

Cover note

Joint amendments to the FP10 legal texts

Dated 1 December 2025

Purpose of this note

This cover note introduces the joint amendments prepared by our associations representing research and innovation organisations in relation to the European Commission's proposal for the 10th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10). It provides a concise overview of our shared objectives and highlights the key issues addressed by the amendments. The detailed amendments for the legal text and their rationales are contained in the attached table.

To frame our amendments in their broader context, we recall that the planned increase of the Horizon Europe budget to €175 billion is welcome, though it must be regarded as the minimum required to achieve Europe's ambitions. Additionally, we stress that the proposed European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) regulation is not suitable in its current form and requires substantial revision.

Why we joined forces

We, the undersigned representatives of European research and innovation organisations, are united by a simple, urgent call: enable Europe to move at the speed and scale that the moment demands. The decisions taken in the coming period must show that Europe is markedly stepping up its capacity to lead in cutting-edge research and innovation, in order to accelerate advanced technological and societal development underpinned by the latest scientific breakthroughs. This should be translated into real-world impact for boosting autonomy, competitiveness, prosperity, security, and societal resilience in Europe.

Focus of our amendments

The amendments reflect a shared understanding of FP10's role as the EU's central programme for scientific excellence and early-stage innovation, while ensuring complementarity with other

instruments, notably the ECF. They aim to reinforce clarity, coherence and effectiveness, enabling FP10 to continue delivering maximum European added value.

The amendments focus on the following areas:

- Define clear and autonomous programme objectives, aligning FP10 with its legal basis in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and ensuring it encompasses excellence in research and innovation, talent development, societal impact, sustainability and long-term competitiveness.
- Reinforce what has already made the European Research Council (ERC) and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) successful: their investigator-driven and excellence-focused nature.
- Ensure complementarity with other EU instruments, particularly the ECF, ensuring FP10 reinforces core elements of its identity, mission and governance that have been developed over decades, and are integral to today's highly successful programme. The ECF must build upon and complement the success factors of the recent framework programmes. This implies focusing on what Europe needs to further deploy the most promising innovations developed on the basis of the knowledge created through FP10.
- Reinforce the elements that enable FP10 to attract leading talent and generate the most promising ideas for Europe's long-term competitiveness and prosperity, including by removing from the FP10 legal text the ECF rules that are not suited to funding research. Doing so will ensure that collaborative research linked to the themes of the policy windows focuses on scientifically relevant areas.
- Strengthen definitions and horizontal principles, including updated horizontal principles of research and innovation actions, research and technology infrastructures, open access, open science, valorisation, dissemination, and social innovation; reinforced interdisciplinarity; systematic integration of the social sciences, arts and humanities; and reintroduced principles such as gender equality, international cooperation and co-creation.
- Balance support across the research and innovation continuum, with a strong emphasis on early and intermediate stages, safeguarding FP10's excellence-driven profile and ensuring complementarity with close-to-market and deployment activities, such as those funded through the ECF.
- Establish robust, expert-led governance, including strengthened autonomy of the ERC Scientific Council and EIC Board, the introduction of a dedicated Pillar II board, transparent mechanism for the selection of European Partnerships, and open communication between advisory structures without hierarchy.
- Simplify procedures, and strengthen flexibility and legal clarity, particularly on the appropriate use of funding forms (including lump sum funding, reimbursement of actual costs, simplified cost options), clear and predictable eligibility rules, transparent project termination procedures, and the reinstatement of the current Seal of Excellence.

- Promote openness, excellence-based participation and predictable association, including an open and transparent approach to third-country participation with explicit pathways for association of the UK and Switzerland.
- Implement fair and proportionate widening measures, ensuring that participation instruments remain targeted, effective and supportive of long-term capacity building, while allowing justified flexibility in investment-related conditionality for widening measures.
- Support research and innovation in critical technologies with civil or dual-use potential, ensuring FP10 remains clearly distinct from defence-specific applications. Support for defence-oriented activities can be channelled through other instruments such as the ECF and the successor to the European Defence Fund.

Our offer to European policymakers

We stand ready to support the co-legislators by explaining our proposals in detail and by providing further input as negotiations progress. FP10 is a unique opportunity to reinforce Europe's scientific leadership and innovation potential, underpinned by the talent that makes it possible. The attached amendments are intended to help ensure that the final legal texts enable the programme to meet the needs of the R&I community and to maximise its contribution to Europe's resilience, long-term competitiveness and prosperity.

Signatories

CESAER - <https://www.cesaer.org/>

Coimbra Group - <https://www.coimbra-group.eu/>

EUA - <https://www.eua.eu/>

EU-LIFE - <https://eu-life.eu/>

The Guild - <https://www.the-guild.eu/>

LERU - <https://www.leru.org/>

YERUN - <https://yerun.eu/>

List of supporting organisations:

ALLEA - <https://allea.org/>

Aurora Universities Network* - <https://aurora-universities.eu/>

ECIU - <https://www.eciu.eu/>

ISE - <https://initiative-se.eu/>



MCAA - <https://www.mariecuriealumni.eu/>

UNICA - <https://www.unica-network.eu/>

Young Academy of Europe - <https://yacadeuro.org/>