

# The Framework Programme that Europe Needs

Europe and the world are confronted with major challenges. Fundamental solutions and transitions are needed in the field of health, food, sustainable energy and the circular economy. Research and innovation are indispensable for finding these answers. European co-operation in Research and Innovation (R&I) Framework Programmes (FPs) is one of the great successes of the European project and an area where the EU budget has the most European added value.<sup>1</sup> This has to be accordingly translated in EU budget priorities.

The current FP, Horizon 2020, is a unique programme worldwide, widely appreciated and with an ambitious agenda. Examples of its clear European added value include the European Research Council's role in fostering Europe-wide competition,<sup>2</sup> the support of research infrastructures as a fundamental part of the European research system, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, fostering mobility for the benefits of researchers' careers in a smooth way, and the support of collaborative research to solve societal challenges that cannot be addressed purely with national efforts.

Ahead of the conference 'Research & Innovation – shaping our future' on 3 July, Science Europe reiterates key messages from its Position Statement 'The Framework Programme that Europe Needs' (<http://scieur.org/h2020-position>).

To maintain world-class scientific excellence, Europe needs a Framework Programme that:

## ► Is focussed on excellence

Excellence must be the primary selection criterion across the whole FP, on which no compromises can be made, and as the best guarantee for impact. Excellent frontier- and curiosity-driven research and innovation, promotion of internationally outstanding talents, and access to world-class research infrastructures must remain cornerstones of EU funding in the future.

## ► Demonstrates a clear added value

EU actions should play a role that cannot be played at national level, but also be designed to allow good interplay with national research and innovation systems, as well as structural funds. The FPs must not and cannot relieve national research and funding systems of their responsibility to fund vital research and innovation ecosystems as the core of the European Research Area. However, the FP should help avoid, rather than cause, negative effects such as 'brain-drain'. To have an impact, appropriate initiatives and schemes need to be adequately funded and have better synergies with European Structural and Investment Funds.

## ► Has a sufficient long-term budget to realise its ambitions

It is essential to guarantee a grant-based budget dedicated to science in the FPs. Knowledge is Europe's most valuable strategic resource. Long-term investment must be recognised as the key to achieve the EU's research and innovation strategic policy targets. This should be reflected in the next and future Multi-annual Financial Frameworks.

## ► Links excellent research with innovation

A strong research base is a crucial asset for innovation. The support for non-market-oriented research should not be confined to the 'Excellent Science' pillar alone, but should be present throughout all parts of the FP, also allowing more room for bottom-up, collaborative research.

## ► Uses a science-driven definition of 'impact' that is broader than just economic impact

The FP should fully and equally embrace the contributions that science makes to the environment, to public health, to societal well-being, and to culture.

## ► Integrates Open Science

Horizon 2020 and future FPs must support the researcher-driven utilisation of the digital opportunities in science. Open Access and data re-use increase the circulation of knowledge, spark innovation and foster collaboration on a global scale. The Open Access policy in Horizon 2020 is a success and should be continued.

## ► Is driven by a strategic approach to international co-operation

Current and future FPs should have a strategic vision and structure to support Europe's role as a major R&I player in a highly competitive global environment, and use this as an opportunity to diffuse European values.

## ► Is clear, simple, and transparent in its implementation

Science Europe welcomes the simplification measures introduced in Horizon 2020. The Commission should continue to strive for further simplification and avoid adding new instruments or funding models – such as output-based funding – without proper justification.

**Science Europe welcomes the resolution of the European Parliament on Horizon 2020 interim evaluation and the preparation of the next FP,<sup>3</sup> and is willing to continue the dialogue with European institutions, European Research Area stakeholders, and high-level expert groups<sup>4</sup> in defining a common vision for the next FP.**

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1. As demonstrated for example by the 'High Level Group on Own Resources' chaired by Mario Monti, in its report 'Future Financing of the EU, Final report and recommendations of the High Level Group on Own Resources', December 2016. The report also states: "The two examples above, research and internal and external security, concern two areas where the merit of action at the EU level is already established, or is justified in economic, political and social terms. However, this does not necessarily translate into EU spending priorities, in particular in current times of rarefied public resources which are squeezed in an ever growing dilemma of having to finance more with less".
2. Please also see the Science Europe press release 'In Support of the European Research Council Scientific Council Statement "Building on a European Success Story to Further Empower European Researchers"', 17 May 2017: <http://scieur.org/pr-erc-statement>
3. European Parliament resolution of 13 June 2017 on the assessment of Horizon 2020 implementation in view of its interim evaluation and the Framework Programme 9 proposal: <http://bit.ly/2slVEWj>
4. Such as the 'High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU Research and Innovation Programmes' or the 'Research, Innovation and Science Policy Experts' (RISE) group.

Science Europe is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels representing major Research Funding and Research Performing Organisations across Europe.

More information on its mission and activities is provided at [www.scienceeurope.org](http://www.scienceeurope.org).

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