

Researchers call on EU institutions to ensure free circulation of scientific knowledge

Brussels, 17 February 2020 - Joint statement

European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers ([Eurodoc](#)), Marie Curie Alumni Association ([MCAA](#)), and Young Academy of Europe ([YAE](#)), who together represent researchers at all career stages across Europe and abroad, **call on the European Commission to propose legislation ensuring that publicly funded scientific knowledge can circulate freely without embargoes or restrictions** to accelerate discovery, strengthen European research, and to tackle global challenges.

Uniform legislation on a European level would harmonise and clarify rules by removing barriers which today prevent scientific knowledge from circulating freely in all of Europe. This could take the form of a directive establishing the nonwaivable legal right for researchers to share publicly funded peer-reviewed research findings without embargo periods or other restrictions (e.g. on the use of [open licenses](#)). Several related examples of national legislation that can act as inspiration already exist across Europe, including in the [Netherlands, Belgium, France and Germany](#).

By establishing this legal right, researchers will be able to publish in any journal or outlet and still comply with open access mandates such as 'Plan S' by following the '[repository route](#)', as this right would supersede any restrictive policies some publishers may have. It thus will ensure that any researcher in Europe who wishes to deposit their [author-accepted manuscript](#) in an open access repository without an embargo and using an [open license](#) will always have the legal right to do so. We believe that such legislation would greatly benefit researchers, science, and broader society.

*Signed by Eva Hnátková (President, Eurodoc), Matthew DiFranco (Chair, MCAA), and Mangala Srinivas (Chair, YAE) on 17 February 2020. This statement is released under a [CC BY license](#).
Contact: policy@mariecuriealumni.eu*

Appendix on European legislative context

- [Article 179](#) in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: (1) **The Union shall have the objective of strengthening its scientific and technological bases by achieving a European research area in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely, and encouraging it to become more competitive, including in its industry, while promoting all the research activities deemed necessary by virtue of other Chapters of the Treaties.** [boldface added]
- May 2016 Council of the EU [conclusions](#) calling for the removal of barriers to ensure immediate open access to scientific publications.