

40 years of EU Funding Landscape and the Development of Research Management

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The profession of Research Managers and Administrators* (RMA)

is growing and professionalising over the last decennia. As one easily loses context when being in the midst of a development, and new staff is joining us, here's my take on how our profession developed, based on recent publications.

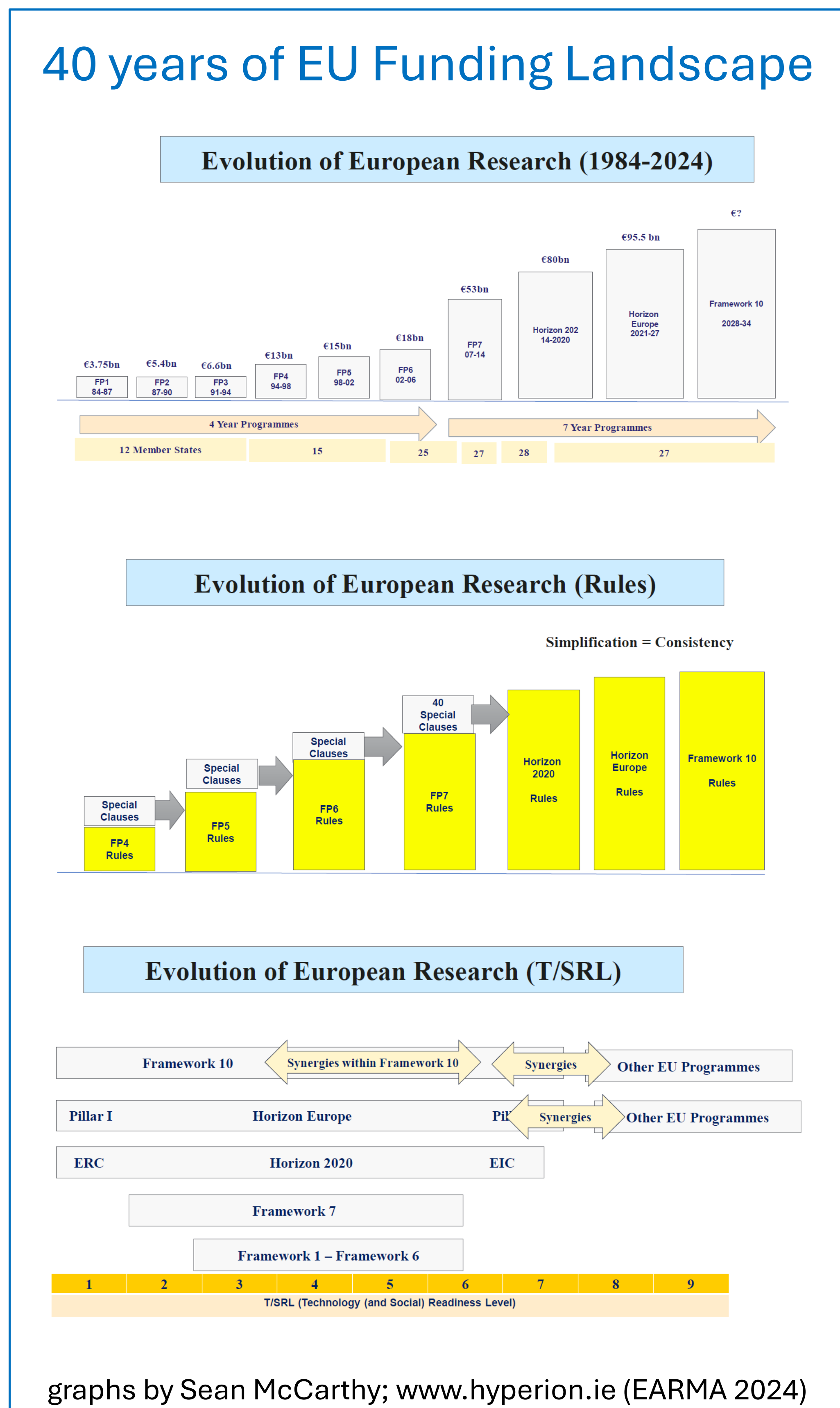
* Note that in the US/UK system, administration is a high-level term and has little to do with the Dutch "administratie".

RMA in the 2010th: blended professional

- Non-scientific staff with academic background (often a PhD)
- Working on activities that fall partly into the core business of scientific staff
- Efficient and effective in their operations due to their blended profile
- Less frustration and reduced work pressures for both scientific staff and (other) RMAs, because both scientific staff and RMA focus their efforts on what they are really good at



Garrowby Hill (1998) – David Hockney



Development in Funding Landscape	Development of RMA profession
Increasing Competition on grants	Grant advisors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central services growing • Decentral services established • Private companies • Specialized RMAs involved
Increasing Legal and Financial Requirements	Specialists for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Property Rights • Financial support • Compliance, Control, Audit • EU tendering/procurement • Knowledge security • Data security
Increasing interests for Science for Society, Grant Challenges / SDGs, Impact	Specialists for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Innovation • Open Science • Citizen Science • Public Engagement
Increasingly Large consortia, Non-academic stakeholders, High TRL	Specialized support for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Project management • Stakeholder management • Technology Transfer • Business relations • Science Communication
Increasing awareness for Ethics and Integrity, Data management	Specialists for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Ethics • Research Integrity • Data management

A changing research landscape requires high-level support with specialized skills.

2024, RMA is a mature profession

evidenced by e.g.:

- National and international organizations of RMA
- Major national and international conferences
- EARMA being a professional organization with paid staff
- European Certificate in Research Management
- Journal of Research Management and Administration
- Handbook of RMA around the world

RMA in the 2020th:

working in one “ecosystem” with researchers

- Working in the center of the research business (rather than at the periphery; ‘administration’; ‘support’)
- Differentiation in specialisation, but “collective specialisation”
- RMAs as Enablers

Want to know more or engage?



References

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- Anne Groeninx van Zoelen: History of the Development of Research Management; Chapter 1.6 of The Emerald Handbook of Research Management and Administration Around the World, p.69-82, 2024
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