

## BILATERAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

The academic exchange of researchers is an important practical output under the cooperation agreements concluded with partner academies. Such agreements have a long history. In 2022, thirty-five years passed from the signing of the first such agreement with the Polish Academy of Sciences on 16 December 1987 in Tallinn.

The periodic updating of agreements creates a flexible framework for supporting cooperation between the scientists of individual countries, contributing to establishing contacts and increasing the international visibility and impact of Estonian research.

In 2022, the Estonian Academy of Sciences supported the research visits of 36 foreign researchers to Estonian universities and research institutions under 18 cooperation projects (224 days in total). Partner academies supported 44 visits of Estonian researchers (319 days in total). The opportunities offered by the international exchange programme were used the most by Hungary, Poland and Czechia, followed by Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Sweden and Slovenia to a lesser degree.

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## THE FIRST FULL YEAR OF THE ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AS CHAIR OF THE EUROPEAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

*Erle Rikmann, Secretary of the European ISC network*

The International Science Council (ISC) is a global science organisation that brings together research unions and associations, national academies and other representative research organisations. The main aim of the Science Council is to express and amplify the voice of scientists in matters concerning global public wellbeing. Supported by its members and numerous international partner organisations, the Council takes part in shaping international research policy and promotes the provision of scientific advice and knowledge-based policy-making. In 2021, the Estonian Academy of Sciences was elected as the chair of the European members of the ISC for three years (2022–2024).

During Estonia's presidency, the main activities of the network of the European ISC members are focused around three circles of topics. First, representation of the interests of European research institutions and researchers in the global ISC organisation. The activities of this science organisation have considerably expanded and the management of the organisation has also been replaced. Although the European members make up nearly a quarter of the member organisations of the global ISC, they are not proportionately represented in the new management of the ISC. One of the tasks of the European members' network and its Secretariat in Estonia, therefore, is to draw attention to the viewpoint and requirements of European research in the global ISC organisation.

The second important circle of topics is the promotion of science advice and knowledge-based policy-making in Europe, primarily by supporting the development of the structures necessary to enable this. The network of research organisations incorporates the best knowledge and helps find the best new practices for solving the challenges in the provision of scientific advice by sharing experience, holding public discussions and engaging in research cooperation. The need for more permanent scientific advice structures with a prompt response capability and interdisciplinary competences is also growing at European Union level.

The third area of activity in the work of the European ISC members is the development of research diplomacy and international research cooperation. This includes the improvement of the level of overall knowledge, as well as practical activities where the aim of research cooperation is to support relationships between countries or regions or to contribute to the development of research and innovation with the help of diplomacy.

All three topics were discussed at the Annual Meeting and science seminar held in London on 12 and 13 October together with the Royal Society. The improvement of scientific advice, crisis preparedness and international research cooperation were discussed by various top European scientists, scientific advisers to governments and representatives



Annual Meeting of the European ISC at the Royal Society in London.

of academies, including Paul Monks, Chief Scientific Adviser at the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS); Marco Sacchi, Royal Society University Research Fellow in Computational Surface Science, Materials Modelling and Quantum Biology;

Robin Grimes, the UK Ministry of Defence Chief Scientific Adviser on nuclear science and technology matters and Professor of Materials Physics at the Imperial College London; and Tarmo Soomere, President of the Estonian Academy of Sciences and Chair of the European ISC.

## THE 8TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN SCIENCE ADVISORS FORUM (ESAF)

The Estonian Academy of Science organised the 8th Annual Meeting of the European Science Advisors Forum (ESAF) titled ‘The role of science advice in rebuilding society’<sup>96</sup> in Vilnius on 29 – 30 November 2022.

The members of ESAF and guests from the European Commission took part in the Annual Meeting. First, the ESAF Chair, President Tarmo Soomere gave the network an overview of what was done in 2022 under the auspices of ESAF. There has been a number of one-on-one discussions about the future of ESAF with various members of the network. For instance, meetings were held with Dr Istvan Szabo from Hungary, Professor Gerald Haug from Germany, Professor Anton Zeilinger from Austria and the former ESAF member, Professor Mark Ferguson from Ireland. ESAF’s cooperation with other networks was discussed with the new President of INGSA Rémi Quirion and Vice-President Claire Gregg. ESAF’s positions were also presented on the international arena: at the joint

conference of SAPEA and the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to the European Commission, titled ‘Science advice under pressure’, at the IAP Annual Conference in Arizona, USA, and at several discussions held by the US Academy of Sciences.

### **An overview of the presentations made at the meeting**

The main topic of the meeting was most directly discussed by the head of the Scientific Committee of the National Council of Ukraine on Science and Technology Development **Dr Oleksiy Kolezhuk** and **Vaughan Turekian** as well as **Franklin Carrero-Martinez** from the US National Academies of Sciences.

**Dr Oleksiy Kolezhuk** gave an overview of the main problems in the Ukrainian research system before the beginning of the war as well as of those that have emerged in the course of the war, and he outlined the steps that would need to be taken to rebuild the Ukrainian research system. In a situation where 15% of Ukraine’s scientists have emigrated, 30% have relocated within Ukraine and nearly 15% of the

<sup>96</sup> <https://esaforum.eu/esaf-annual-meeting-2022-esaf-8-the-role-of-science-advice-in-rebuilding-the-society/>