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Public consultation on the past, present and future of the European Research & Innovation Framework programmes 2014-2027

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

INTRODUCTION

This consultation aims to collect the views of research institutions, businesses, consumer organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations, public authorities, and other stakeholders on the European Union Framework Programmes (FP) for Research & Innovation, **Horizon 2020** (8th FP) and **Horizon Europe** (9th FP).
The consultation has **five sections**:

- **Section A "About you"** asks information about the respondent's profile.

- **Section B** focuses on the **past programme Horizon 2020** (2014 – 2020) and aims to collect feedback and evidence to **draw lessons from the past**. This part of the consultation will feed into the ex-post evaluation of Horizon 2020.

- **Section C** focuses on the **current programme Horizon Europe** (2021 – 2027) and aims to take stock of what stakeholders are currently experiencing to possibly **adapt current actions**. This part of the consultation will feed into the mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe, covering the period 2021 – 2023.

- **Section D** collects views and opinions for the **upcoming Strategic Plan of Horizon Europe** (**2025 – 2027**). The questionnaire concerns the future societal challenges that should **shape future EU research and innovation** activities, the strengths and weaknesses of the European R&I system, EU Missions, European Partnerships and synergies with other EU programmes.

- **Section E** asks about the **key lessons learned and messages for the future**. If you wish so, you can **upload a position paper** in this section.

You can choose to **complete only one or more sections** of the consultation.

You can **save your contribution as a draft** on the server and continue later or on a different day.

As the consultation looks at the **past, the present and the future of European Research Framework Programmes**, some topics are addressed under multiple sections.
For example, both section B (Horizon 2020) and section C (Horizon Europe) examine how the programmes contributed (or is contributing) to climate, health, digital and industrial transitions. Likewise, questions on the programme's implementation and administrative procedures are asked in the two sections to account for the simplification measures introduced in Horizon Europe.

Your answers will be **treated confidentially** and will be statistically processed. **The results will be anonymised and presented at an aggregate level** only in a report that will be published in the "Have your say" web portal.

Please select your **language** preference on top of the page before starting the survey.

Need help? Please contact: RTD-PUBLIC-CONSULTATION-HORIZON@ec.europa.eu

SECTION A. ABOUT YOU

* Language of my contribution

- ○ Bulgarian
- ○ Croatian

- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- (•) English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- (•) Other

Are you providing your personal views or the views of an institution/organisation?

- ( ) Personal views
- (•) Views of an institution / organisation

* First name

CAROLINE

* Surname

ALMERAS

* Email (this won't be published)

caroline.almeras@ectri.org

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

ECTRI - European Conference of Transport Research Institutes

* Organisation size

- (•) Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- ( ) Small (10 to 49 employees)
- ( ) Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- ( ) Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

54191854341-51

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

This list does not represent the official position of the European institutions with regard to the legal status or policy of the entities mentioned. It is a harmonisation of often divergent lists and practices.

- ( ) Afghanistan
- ( ) Djibouti
- ( ) Libya
- ( ) Saint Martin

- Åland Islands
- Albania
- Algeria
- American Samoa
- Andorra
- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Dominica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Saint Pierre and Miquelon
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden

- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States

- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Japan
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saint Helena Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

* Please select the option(s) that best describe(s) your experience with the European Union Research and Innovation programmes:

between 1 and 6 choices

- [x] I/my organisation has **participated/is currently participating** in at least one project funded by **Horizon 2020** (2014 – 2020)
- [x] I/my organisation has **participated/is currently participating** in at least one project funded by **Horizon Europe** (2021 – 2027)
- [x] I/my organisation has **proposed project(s)** to receive funding from Horizon 2020 (2014 – 2020) but was **unsuccessful**.
- [x] I/my organisation has **proposed project(s)** to receive funding from Horizon Europe (2021 - 2027) but was **unsuccessful**.
- [x] I/my organisation **supports other entities** that apply for / participate in the EU R&I Framework Programmes

- [ ] I/my organisation is interested in research and innovation but **did not apply so far for EU funding** under the European Research and Innovation Programme
- [ ] None of the above

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **Fo r the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* **Contribution publication privacy settings**

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

- ( ) **Anonymous**
  Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.
- (•) **Public**
  Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

- [x] I agree with the personal data protection provisions

* Which part of the survey would you like to fill in?

between 1 and 3 choices

- [ ] Performance of the past programme Horizon 2020 (input for the Horizon 2020 ex-post evaluation)
- [x] Performance of Horizon Europe (input for the Horizon Europe interim evaluation)

- [x] Looking into the R&I future priorities 2025-2027 (input for the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan)

* In which of the following **areas of Horizon Europe** are you or your organisation mainly active / interested in? Please select all that apply (Horizon Europe structure):
  - [ ] Frontier research: European Research Council
  - [x] Researcher training, career development and mobility: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions
  - [ ] European Research Infrastructures
  - [ ] R&I to tackle global challenges: Health (Cluster 1)
  - [ ] R&I to tackle global challenges: Culture, creativity and inclusive society (Cluster 2)
  - [x] R&I to tackle global challenges: Civil security for society (Cluster 3)
  - [x] R&I to tackle global challenges: Digital, industry and space (Cluster 4)
  - [x] R&I to tackle global challenges: Climate, energy and mobility (Cluster 5)
  - [ ] R&I to tackle global challenges: Food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment (Cluster 6)
  - [ ] Developing and scaling up of breakthrough technologies and game changing innovations: European Innovation Council
  - [ ] Support systems for innovation: European Innovation Ecosystems
  - [ ] Entrepreneurial innovation & training: European Institute of Innovation and Technology
  - [ ] Widening participation & strengthening the European Research Area (widening component)
  - [ ] Widening participation & strenghtening the European Research Area (ERA component)
  - [ ] None of the above

SECTION C. PERFORMANCE OF HORIZON EUROPE (INPUT FOR THE HORIZON EUROPE INTERIM EVALUATION)

Your experience with Horizon Europe

According to you, what are the main benefits of participating in Horizon Europe compared to national and/or regional R&I programmes in EU Member States or Associated countries? Select maximum 3 answers

at most 3 choice(s)

- [ ] Improved cooperation with partners from other countries (within the EU and beyond)
- [ ] Improved excellence in research and innovation (e.g., more high impact publications and patents)
- [ ] Improved international visibility
- [ ] Strengthened critical mass to address pan-European challenges
- [ ] Strengthened cooperation between academia and the private sector
- [ ] Strengthened interdisciplinary cooperation
- [ ] Additional risk capital provided to companies
- [ ] Possibility to finance projects which otherwise could not be supported at national and/or regional level
- [ ] Reimbursement of costs at a higher level than in national and/or regional research and innovation programmes
- [ ] Horizon Europe covered a topic not covered by national and regional R&I support
- [ ] Horizon Europe provided financial means at a scale not provided in national and regional schemes
- [ ] Horizon Europe supported the development of emerging technologies
- [ ] Horizon Europe helped to bring innovations to the market
- [ ] There are no additional benefits compared to national / regional support

In your view, what are the main reasons that may have prevented potential beneficiaries from participating in Horizon Europe? Select maximum 3 answers.

at most 3 choice(s)

- [ ] Inadequate knowledge of the EU research and innovation framework programme
- [ ] Limited attractiveness compared to other European or international programmes
- [ ] Limited attractiveness compared to other national or regional programmes
- [ ] The Horizon Europe application process is cumbersome
- [ ] The Horizon Europe project implementation rules are cumbersome
- [ ] Success rates in Horizon Europe are too low to be worth applying
- [ ] Difficulties in finding project partners
- [ ] Lack of a relevant area/topic for my research interests
- [ ] Concerns about sharing valuable knowledge with partners
- [ ] Limited financial/human resources to prepare a proposal

- [ ] Lack of expertise
- [ ] Other

If other, please specify.

Priorities and Objectives

In your view, to what extent do the following changes, introduced in Horizon Europe, contribute to strengthening the impact of European research and innovation?

	Not at all	A little	Does not make a difference	Somewhat	To a great extent	I do not know / No opinion
Definition of the future R&I priorities through a co-creation process with stakeholders	○	○	○	○	○	○
Development of several multi-annual Strategic Plans	○	○	○	○	○	○
Creation of a pillar dedicated to innovation, including the European Innovation Council	○	○	○	○	○	○
Creation of “EU Missions”	○	○	○	○	○	○
Creation of a pillar grouping societal and industrial issues	○	○	○	○	○	○

New approach to Partnerships (co-programmed, co-funded and institutionalised)						
Implementation of an open science policy						
Introduction of the impact logic in the formulation of topics						

Implementation and administrative procedures

To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning the calls for proposals under Horizon Europe?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / No opinion
The rules of participation are clear						
The descriptions of the calls for proposals are clear						
Finding the right call for my proposal is easy						
The calls for proposals are frequent enough						

There is an adequate mix of calls for proposals addressing specific topics (top-down) and calls for proposals without a pre-defined topic (bottom-up)						
The strengthened gender equality provisions bear potential to promote gender equality across R&I organisations and activities						
The standard application form facilitates the application						
The IT tool is user-friendly						
The reduced page limit for proposals reduces the burden on applicants						

The feedback received on rejected proposals and the re-submissions rules are clear						

To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning proposal evaluation under Horizon Europe?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / No opinion
The time taken to evaluate proposals is adequate						
The feedback received from the evaluation is clear and informative						
The time taken to sign the grant agreement is adequate						

To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning the project implementation under Horizon Europe?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / No opinion

Our organisation's usual accounting practices were accepted						
The cost calculation rules are clear						
The mechanisms for project monitoring and reporting are adequate						
I am satisfied with the support received by the EC services (including agencies) during grant preparation and implementation						
The standard templates facilitate project reporting						
The extension of the single audit principle reduces the burden on beneficiaries						
The use of lump sum funding reduces the burden on beneficiaries						

What is your level of satisfaction with the way the European Commission implements the following types of support under Horizon Europe?

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	I do not know / I have not used it
Grants for collaborative projects	○	○	○	○	○	○
Grants for single beneficiary projects	○	○	○	○	○	○
Blended finance (grants and equity support)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Public procurement	○	○	○	○	○	○
Prizes	○	○	○	○	○	○
Co-funding (e.g., European Partnerships)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Technical assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○
Support for networking	○	○	○	○	○	○
Training and expert advice	○	○	○	○	○	○

EU Missions	○	○	○	○	○	○

Do you think the different types of support made available by Horizon Europe are suitable for your needs?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Scarcely
- ○ Neutral
- ◉ Largely
- ○ Perfectly
- ○ I do not know / No opinion

Why? What else would you need from Horizon Europe?

The effort needed to participate in Horizon Europe compared to Horizon 2020 is:

at most 1 choice(s)

- ☐ Greater
- ☑ Similar
- ☐ Lower
- ☐ I do not know / No opinion

The effort needed to participate in Horizon Europe compared to that of other similar international research and innovation programmes was:

at most 1 choice(s)

- ☑ Greater
- ☐ Similar
- ☐ Lower
- ☐ I do not know / No opinion

Approximately, how much time did the proposal preparation for Horizon Europe take overall? Please indicate the total number of person-days.

at most 1 choice(s)

- ☐ Less than 10 person-days
- ☐ More than 10 but below 20 person-days
- ☐ More than 20 but below 30 person-days
- ☐ More than 30 but below 40 person-days
- ☐ More than 40 but below 50 person-days

- [x] More than 50 but below 60 person-days
- [ ] More than 60 but below 100 person
- [ ] More than 100 person-days

Approximately, how much time does your project spend on **managing participation** in Horizon 2020?
Please indicate the **total number of person-days** spent overall on managing participation?

Approximately [X] person-days in total for a project duration of [X] months.

How can the administrative burden for applicants and participants be further reduced (regarding application process, reporting requirements, cost calculation etc.)?

Text of 1 to 2000 characters will be accepted

• It is very difficult to motivate institutions to serve as a coordinator. Reasons are the extensive amount of effort that a coordinator needs to take to develop a proposal. Preparing a well-designed work plan and proposal takes at least two person months for a coordinator in a strong leading role for a mid sized project – more if partners from some countries are hardly available during summer especially in case of September deadlines.
• The role of coordinator is even less attractive given the low chance to win a project even if the proposal is evaluated above threshold, so the effort is not worth. Maybe it would be more motivating if coordinators could receive some funding for submitting above-threshold proposals to compensate at least for the preparation effort.
• Timing of calls' closing in early January or September should be reconsidered – it destroys many applicants' work-life balance and causes unnecessary much stress. Please consider at least a "pilot" for closing in e.g. early November and just before Easter.

Progress towards achieving Horizon Europe objectives

To what extent do you agree that Horizon Europe is on track to deliver on the following objectives?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / No opinion

Develop, promote and advance scientific excellence	○	○	○	○	○	○
Support the creation and diffusion of high-quality fundamental or applied knowledge, skills, technologies and innovations	○	○	○	○	○	○
Support training and mobility of researchers and attract talents	○	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen the impact of R&I in developing, supporting and implementing Union policies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Support the access to and uptake of innovative solutions in European industry and in society to address global challenges, including climate change and the SDGs	○	○	○	○	○	○

Foster all forms of innovation, including breakthrough innovation and social innovation	○	○	○	○	○	○
Facilitate technological development, demonstration and knowledge and technology transfer	○	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen deployment and exploitation of innovative solutions	○	○	○	○	○	○
Strengthen and increase the impact and attractiveness of the European Research Area	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fostering excellence based participation from all Member States, including low R&I performing countries	○	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent do you agree that the implementation so far of EU Missions is on track to deliver on their objectives?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / no opinion
Adaptation to climate change	○	○	○	○	○	○
Prevention, cure and solutions for cancer	○	○	○	○	○	○
Restoring healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters	○	○	○	○	○	○
Climate-neutral and smart cities	○	○	○	○	○	○
A Soil Deal for Europe	○	○	○	○	○	○

If you would like to elaborate, please add a comment below.

Compared to Horizon 2020, the use of public-public and public-private partnerships has been streamlined with fewer but more impact-oriented partnerships, which can take three forms: co-funded, co-programmed and institutionalised European Partnerships. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	I do not know / No opinion

The rationalisation of European Partnerships has allowed additional public and private investments in research and innovation to be leveraged						
The rationalisation of European Partnerships has led to delivering more solutions for the benefits of society, the environment and the economy						

In your opinion, to what extent are European Partnerships and EU Missions supported by Horizon Europe effective compared to regular collaborative research projects in achieving Horizon Europe's objectives?

	Not at all	A little	Neutral	Somewhat	To a great extent	I do not know / No opinion
European Partnerships						
EU Missions						

According to you, to what extent is your research or innovation project impacted by the exceptional limitations on participation in Horizon Europe by non-EU legal entities (justified to safeguard the Union's strategic assets, interests, autonomy or security)?

- Not at all

- A little
- Somewhat
- To a great extent
- I do not know / No opinion

How did the following EU programmes work in synergy (complement and reinforce) Horizon Europe?

	No synergies exploited	Few synergies exploited	Several synergies exploited	Synergies fully exploited	I do not know / No opinion
Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)					
LIFE - Programme for Environment and Climate Action					
European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)					
Creative Europe Programme					
European Social Fund Plus (ESF)+					
Erasmus +					
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)					
Just Transition Mechanism					
Recovery and Resilience Facility					

EU4Health Programme					
Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)					
Digital Europe Programme (DEP)					
Single Market Programme					
InvestEU					
Innovation Fund under the Emission Trading Scheme					
Union Space Programme					
Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)					
Internal Security Fund (ISF)					
Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI)					
European Defence Fund					
Euratom Research and Training Programme					

To what extent have the following initiatives helped disseminate, exploit and access research and innovation results?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	To a great extent	I do not know / No opinion
Scientific publication(s)	○	○	○	○	○
Patent filing	○	○	○	○	○
Horizon Dashboard	○	○	○	○	○
Horizon Results Booster	○	○	○	○	○
Horizon Results Platform	○	○	○	○	○
CORDIS	○	○	○	○	○
Innovation Radar	○	○	○	○	○
IPR Helpdesk	○	○	○	○	○
Project website	○	○	○	○	○
Social media	○	○	○	○	○
Workshops, events, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
Open science activities for early sharing of results	○	○	○	○	○
Horizon Standardization Booster	○	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○	○

If other, please specify.

What (would have) happened to your research and innovation project(s), without European-level funding through Horizon Europe?

My project(s) would be:

- ☐ Funded by a **public** source at national or regional level, without any major changes in scope, duration or level of ambition
- ☐ Funded by a **private** source at national or regional level, without any major changes in scope, duration or level of ambition

- Funded (by either a public or private source), but with a **substantial reduction in scope, duration or level of ambition**
- No funding secured (by either a public or private source), but **would have taken place later**
- No funding secured, and would **not have taken place at all**
- Likely funded, at least to some extent, through other sources but without/ with **r educed cooperation with partners from other countries**
- Likely funded, at least to some extent, through other sources but without/ with reduced **interdisciplinary cooperation**
- Likely funded, at least to some extent, through other sources but with **reduced international visibility** of research and/or research team
- Funded by **another EU programme**, without any major changes in scope, duration or level of ambition
- Another scenario.

If other, please specify.

SECTION D. LOOKING INTO THE R&I FUTURE PRIORITIES (INPUT FOR THE HORIZON EUROPE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2027)

The Horizon Europe strategic plan defines the strategic orientations for research and innovation investments for a period of up to four years.
It focuses on the six thematic Clusters of Horizon Europe, which cover the following areas respectively:

- Health (Cluster 1)
- Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society (Cluster 2)
- Civil Security for Society (Cluster 3)
- Digital, Industry and Space (Cluster 4)
- Climate, Energy and Mobility (Cluster 5)
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment (Cluster 6)

The first Horizon Europe strategic plan covers the period 2021-2024. You can find more information about the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 in the following factsheet.

The societal challenges

Name the most important R&I solution that would help you in your life over the next 10 years.

Policies for enabling sustainable mobility (and transport systems aligned with sustainability) to be a reality at the local and regional levels. They should include healthy/active modes such as walking, cycling along with collective transport meeting service standards of high enough quality to make these mobility modes the first choice by all people, including those that are visually impaired and have other disability. Furthermore, freight transport chains should be multi-modal and resilient to ensure the quality of life of European citizens in the most sustainable possible manner. The solutions should include services and technologies to enhance safety in the transportation system, addressing all modes, and in line with the overall aims for sustainable and economically viable societies.

Policies are not yet effective for addressing the envisaged Sustainable Development Goals, as set in the United Nations' Agenda for 2030, and the EU ambition to reach climate neutrality by 2050. More R&I should be devoted for innovative frameworks to enable policy integration (e.g., transport- health-environment), including the required monitoring of impacts (intra and inter-sectorial).

In the next **ten years**, which societal challenges should be the focus of EU investments for research and innovation activities?

	Not a priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Essential	I do not know
Climate change	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Loss of biodiversity	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Energy supply	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Migration flows	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Social justice	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Strained healthcare systems and ageing European population	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Global competition for technological leadership	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Global instability and EU societal preparedness for large-scale disruptions	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○	◉	○

If other, please specify.

Transport and mobility solutions and technologies for safer and more sustainable societies

Ensuring that transport systems and urban societies are resilient and adapted to societal aspects, while also considering solutions for rural areas, requires further R&I.

Affordable solutions, integrating energy into the pricing, for mobility.

In the next **three years**, which societal challenges should be the focus of EU investments for research and innovation activities?

	Not a priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Essential	I do not know
Climate change	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Loss of biodiversity	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Energy supply	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Migration flows	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Social justice	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Strained healthcare systems and ageing European population	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Global competition for technological leadership	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Global instability and EU societal preparedness for large-scale disruptions	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Other	○	○	○	○	○	◉

Please feel free to add further comments to your selection.

Strained transport systems at the urban and regional levels, requires:
i) sustainable and multimodal mobility options (for passengers and freight) - aligned with climate neutrality goals;
ii) resilient networks with secure and robust digital and physical infrastructures.

Further R&I in meta-governance of transport for efficiency and social equity to overcome fragmentation of

governance of collective transport (multiple operators, without integration) requiring transport and mobility solutions and technologies for safer and more sustainable societies

In your opinion, which Horizon Europe Cluster(s) contributes(s) to addressing the societal challenges?

	Cluster 1 - **Health**	Cluster 2 - **Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society**	Cluster 3 - **Civil security for society**	Cluster 4 - **Digital, Industry and Space**	Cluster 5 - **Climate, Energy and Mobility**	Cluster 6 - **Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment**
Climate change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Energy supply	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Migration flows	☐	☑	☑	☐	☑	☐
Social justice	☑	☑	☑	☐	☑	☐
Loss of biodiversity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑
Strained healthcare systems and ageing European population	☑	☑	☐	☐	☐	☐
Global competition for technological leadership	☐	☐	☑	☑	☑	☑
Global instability and EU societal preparedness for large-scale disruptions	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑	☑
Other	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	☐

If other, please specify.

• Citizens' safety and security in modern societies

Are there European scientific areas of strengths or weaknesses which should be prioritised in Horizon Europe to keep Europe at the forefront of international scientific competition?

As a general comment: R&D is long term. A discussion on the worthiness (and fairness) of politically and ideologically charged concepts such as "International scientific competition" or "Global competition for technological leadership" would be valuable. Accepting such concepts makes EU R&D depending too much on particular agendas of industrial and economic advocates and moves R&D policy away from strategic thinking.
"Technological leadership" is not a value in itself, but should be driven by a purpose, such as:
• Technological leadership to address sustainability (e.g., prioritize CCAM for effective public transport solutions instead of individual cars; use technology to improve the life of people in vulnerable situations such as the elderly with no driving license, low income households living in the suburbs with no access to affordable transport options).
• R&D for safe, secure and sustainable societies (through CCAM, MaaS, resilient transport networks, cybersecurity implications, etc.) along with the appropriate regulations for their effective deployment;
• Using the right incentives, EU can be an example of participation of women in science and of leading R&I. This would act as a strength to advance gender balance, along with ending gender based injustice and inequalities beyond the EU.
• Policy and regulation for the support and empowerment of employment in areas where technological advancements are seen as "threat" (e.g. CCAM)

Expected impacts across the six Clusters

In your view, for which expected impacts under Cluster 3 (Civil security for society) is EU support more impactful than national and/or regional support alone?

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely	I do not know / No opinion
Enhanced disaster risk reduction including through better societal preparedness	○	○	○	○	◉	○

Improved air /land/sea border management and maritime security	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Tackling crime and terrorism, and enhancing resilience of infrastructures	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Increased cybersecurity and a more secure online environment	○	○	○	○	◉	○

Please feel free to specify any other area missing from the list above.

In your view for which expected impacts under Cluster 4 (Digital, industry and space) is EU support more impactful than national and/or regional support alone?

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely	I do not know / No opinion
Global leadership in clean & climate-neutral industrial value chains, circular economy and climate-neutral digital systems and infrastructures	○	○	○	○	◉	○

Industrial leadership and increased autonomy in key strategic value chains with security of supply in raw materials	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Globally attractive, secure and dynamic data-agile economy	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Open strategic autonomy in digital technologies and in future emerging enabling technologies	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Open strategic autonomy in developing, deploying and using global space-based infrastructures, services, applications and data	○	○	○	○	◉	○
A human-centred and ethical development of digital and industrial technologies	○	○	○	○	◉	○

Please feel free to specify any other area missing from the list above.

In your view, for which expected impacts under Cluster 5 (Climate, energy and mobility) is EU support more impactful than national and/or regional support alone?

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Extremely	I do not know / No opinion
Clean and sustainable transition of the energy and transport system	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Transition to a climate-neutral and resilient society and economy	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Efficient, clean, sustainable, secure, and competitive energy supply	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Efficient and sustainable use of energy	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Climate-neutral and environmental-friendly mobility	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Safe, seamless, smart, inclusive, resilient, climate neutral and sustainable mobility systems	○	○	○	○	◉	○

Please feel free to specify any other area missing from the list above.

• Innovative and affordable crosscutting solutions (including fair policies and the “right” economic incentives and measures that would enable a fair decarbonisation of transport and energy). These are important to be explicitly mentioned in the item above: “Clean and sustainable transition of the energy and transport sectors towards climate neutrality”.
• EU contributions in this cluster remain substantial, but it becomes increasingly important to tailor research to the national, regional and local contexts. Therefore, better integration between EU and national R&D programmes within cluster 5 are necessary.

How familiar are you with the strategic planning process for Horizon Europe?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Slightly
- ○ Somewhat
- ○ Moderately
- ◉ Extremely

Synergies and complementarities

Compared to the Strategic Plan 2021-2024, do you see any unexploited potential for complementarities between different clusters?

	Cluster 1 - **Health**	Cluster 2 - **Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society**	Cluster 3 - **Civil security for society**	Cluster 4 - **Digital, Industry and Space**	Cluster 5 - **Climate, Energy and Mobility**	Clus **Fo Bioec Nat Reso Agric a Envir**
Cluster 1 - **Health**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	
Cluster 2 - **Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society**	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑	

Cluster 3 - **Civil security for society**	☐	☐	☐	☑	☑	
Cluster 4 - **Digital, Industry and Space**	☐	☐	☑	☐	☑	
Cluster 5 - **Climate, Energy and Mobility**	☑	☑	☑	☑	☐	
Cluster 6 - **Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment**	☑	☐	☐	☑	☐	

Please elaborate.

Whereas relationships between clusters 4 and 5 have been extensively explored, the health and societal dimensions of climate, energy and mobility innovations remain underdiscussed, with relatively swallow and taken-for-granted statements dominating the discussion on these topics.

Regarding possible complementarities between Cluster 1 (Health) and Cluster 5 (Mobility): transport is fundamental for health and well-being (for example, active travel is key to reduce several diseases such as diabetes type II*) so this crosscutting challenge requires to be addressed properly. Currently, the appraisal of plans and projects neglects the health effects of sustainable transport options. People and policymakers are not yet aware of the health benefits of walking, cycling and greener collective transport options. Additionally, negative health effects caused by transport (e.g. through noise or pollution) should be a naturally included in assessments of transport solutions.

(*) Sustainable transport systems and mobility options represents the anchor to promote active lifestyles as regular physical activity can be part of the daily travel. According to the World Health Organisation, physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality (6% of deaths globally). Scientific evidence shows, for example, that walking for 30 minutes on a regular daily basis would reduce mortality risk by at least 10%.

Do you see any unexploited potential for complementarities between the six clusters and the other parts of Horizon Europe?

	Cluster 1 - **Health**	Cluster 2 - **Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society**	Cluster 3 - **Civil security for society**	Cluster 4 - **Digital, Industry and Space**	Cluster 5 - **Climate, Energy and Mobility**	Cluster 6 - **Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment**	I do not know
Pillar I - Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Pillar I - Research Infrastructures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Pillar I - The European Research Council (ERC)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑
Pillar III - European Innovation Council	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Pillar III – European	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Innovation Ecosystems							
Pillar III – European Institute of Innovation and Technology	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐
Widening and ERA	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Joint Research Centre	☐	☐	☐	☐	☑	☐	☐

Please elaborate.

MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships and MSCA staff exchanges could be linked to EU-funded projects in cluster 5 (a priority can be allocated to those MSCA proposals aligned with reaching HEU topics and goals such as zero emissions and climate neutrality), which will ensure a better alignment with maximizing resources for common goals.

Pillar I (Research Infrastructures) and Cluster 5 (Climate, energy and mobility): Enabling researchers to have a quick access and use of complete (comprehensive) data sets through open platforms, interoperable and secure dataspaces.

To maximize the European innovation potential, Horizon Europe is designed to be implemented in synergy with other Union funding programmes. With which EU programme(s) could synergies be strengthened?

- [ ] European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- [ ] European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)
- [ ] European Social Fund Plus (ESF)+
- [x] European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- [ ] EU4Health
- [x] Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)
- [x] Digital Europe Programme (DEP)
- [ ] Single Market Programme
- [ ] LIFE - Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)
- [ ] Erasmus +
- [ ] Union Space Programme
- [ ] Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)
- [ ] Internal Security Fund (ISF)
- [ ] Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI)
- [ ] InvestEU
- [ ] Innovation Fund under the Emission Trading Scheme
- [ ] Just Transition Mechanism
- [ ] Euratom Research and Training Programme
- [ ] European Defence Fund
- [ ] Creative Europe Programme
- [ ] Recovery and Resilience Facility
- [ ]

I don't know

Please elaborate.

Synergies have already been maximized and even, in some cases, overstressed. The problem of such overemphasis in synergies is a relative loss of ambition and long-term vision in R&D clusters, looking excessively for short term implementation of results and industrial applications. As a public funded research programme, Horizon Europe and future framework programmes should try to recover such long-term perspective.
Furthermore, it has to be recognised that low TRL R&D and fundamental research are one prerequisite for “innovation” and leadership in science and technology. It is therefore essential to adequately fund this type of research which by nature is more long term.

EU Missions, European Partnerships and horizontal issues

What added value do you think that EU Missions can bring to European, national, regional and local programmes and initiatives?

It is difficult to provide a general statement on Missions, as their added value very much depend on the topic addressed. ECTRI is closer to the Mission for 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030, and it seems like it is a good topic in the wrong place: there is very limited scope for R&D here and this is more a mission on accelerating climate-friendly public policies in cities. Furthermore, it is difficult to see the added EU value beyond the provision of some funding, which could have been provided by national or local governments in many cases. The EU should make an effort to differentiate clearly between scientific missions and policy missions, and be more cautious at the time of selecting them and setting them up in the right funding scheme.

The Strategic Plan 2021–2024 identified a number of co-funded and co-programmed European Partnerships in various areas to reinforce the impact of Horizon Europe. In the period 2025-2027, and apart from other Horizon Europe initiatives (other partnerships, Missions, clusters etc.), is there any other area where a partnership approach could deliver more impacts?

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) I do not know

Please specify the area(s) where more impacts could be reached through a partnership approach.

Accountability, monitoring and evaluation of outcomes should be much improved and publicly discussed before deciding to expand the ever growing number of partnerships, or even maintain all the existing ones. Caution should be taken that the partnerships are not increasingly concentrating EU public funds in a handful of private (mainly industry) stakeholders.
However, one area where a partnership would make sense is for people’s reskilling and upskilling for the digital economy and industry 5.0, including artificial intelligence for smart multimodal transport.

The Strategic Plan 2021-2024 identified specific issues to be considered in the implementation of Horizon Europe. Should any of these cross-cutting themes be further elaborated for the Strategic Plan 2025-2027?

	Not a priority	Low priority	Medium priority	High priority	Essential	I do not know / No opinion
Gender equality and inclusiveness	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Social Sciences and Humanities	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Ethics and integrity	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Open science practices	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Dissemination and Exploitation (D&E), including links to education and training, market uptake and deployment	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Key Enabling Technologies	○	○	○	◉	○	○
Social innovations	○	○	○	○	◉	○
International cooperation	○	○	○	◉	○	○
EU taxonomy	○	○	○	◉	○	○

In addition to what has been addressed in the Strategic Plan 2021-2024, do you see any other cross-cutting themes that should be integrated in the Strategic Plan 2025-2027?

Circularity (i.e., Circular economy principles) across all domains, including transport and mobility

Business models for sustainable development (including integrated land use-energy-transport-…)

Energy and mobility poverty

Horizon Europe strategic planning process

The Strategic Plan 2021-2024 is organised around four Key Strategic Orientations (KSO) linked with the EU policy priorities. How easy is it to understand these KSOs?

	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Very easy	I do not know / No opinion
Promoting an open strategic autonomy by leading the development of key digital, enabling and emerging technologies, sectors and value chains	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Restoring Europe's ecosystems and biodiversity, and sustainably managed natural resources	○	○	○	○	◉	○
Making Europe the first digitally enabled circular, climate-neutral and sustainable economy	○	○	◉	○	○	○
Creating a more resilient, inclusive and democratic European society	○	○	○	◉	○	○

Please elaborate.

The KSOs are clear for researchers. However, a simplified elaboration (using key facts and indicators) would be useful for dissemination purposes addressing policymakers. This would help decision makers across different Member States to reach a common understanding of the rationale behind those KSOs.

Whereas there is nothing wrong (on the contrary) about the concepts of circularity, climate neutrality and

sustainability, the third KSO “Making Europe the first digitally enabled circular, climate-neutral and sustainable economy” is mixing together too many things and should probably be reformulated: it is like a fossil of the never materialized jargon of the Lisbon strategy. There is also a need to better understand (and separate if necessary) what public R&D policies can reasonably deliver and the drivers of economy growth and competitiveness. There is certainly some potential contribution of the former to the latter, but the need to support R&D should not be politically justified solely on the grounds of delivering short-term results in the form of economic growth. There is a need for long-term thinking.

The Strategic Plan 2021-2024 is structured into:

- 4 four key strategic orientations
- 15 impact areas
- 32 cluster specific expected impacts (each translated into a destination in the work programme)

In your opinion, how easy is it to understand this structure?

- [ ] Very difficult
- [ ] Difficult
- [x] Neutral
- [x] Easy
- [ ] Very easy
- [ ] I do not know / No opinion

How could the structure be improved (if needed)?

Our reply would be "easy", however it would not open "how could the structure be improved" reply box, hence why ticking "neutral" as well.

No need for changes by now. The structure is too much result-oriented (with “destinations” at the end of the pyramid) and leaving too little room for exploratory, long-term focused research. But changing the structure now would be confusing for the research community. Let’s rather consider the possibility of establishing a more balanced structure between the short and the long term in the next framework programme.

SECTION E. KEY LESSONS AND MESSAGES FOR THE FUTURE

What are your key lessons from the past and present European Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and the messages you would like to pass on for the future of the programme?

On the intervention modes and types of action

1500 character(s) maximum

Consider establishing conditions in some types of action that facilitates the involvement of newcomers to avoid the increasing concentration of R&D funds in a reduced number of big players. One related issue could be considering research costs as an evaluation criterion of proposals, in order to get more value for

money. Also, R&D funds should not be used to fund deployment and implementation as there are dedicated funds for this.

More Research and Innovation actions for enabling integrated cross-modal (multimodal) transport and energy for both passengers and freight modes (cluster 5), engaging the research community, industry and other public and private stakeholders.

On the identification of funding priorities

1500 character(s) maximum

Consider leaving more room and resources to disruptive research, reducing the current prevalence of short-term industrial-dominated research. This can be done through stronger assessment of research project's results and recommendations and wider mobilisation of the research community during the preparation of the working programmes.

Funding priorities should consider the results of the evaluation of the previous WP, and be based on the existing gaps and maximum expected impacts (social, environmental, health-related, etc.).

Furthermore, funding priorities for the next WP should address "People" (an example from mobility: all individuals in the mobility system) and "Business" (all economic actors working within a sector/domain) as an integrated challenge.
An example from mobility: co-implement actions for sustainable mobility (to address people's needs in terms of mobility/accessibility) while enabling economic activities (e.g., transport related) to be viable through new business models with public and private partnerships.

On the implementation of the programme/projects and procedures

1500 character(s) maximum

Consider establishing stronger and more transparent assessment procedures of the results of projects and programmes, and better dissemination of such assessments to stimulate public debate. As important as it is to advertise success stories, there should also be a sound discussion around failures, while failures should be allowed being an essential part of research.

The implementation of the programme/projects could benefit if the Marie Skłodowska- Curie Actions (MSCA) fellowships and staff exchange can be associated to the RIA implementation (and create an intertwined funding of human resources). This would require to create specific rules/incentives in both programmes (e.g. HEU and MSCA).

Administrative simplifications are welcomed, but should be discussed with the R&D community, to make sure that these are real simplifications and not shifts of the complexity within the process as this could lead to new burdens for participation in projects.

Other

1500 character(s) maximum

• Objectives addressed in the Missions are very hard to achieve, even if research and innovation results are excellent and provide solutions with potentially high impact, because the results are still too easy to be ignored by politics. Many researchers are highly frustrated and demotivated, especially in the area of Climate, Energy and Mobility because long-standing scientific findings and recommendations are taken up

far too little and too late. We do not necessarily need more R&I solutions, but a commitment of the policy level to base their decision making on scientific facts and apply the solutions and concepts that have been developed, especially those which do not only focus on technology development but societal transformation and sufficiency.

• Not just since the pandemic the trust in science is decreasing in the general public, making it even harder to advocate for fact-driven decision making. Researchers would benefit greatly if the Commission publicly endorsed them and represented confidence in their strong scientific community, which in turn would strengthen the position of science in the context of national political interests.

If you wish to upload a position paper concerning the ex-post evaluation of Horizon 2020, the mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe and/or the 2025 - 2027 Strategic Plan, you can do so here. Maximum file size is 1 MB.

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

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