Council of the European Union

Brussels, 5 November 2025
(OR. en)

14587/25

Interinstitutional Files:
2025/0543 (COD)
2025/0544 (CNS)

LIMITE

RECH 471
COMPET 1075
IND 461
MI 834
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CADREFIN 275
CODEC 1655

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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	12007/25; 12005/25
No. Cion doc.:	11765/1/25 REV 1; 11749/25
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing Horizon Europe, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, for the period 2028-2034 laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2021/695 Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe - the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for the period 2028-2034, laying down the rules for participation and dissemination under that Programme, and repealing Decision (EU) 2021/764 - Second Presidency compromise text on the Competitiveness and Society Pillar including European Partnerships

Delegations will find attached a second Presidency compromise text on Block III (Competitiveness and Society Pillar including European Partnerships): Framework Programme (Art. 11 and 15) and Specific Programme (Art. 5 and 11)

Changes in comparison to the Commission proposals (document 12007/25 and 12005/25) are marked in ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions and in **bold underline** for additions. Text in ***bold italics*** corresponds to topics which require further discussion

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ANNEX

PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ESTABLISHING HORIZON EUROPE, THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, FOR THE PERIOD 2028-2034 LAYING DOWN ITS RULES FOR PARTICIPATION AND DISSEMINATION, AND REPEALING REGULATION (EU) 2021/695

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Article 11

European Partnerships

1. Where necessary to achieve the objectives set out in Article 3, activities under this Regulation may be implemented through European Partnerships, ~~by default~~ **in particular** through the work programmes. **A strategic and coherent portfolio of a limited number of European Partnerships shall be ensured.**

2. European Partnerships shall be based on a Memorandum of Understanding, **or a contractual arrangement,** agreed and signed between the partners, stipulating:

   (-a) the objectives to be achieved;

   (a) the results to be delivered, which shall be clear, measurable, time-bound;

   (b) **a single set of** reporting requirements;

   (c) the related **financial and/or in-kind** commitments from all partners;

   (d) governance arrangements with a **standard** mechanism for **all** partners to discuss and agree on the partnerships' programming and activities.

3. ~~In duly justified cases~~ **Where appropriate for achieving their objectives,** European Partnerships will be implemented by entrusting budget implementation tasks from **one or** various Union funding programmes to bodies established pursuant to Articles 185 and 187 TFEU, in accordance with Article 62(1), point (c), of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. **Joint Undertakings shall be established through a single establishing act ensuring harmonised rules.**

3a. European Partnerships shall be based on a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) agreed between the partners, detailing the thematic priorities and desired scientific and socio-economic results, as well as a roadmap of planned activities during the duration of the programme.

4. For European Partnerships established pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, support from the Programme shall be conditional upon efficient use of Union financing, **and a commensurate funding from both the Union and other partners proportional to the ambitions from the partnership** ~~a proportionate financial contribution from other partners at least matching the Union contribution~~ and voting rights for the Union **and other partners** in the governing bodies ~~ensuring protection of the interests of the Union in the partnership. For that purpose, Joint Undertakings shall be established through a single establishing act ensuring harmonised rules~~.

5. European Partnerships shall:

(-a) be identified and selected in close cooperation with Member States.

~~(a) be established only in cases where Union action alone or other forms of support under the Programme cannot achieve the desired objectives.~~

(b) be established for the purpose of addressing challenges that require a critical mass of resources and a unified and coordinated approach, both in terms of programming and implementation, across actors.

(ba) be established only in cases where Union action alone or other forms of support under the Programme cannot achieve the desired objectives.

(c) align with **Union strategic priorities** and assist in the implementation of major Union policies and policy initiatives.

(d) be selected in a **transparent, open and** competitive ~~manner~~ **process** based on a set of quantifiable lifecycle criteria and a strong portfolio approach, resulting in a coherent **and complementary** set of initiatives.

(e) be based on ex ante, long-term and formal commitments from all partners to contribute financially **or where appropriate in-kind** to the resources of the European Partnership~~, which shall be centrally managed, except in duly justified cases~~.

(f) require a clear lifecycle approach, including an upfront plan for the implementation of the initiative with a strategy for gradually or fully phasing out from Union funding.

(fa) be aligned with other Union funding instruments, in order to avoid overlaps and duplications and instead ensure added value and maximise impact.

6. Contributions from Partners other than the Union shall take the following forms:

(a) financial contributions to the operational budget of the initiative;

(b) **in-kind contributions through** co-financing by the Partners of their own participation, or that of their members, in projects funded through the initiative.

7. All Partners other than the Union shall ~~provide~~ **make public** information on the structure, membership and activities developed within the partnership. In cases where partnerships are concluded with representative organisations and associations, this shall include regular information on their membership.

Recitals

(9) It should be possible to implement parts of the budget through European Partnerships together with ~~other public~~ **private** and**/or** ~~private~~ **public** ~~entities~~ **partners**, where this is the most effective implementation form to achieve the policy objectives. European Partnerships should be established where a close involvement of the Union is required and should ensure appropriate voting rights for the Union **and other partners** as well as sufficient co-investment by other partners to leverage Union funding. In view of fostering synergies and efficiencies, it is necessary to ensure harmonised rules. Therefore, a strategic**,** ~~and~~ coherent **and complementary** portfolio of a limited number of European Partnerships should be established **in close cooperation with Member States**.

(10) **[**The European Partnerships, including in the form of Joint Undertakings, as an essential tool to deliver on industrial involvement and investment in collaborative research and innovation, should contribute to the specific policy objectives of the policy windows of the European Competitiveness Fund, and be supported through it, where necessary, to complete these objectives.**]**

(34) **[**Where Union support under the Programme is to be provided in the form of a budgetary guarantee or a financial instrument, including where combined with non-repayable support in a blending operation, with the exception of financial instruments under the EIC, such support should be provided exclusively through the ECF InvestEU Instrument in accordance with the applicable rules of the ECF InvestEU Instrument.**]**

Chapter III

Competitiveness and Society

Article 15

Collaborative research and innovation

1. Collaborative research **and innovation** shall support the creation of **excellent** transnational research and innovation **activities and** cooperation networks, bringing together entities ~~of~~ **across** different **sectors and** disciplines, **including SSH,** to support the **discovery, the** development and swift diffusion of high-quality results in favour of the Union's **strategic priorities.** ~~industrial competitiveness, space, security, clean transition, preparedness and resilience, and addressing societal challenges, including culture and creativity, and to strengthen the impact of research in developing and supporting Union policies.~~

2. **Collaborative research and innovation** ~~A~~**a**ctivities shall be carried out in a balanced manner between lower and higher Technology Readiness Levels, thereby covering ~~the whole~~ **all parts of the research and innovation** value chain **complementary to other activities under the ECF**.

3. **Under the 'competitiveness' component of pillar II, t**~~T~~**his** Programme shall ~~include~~ **support** the collaborative research and innovation activities in a specific dedicated part of the work programmes adopted under Chapters IV to VII of the Regulation (EU) XXX European Competitiveness Fund. Those work programmes shall be adopted in accordance with Article 15 of the Regulation (EU) XXX [European Competitiveness Fund Regulation].

4. **Under the 'society' component of pillar II, t**~~T~~his Programme shall support **collaborative research and innovation** activities**:**

(a) to tackle global societal challenges **and socio-economic transformations** in the areas of strengthening **aligned with the EU values.** democratic values and tackling disinformation, including rule of law and fundamental rights; promoting socio-economic transformations that contribute to inclusion and growth, addressing demographic and intergenerational challenges, including from a youth perspective and including migration management and integration of migrants.

~~5.~~(b) ~~The Programme shall contribute~~ to support EU Missions notably through the identification of priority actions for R&I funding for the development of new knowledge, technologies, services, and products in view of their goals. Funding for the EU Missions established under Article 8 of the Regulation (EU) 2021/695 shall be awarded on the basis of work programmes covering up to the budgetary year 2030.

~~6.~~(c) ~~The Programme shall~~ to support the R&I component of the New European Bauhaus Facility.

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Recitals

(11) EU Missions as set up in the Regulation 2021/695 should enable a transformative and systemic impact for society, by fostering cross-disciplinary, cross-sectoral, cross-policy and cross-border collaboration. They should rely on research and innovation to develop the breakthrough technologies, services, products, and social innovations needed to achieve their ambitious objectives. In turn, EU Missions should accelerate the development, scaling, and deployment of innovative solutions and help create lead markets for new products and services. The Framework Programme should finance the research and innovation activities of the Missions, while the deployment and scaling up should be delivered through other EU programmes and national funding.

(12) Anchored in the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2025-2027[1], the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Facility is a multi-annual funding tool designed to accelerate the transformation of neighbourhoods through sustainable and inclusive design. Its R&I component should be funded by Horizon Europe while its roll-out component should be delivered through other EU programmes and national funding.

[1] Commission Decision C(2024)1741 of 20.03.2024.

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION ON ESTABLISHING THE SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE - THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR THE PERIOD 2028-2034, LAYING DOWN THE RULES FOR PARTICIPATION AND DISSEMINATION UNDER THAT PROGRAMME, AND REPEALING DECISION (EU) 2021/764

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Article 5

European Partnerships

1. European Partnerships shall follow a clear lifecycle approach, including their **identification in close cooperation with Member States,** selection, implementation and monitoring, and transitioning out of Regulation XXX [*reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation*] on the basis of the following:

   (a) European Partnerships shall be selected following a competitive, open, non-discriminatory, and transparent procedure~~, on the basis of areas proposed by the Commission~~. In addition the requirements set out in Article 11 of Regulation (EU) Regulation XXX [*reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation*], candidate partnerships shall comply with the following selection criteria:

      i. portfolio relevance: overall consistency and coherence of the partnership portfolio shall be ensured, provided that candidates meet all selection criteria and demonstrate relevance as part of a strategic**, coherent and complementary** portfolio of actions;

      ii. critical mass: the partnerships' budget (Union and partners' contributions) shall match their duration, ensuring sufficient resources to fund at least one substantial call per year~~, each comparable in size to an average Horizon Europe call in the relevant thematic area~~;

      iii. partners' composition: unless duly justified, the participation of public entities from at least ~~five~~ **10** Member States and**, where appropriate,** private entities representing substantial segments of their respective ecosystems is required, ensuring a broad and balanced involvement of key stakeholders;

iv. pan-European relevance: partnerships shall have pan-European relevance, reflected in a balanced geographic distribution of partners among Member States;

v. mission-orient**ed**~~ation~~ **approach**: partnerships shall formulate clear, measurable, time-bound objectives within the**ir** duration ~~of Horizon Europe~~ that will inform monitoring, assessment, and evaluation exercises;

vi. **implementation** ~~business~~ plan: partners shall develop a**n implementation** ~~business~~ plan ex-ante, including a set of key performance indicators to track progress**, dissemination and valorisation activities** and a forward-looking transition strategy, including actions for phasing out from Horizon Europe funding;

via. data strategy: a data strategy shall include stipulations to the use of data created during the partnership and ensure availability of data at least 10 years after its end, in line with the FAIR data principles;

vii. openness and transparency: partnerships shall demonstrate openness and transparency regarding the identification of priorities and objectives – including expected results and impacts – and the engagement of partners and stakeholders across the entire value chain and from diverse sectors, backgrounds, and disciplines, including relevant international ones **with due regard to** ~~without affecting~~ **economic and research security** ~~European competitiveness~~;

viia. SME and scale-up integration: where relevant, partnerships shall formulate clear strategies to promote the inclusion of SMEs and scale-ups in the innovation cycle, taking into account their specific needs and challenges;

viii. legacy: in cases where candidate partnerships build on predecessor initiatives, the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of previous partnerships shall be demonstrated;

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~~ix.~~ **(aa)** ~~t~~**T**hroughout their implementation, European Partnerships shall ensure:

x. ~~internal~~ transparent governance arrangements and ~~internal~~ rules, **based on common guidelines,** including codes of conduct, that ensure their functioning in an open and transparent manner;

xi. continuous openness of the initiative through clear and transparent accession and exit criteria, including through open calls to potential new partner organisations**;**

xii. flexibility through timely revisions of key documents such as the Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (SRIAs) and transition strategies, adapted as necessary to ensure relevance and feasibility;

xiii. continuous monitoring**,** ~~shall~~ includ**ing**~~e~~ tracking progress towards a set of partnership-specific common indicators**, such as** ~~including~~ partner contributions, cost efficiency, and openness to new partners. Partnership-specific common indicators shall build on the common indicators as defined under Regulation XXX [*reference to Performance Regulation*] and ~~set out in~~ **on** the biennial monitoring reports on the performance of European partnerships under Horizon Europe 2021-2027;

xiiia. detailed information on the evaluation process and results from all calls for proposals within European Partnerships, to be made available to Union bodies and to Member States in a timely manner.

xiv. European Partnerships shall launch their final calls before 31 December 2034. European Partnerships shall determine and implement the best mode of transition. Taking into account the transition strategies prepared ex-ante, partnerships shall undergo an independent assessment determining whether their objectives have been met, the suitability of the partnership approach, and their continued relevance for the Union's policy priorities. This assessment should include a recommendation for the most effective policy intervention mode for any future actions.

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(~~b~~**xivb**) In the absence of renewal, European Partnerships shall implement appropriate measures based on their phasing-out actions identified in their transition strategies.

(ab) In case of non-compliance with the above requirements, the Commission may reduce, suspend, or terminate Union funding, or take other appropriate measures. Member States shall be informed in due time of such measures.

Chapter III

Competitiveness and Society

Article 11

Collaborative research and innovation

Collaborative research **and innovation** activities referred to in **Title I** Chapter I**II** of Regulation XXX [*reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation*] shall cover, in particular, the following research and innovation activities:

(a) under 'Competitiveness', research and innovation activities of the policy windows described in Chapters IV to VII of the European Competitiveness Fund**, in accordance with the rules of Regulation XXX [*reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation*]**:

(b) under 'Society', research and innovation activities, such as:

(i) activities aimed at accomplishing priorities for ~~global~~ societal challenges **and transformations**:

– ***strengthening democratic values and foundations, ~~civic engagement,~~ the rule of law and fundamental rights, by fostering civic engagement, resilient, pluralistic societies, and upholding the integrity of the information and media space and countering foreign interference, polarisation, disinformation, hate speech, discrimination, and xenophobia, and supporting peace and security in a rapidly evolving world of geopolitical shifts;***

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– ***promoting social inclusion, social and economic transformations, inclusive societies, fair and just working conditions and social cohesion and tackling inequalities to create opportunities for all, taking into consideration rural areas' specificities, addressing demographic change and intergenerational fairness, including well-managed migration and mobility, supporting ~~mental~~ health and ~~societal~~ well-being for all~~,~~ ~~including for young people~~;***

- ***strengthening the knowledge base needed to support actionable solutions for driving the global transition towards a climate neutral and climate resilient society; fostering activities to combat biodiversity loss and degradation and the increasing frequency of natural disasters and extreme weather events;***

- ***safeguarding the Union's cultural heritage and exploring the potential of cultural and creative sectors for sustainable development;***

– ***fostering a value-based and competitive Europe by advancing future-ready skills, and driving inclusive innovation that empowers people, facilitates societal acceptance of technologies and digital transitions, promotes trust in science and participatory research to foster societal relevance and acceptance, and supports sustainable growth that benefits all.***

(ii) EU Missions: activities supporting EU Missions referred to in Article 15(5) of Regulation XXX [reference to the Horizon Europe Regulation].

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(iii) activities in the context of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) Facility, established with the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2025-2027[2], shall deliver on the objectives of the New European Bauhaus, in particular supporting activities to foster the development and scaling up of innovative research solutions for the transformation of neighbourhoods into sustainable, inclusive and beautiful places.

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[2] Commission Implementing Decision C(2024)1741 of 20 March 2024 on adopting the 2025-2027 strategic research and innovation plan under the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.