The Future of European Research

G6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU FUTURE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The **G6 of science**, comprising six major European research organisations, welcomes the Commission's proposal for the FP10 legislative package[1] and preserving Horizon Europe as a stand-alone programme. The G6 appreciates the relevance given to research and innovation (R&I), which has become a central element in the European Union's agenda.

"Europe will always Choose Science"[2,3] - such was the promise made by President Von der Leyen at the high-level summit organised by STOA and the G6 in June 2025. In this spirit, the G6 aims to support the Programme in reaching its full potential by contributing the following recommendations:

- The initial **budget** of 175 billion EUR is a step in the right direction, yet if the Union really ambitions to achieve its political priorities and foster its strategic competitiveness, the Programme would require at least **200 billion EUR** as recommended in the Draghi report. Additionally, while the G6 understands the need for a more agile and flexible budget, Europe must not risk losing long-term competitiveness for the sake of immediate or short-term priorities. R&I need a **stable and predictable budget**.

- **Excellence** must remain the central criterion in EU R&I funding across all pillars. Only a merit-based approach can guarantee that resources are allocated to the projects with the greatest potential for scientific breakthroughs and disruptive innovation as well as for societal benefits and sustainable economic growth.

- The **governance** of the Programme needs to be kept in the R&I domain. The G6 appreciates the policy-oriented approach of the windows, embedded in the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), but the governance of the collaborative R&I activities of Pillar 2 should be independent of the one of the ECF. Moreover, R&I stakeholders need to be involved in the strategic programming from early stages onwards.

- Support to **collaborative research** and innovation in Pillar 2 should be provided in a balanced way throughout the whole innovation chain, without neglecting low-TRL projects. Furthermore, the definition of the calls and topics needs to be less prescriptive, including bottom-up calls, ensuring adequate support to fundamental research, and allowing for different approaches to solve current issues. Similarly, the G6 recognises the value of the European Innovation Council (EIC) as a bridge between fundamental science and innovation. A strong focus on open calls within the EIC should be maintained and further strengthened.

1 https://commission.europa.eu/publications/horizon-europe_en
2 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_25_1416
3 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/stoa/en/events/details/shaping-europe-s-future-research-and-inn/20250515WKS06341

- Europe needs to attract the best **talent** and be able to keep it. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), the European Research Council (ERC) and the Research and Technology Infrastructures are fundamental instruments to allow the Union to be a strong magnet for the best minds. In particular, the independence of the ERC has largely contributed to its success and worldwide recognition, and thus must be preserved.

- Despite current geopolitical challenges, **international cooperation** remains at the core of R&I, and is indispensable for strengthening European competitiveness and tackling global challenges. The swift association of key partners to the Programme is essential for Horizon Europe to keep thriving. Moreover, the participation of third countries not associated to the programme should also be encouraged, while safeguarding the Union's strategic sovereignty and autonomy.

- Research and innovation capabilities must be enhanced throughout the EU in order to foster **cohesive excellence**, unlocking the full potential of all Member States and creating new synergies for the benefit of the ERA as a whole. This requires concerted efforts at the European, national, and subnational levels and a focus on strengthening local ecosystems that can deliver research at the frontier of science and innovation.

The G6 calls for a strong, excellence-based Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, which will allow the best talent and ideas to thrive, thus contributing to making the Union more competitive, preserving its strategic autonomy and security while safeguarding its values and principles. As the G6 has already expressed, our organisations are willing to collaborate with the Union Institutions in the negotiations to make this vision a reality.

The G6 network unites six large multidisciplinary Research Performing Organisations located in Europe, the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), the Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft Deutscher Forschungszentren (Helmholtz Association), the Leibniz-Gemeinschaft (Leibniz Association) and the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (MPG).

Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

cnrs

CSIC
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

HELMHOLTZ

Leibniz Association

MAX PLANCK GESELLSCHAFT