

Greek Preliminary Position Paper On the 10th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

Introduction

The forthcoming Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10) must meet the challenges of the times, meaning a Programme well-structured and adequately funded¹ to reinforce Europe's scientific and technological leadership, enhance its global competitiveness, and secure strategic autonomy.

Furthermore, the next Framework Programme should uphold excellence, ensure a balanced distribution of funding, enhance administrative simplification, and foster strategic international cooperation to maximize impact.

Guiding Principles for FP10

The following principles should underpin the structure and implementation of FP10:

- **Excellence** as the core principle – Ensuring a highly competitive and merit-based selection process for funding.
- Ring-fencing of Research and Innovation Funds – safeguarding FP10 resources exclusively for R&I activities through open, competitive calls.
- **Balanced support for fundamental and applied research** – maintaining an appropriate mix between curiosity-driven research

¹ Recent reports (Letta, Draghi, Heitor) underscore the insufficiency of current investment levels.

and targeted innovation, particularly in deep-tech and breakthrough technologies.

- **Streamlined and efficient funding mechanisms** – reducing administrative complexity to improve accessibility and efficiency.
- **Strategic international collaboration** – strengthening partnerships with like-minded global actors while safeguarding European interests.
- **Expansion of FP scope** – Facilitating dual-use research to bolster resilience, infrastructure protection, and public security.

Key Recommendations

➤ Strengthening Budgetary Allocation and Synergies

- Ensuring an increased and stable budget – to maintain Europe’s leadership in research and innovation.
- Optimizing synergies with EU funding mechanisms – enhancing coordination with Cohesion Policy Funds and the Seal of Excellence (SoE) initiative.
- Ensuring clarity in the allocation of R&I funding – avoiding diversion of research funding to non-R&I activities.

➤ Fostering a Balanced Research and Innovation Ecosystem

- Diversification of funding instruments – supporting a wide range of Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) and interdisciplinary research.
- Reinforcement of ERC and MSCA schemes – strengthening support for frontier research, researcher mobility, and world-class infrastructures.
- Enhancing the translation of research into innovation – establishing more effective pathways for transforming fundamental research into high-impact innovations.

➤ Reducing Disparities in Research and Innovation Participation

- Continued commitment to Widening Participation initiatives – Addressing disparities in research capacity across Member States.
- Improving proposal success rates – Implementing a strategy of fewer calls, higher funding per call, to enhance impact.
- Balanced mix of small- and large-scale projects – Ensuring accessibility for newcomers while maintaining large-scale, high-impact initiatives.

➤ Reinforcing International Cooperation

- Fostering strategic partnerships – Engaging with third countries that share EU values and a common research agenda. PRIMA is a good practice model.
- Enhancing research security measures – Addressing geopolitical challenges while fostering global research cooperation.

➤ Structuring FP10: Instruments and Partnerships

- Retaining the Pillar and Cluster model of Horizon Europe – ensuring continuity with necessary refinements.
- Strengthening collaborative research projects – enhancing synergies among academia, research organizations, and industry.
- Rationalizing R&I Partnerships and streamlining governance and common procedures and forms.
- Separating EU Missions from FP10 Governance – Aligning with the Heitor report to ensure a distinct management structure for EU Missions.
- Enhancing the Role of the European Innovation Council (EIC) – Simplifying access to funding, particularly for early-career innovators and newcomers.

- Bolstering ERC Funding – Expanding the number of grants while maintaining excellence and ideas as selection criteria.
- Reinforcing Research Infrastructures – Ensuring their long-term sustainability and enhancing Transnational Access (TNA), especially for widening countries².

Conclusion

FP10 must be ambitious, well-resourced, and strategically structured to maximize its impact, while upholding the principles of excellence, inclusivity and efficiency. Greece supports a simplified, results-driven and strategically coherent European research and innovation framework to bolster Europe's global leadership in science and technology.

² European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI). (2024). ESFRI Position Paper on Framework Programme 10. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14359070>