



# Introduction to Horizon Europe

Horizon Europe is the forthcoming EU framework programme for research and innovation in 2021-2027. With a proposed budget of €100 billion covering the seven-year period, Horizon Europe is the most ambitious publicly funded international research and innovation programme in the world.

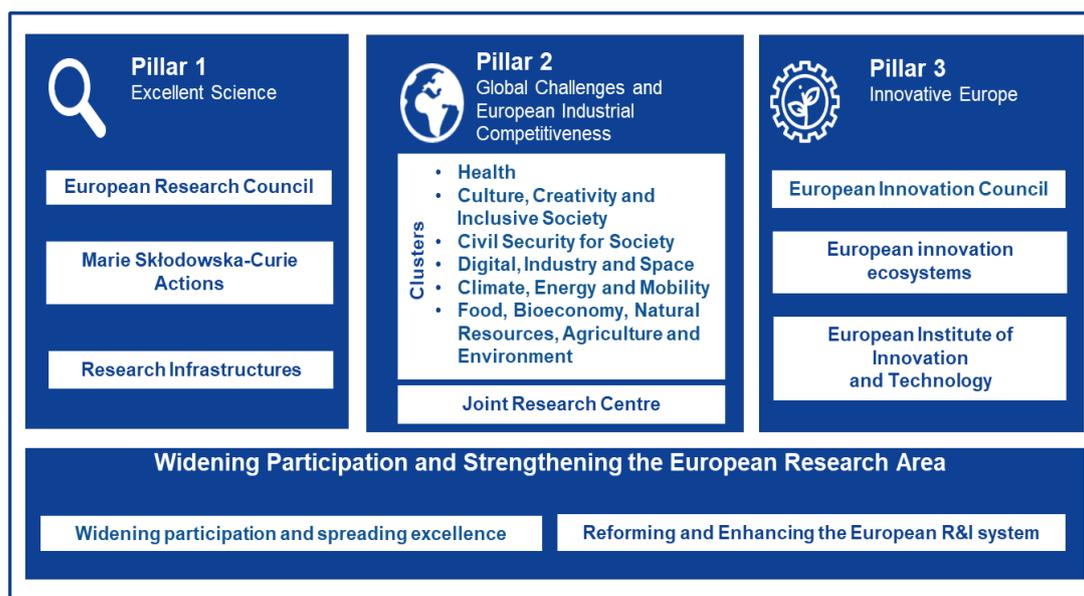
The general objectives of Horizon Europe are to:

- Deliver scientific, technological, economic and societal impact
- Strengthen the scientific and technological base in Europe
- Foster competitiveness in all Member States
- Deliver on EU strategic priorities and contribute to tackling global challenges including the Sustainable Development Goals.

The specific objectives are to:

- Develop, promote and advance scientific excellence, fundamental and applied knowledge, skills, technologies and solutions, training and mobility of researchers, and attract talents to Europe.
- Generate knowledge, strengthen the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting and implementing Union policies and support the access to and uptake of innovative solutions in European industry, including among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and society to address global challenges.
- Foster all forms of innovation, facilitate technological development, demonstration and knowledge and technology transfer, strengthen deployment and exploitation of innovative solutions.
- Optimise the delivery for strengthening and increasing the impact and attractiveness of the European Research Area, to foster the excellence-based participations from all Member States, including low R&I performing Member States and to facilitate collaborative links in European research and innovation.

## Horizon Europe Structure



Horizon Europe is organised into three pillars and a horizontal programme.

**Pillar 1** supports excellent science through the European Research Council (ERC), Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and investment in world-class research infrastructures.

**Pillar 2** addresses global challenges and European industrial competitiveness. This pillar is organised with integrated and broad clusters of activities that aim at fostering systemic changes for the economy and society. Pillar 2 also implements EU-wide research-driven missions with ambitious goals to tackle specific societal challenges.

**Pillar 3** aims at making Europe a frontrunner in market-creating innovation. The new European Innovation Council (EIC) will promote breakthrough and disruptive technologies and innovation including market-creating and incremental innovation with SMEs, start-ups and in some cases small mid-caps with rapid scale-up potential at EU and global level. Pillar 3 will also help developing an innovation ecosystem and strengthening the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) to foster the integration of business, research, higher education and entrepreneurship.

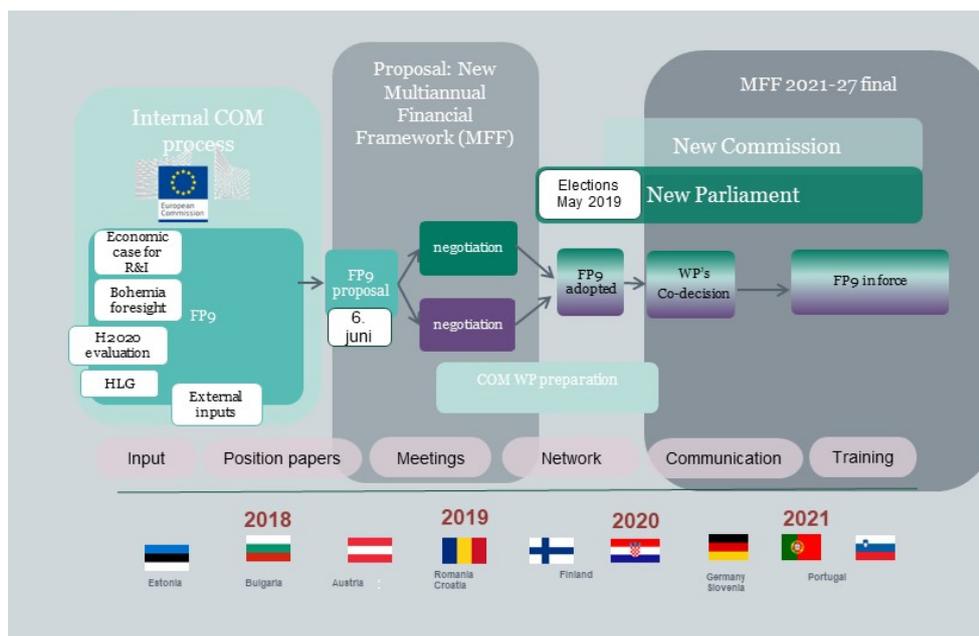
The horizontal programme **Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area** includes activities aimed at boosting research and innovation capacities in low-performing EU Member States, notably in Central- and Eastern Europe.

### State on the Horizon Europe negotiations

The Commission proposal for Horizon Europe was published in June 2018. It followed the Commission proposal for a multiannual financial framework (MFF) that lays down the budget for all EU financial programmes in 2021-2027. Horizon Europe consists of the:

- Regulation that defines objectives, structure, budget distribution, instruments, evaluation criteria, criteria and rules for association of and cooperation with third countries and rules for participation.
- Specific Programme which defines the implementation of Horizon Europe including an outline of the content.

In 2018 and 2019 the Commission proposal was subject to political negotiations between the EU institutions. In March 2019 the EU institutions reached a partial political agreement on the programme. It means that agreement was reached on most of the Horizon Europe package.



The agreement is partial because it excludes three issues that are still subjects for further negotiation during the Finnish presidency in the second part of 2019.

**The budget:** The Commission has proposed €100 billion for Horizon Europe (including Euratom and InvestEU), whereas the Parliament has proposed €120 billion. The final budget is negotiated in the context of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), that sets the overall direction for all EU spending in 2021-2027. Currently the political situation points towards a decrease of the budget for research, innovation and digital transformation. The Nordic Member States and The Netherlands who would usually defend these budget lines are unwilling to increase the overall EU budget which is needed to cover the gap caused by Brexit. Several other countries are willing to pay more to the EU budget. However, this group of countries tend to favour larger budget proportions to cohesion or agricultural policy. The Finnish presidency is expected to come up with a proposal in September 2019 which should align the Member States on a joint position. The trilogue between the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission is likely to take place in 2020.

**Association of third countries:** The EU institutions await the outcome of Brexit before finally deciding on provisions for association of third countries. This issue concerns all EU financial programmes. The final provisions for association are supposed to be coordinated across programmes.

**Synergies:** Synergies between Horizon Europe and other future programmes and policies are coordinated as part of the MFF negotiation because it influences all financial programmes.

In April 2019 the Commission started preparing the implementation of Horizon Europe. The first step is to prepare a Strategic Plan with key orientations that should guide the implementation in 2021-2024. This strategic plan describes political and strategic orientations and expected impacts of research and innovation. It covers all clusters in pillar 2. The Strategic Plan will also include selected missions and partnerships that will implement certain parts of pillar 2. The strategic plan is expected to be finalised and approved by Member States at the beginning of 2020. During 2020 the Commission will draft the first Horizon Europe Work Programme and calls for 2021-2022.



### Reactions to the Partial Political Agreement

”We have secured a deal on a future European research and innovation programme that includes high priority mission areas like cancer research, adaption to climate change and healthy food. Now, we ask the EU Member States to secure ample financing for the Horizon Europe Programme”, said **Christian Ehler** MEP, EPP Group Spokesman, after the deal on Horizon Europe was adopted by the European Parliament ([EPP Group](#)) and shadow rapporteur on the Horizon Europe regulation.

The agreement on Horizon Europe sends “a strong signal to negotiators” for the EU’s broad, long-term financial plan, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation **Carlos Moedas** told the committee meeting. “Our task now is to defend our budget,” he said. ([Science Business](#))

“The results achieved at this stage show a strong commitment to our citizens and research community. I would also like to underline that on the outstanding issues the European Parliament is committed to keep the level of ambition in negotiating a budget of €120 billion and on the participation of non-EU countries”, said Dan Nica, MEP from [S&D](#) and appointed rapporteur for the Horizon Europe regulation)

“With this ambitious new programme and new structure, it is vital to translate this ambition into a solid budget within the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF). This will be the most sensitive issue to discuss in the next legislation”, said **Lieve Wierinck** MEP from [ALDE](#) and former shadow rapporteur on the Horizon Europe regulation.