

Specific programme implementing Horizon Europe framework programme for research and innovation 2021–2027

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The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Christian EHLER (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows.

Specific actions: the Specific Programme's actions shall be used to reinforce, widen and extend the excellence of the Union's scientific and technological base, tackle major global challenges, increase the Union's industrial leadership, improve quality of life in the Union as well as boost investment, address market failures or sub-optimal investment situations, leveraging additional funding rather than crowding out private financing.

The Specific Programme shall be implemented in a **transparent, participatory and strategic way** seeking involvement of stakeholders and civil society. Stakeholder representation and civil society involvement shall be balanced representing various backgrounds

Specific objectives: the Specific Programme shall have, *inter alia*, the following operational objectives:

- strengthening and widening Europe's scientific and technological base, reinforcing and spreading excellence;
- connecting, developing and facilitating wide access, including virtually, to research infrastructures across the European Research Area;
- attracting, training and retaining EU and international researchers and innovators;
- reinforcing the link between research, innovation, education, and other policies, including the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement;
- driving EU industrial transformation to unlock the potential of Europe's strategic sectors, such as Key Enabling Technologies;

Main pillars: the Horizon 2020 programme shall have three main pillars:

- **Pillar I: Excellent and Open Science** (includes grants to top-level individual researchers, and investments in future technologies and training for researchers);
- **Pillar II: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness** (includes investments in biotechnology and space technologies, access to risk finance and support for innovative small firms);
- **Pillar III: Innovative Europe** (includes the European Innovation Council (EIC), spreading excellence and widening participation and reforming and enhancing the European R&I system).

Budget: the proposed financial envelope for the implementation of the Specific Programme for the period 2021 to 2027 shall be **EUR 120 billion** in 2018 prices (compared to EUR 94.1 billion as proposed by the Commission).

Enhanced support for SMEs: special attention will be put into supporting SMEs across Pillar II in collaborative parts and via a dedicated mono-beneficiary, grant-based SME Instrument. All clusters shall dedicate an appropriate amount to the SME instrument, which will be fully bottom up, with continuously open calls and a number cut-off dates, dedicated exclusively to incremental innovation. Only SMEs will be allowed to apply for funding, including via collaborations or subcontracting. Projects must have a clear European dimension and contribute to EU added value.

Gender aspects shall also be appropriately integrated throughout the Programme and specific gender research should be also required to support the implementation and design of better EU gender equality policies.