Preface

The focus of this book, which comprises contributions from both academics and policymakers, is to deepen the analysis of the external dimension of the European Research Area (ERA). It is unique in doing so by arguing that in a globalized knowledge-economy the European Union (EU) needs a new approach to its international science and technology (S&T) policies by, first, focusing on better coherence of S&T policies across the different tiers of government and, second, by demonstrating leadership in tackling major global challenges.

The need for an enhanced external dimension of the ERA was recognized in the European Commission’s Green Paper ‘The European Research Area: New perspectives’ of April 2007. The Green Paper acknowledged that the ERA has to develop deep relations with the outside world as it cannot act as a ‘self-sufficient entity’ for reasons of, inter alia, growing internationalization of science, research, development and technology, new global S&T players, and an increased need to tackle global challenges.

The Green Paper addressed two key questions when it comes to international S&T cooperation: ‘how best to coordinate the international S&T policies of the Member States and the Commission’ and ‘how best to address global challenges through international S&T cooperation’. First answers to both of these questions were given in the European Commission’s Communication on ‘A Strategic European Framework for International Science and Technology Cooperation’ in September 2008 and in the Conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of December 2008 on a ‘European Partnership for International Scientific and Technological Cooperation’.

The chapters in this book will provide theoretical insights and practical options on how to equip the ERA with policies and instruments to successfully ‘go global’, and on how to implement policy measures for international science and technology cooperation effectively and efficiently. The authors base their analysis on sound empirics and take particularly the multi-level character of S&T policies in Europe into account.

This project is part of a series of initiatives organized by the International Cooperation Directorate of the European Commission’s Directorate General for Research (DG Research) to support a more coherent international S&T cooperation strategy at European level. Some of the ideas presented in this
book have been debated and developed at the workshop ‘Strengthening the coordination of Community and Member States’ policies and programmes for international S&T cooperation: impediments and opportunities’ organized in September 2007 by the International Cooperation Directorate of DG Research. Later on, drafts of most of the chapters were presented and discussed at the Second Global International Studies Conference ‘What keeps us apart, what keeps us together? International order, justice, values’ in Ljubljana in July 2008. Participation at this conference was financially supported by DG Research. I wish to thank in particular Ms Mary Minch and Ms Sigi Gruber of DG Research for their continuous support in realizing this project and the contributors for their enduring commitment throughout the process of producing this book. The final responsibility of the content rests of course with the authors and does not reflect the official position of the European Commission.

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NOTE

1. As the manuscript for the book was finalized before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, some chapters still differentiate between ‘European Community’ and ‘European Union’.