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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Danish EU Presidency Horizon Europe negotiation process: General provisions & Pillar III - PowerPoint presentation

Delegations will find attached a PowerPoint presentation on the above-mentioned subject made by the Presidency at the Research Working Party Meeting held on 3 November 2025.

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Danish EU Presidency

Horizon Europe negotiation process: General provisions & Pillar III

Agenda today

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- Horizon: General provisions – 2nd Presidency text
  - Starting with an exchange based on the PCY reflection note on seals
  - Overview of main changes made by PCY
  - Go-through of combined parts/articles of the general provisions

Lunch break

- Horizon: Continuation of general provisions part

- Horizon: Pillar III Innovation – 2nd Presidency text
  - EIC block: short overview of main changes made by PCY
  - EIC block: Key points in view of interface with ECF and DARPA/Defence

  - Innovation ecosystems block: short overview of main changes made by PCY

Reflection note on seals – your opinion sought

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1. In which parts of the Horizon Europe programme would it make sense to use a seal to ensure other funding opportunities?
2. Should there be a difference in scope of the Competitiveness Seal under Horizon in comparison to the ECF?
3. What is the impact of the replacement of the 'established' Seal of Excellence with the Competitiveness Seal in Horizon Europe in the different parts of the programme in view of branding, stakeholders and funding bodies?
4. Is it possible to have the two seals targeting distinct parts of the Horizon Europe programme in a complementary manner, taking into account the different objectives and scopes, including the interface with the ECF?

ECF proposal definition of Competitiveness Seal

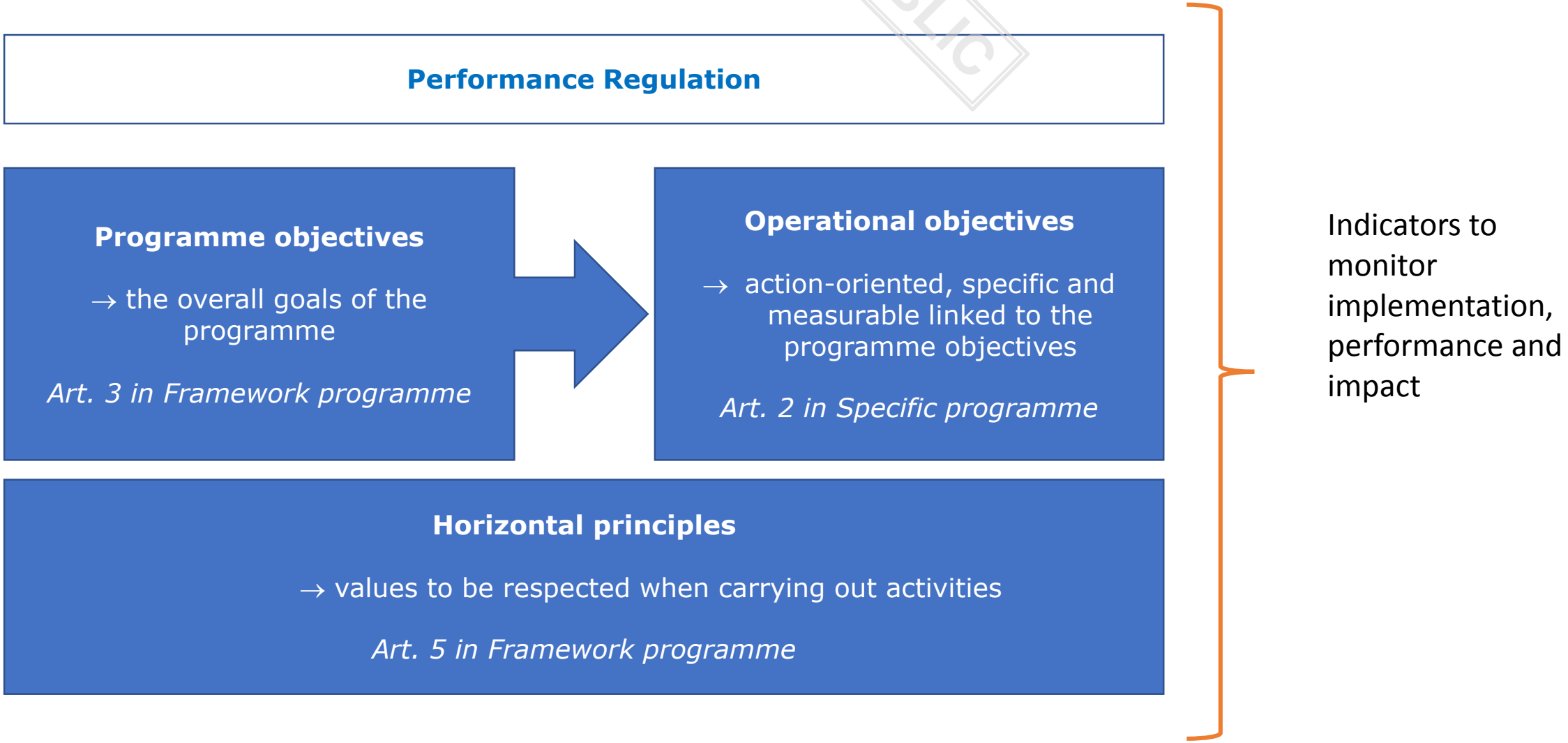
'Competitiveness Seal' means a quality label awarded to a proposal submitted to a call for proposals that meets all the quality requirements set out in the award procedure but might receive support from other Union or national funding sources.

Horizon Europe proposal Art 8.3 and 8.4

- …in addition to the conditions set out in Article 8(1) and (2) of ***the ECF,*** a Competitiveness Seal shall be awarded only to high-quality actions that have not been financed under the Programme due to budgetary constraints.
- The Member States may finance actions to which a Competitiveness Seal was awarded.

PCY understanding of objectives and principles

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Overview of changes made or not - stabilising

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- References to value chain building from Horizon to ECF have been inserted in FP Art. 5 as a horizontal principle
- Recital 1 is reusing the ERA text from the Treaty → to be kept as such
- Recital 2a added for a better description of what Horizon shall do
- FP Art. 2 definitions: remains a living document → only define terms used and not defined elsewhere
- FP Art. 3(1) text turned around to start from the Horizon programme and then link to ECF
- FP Art. 4 consensus on structure – pending pillar 2
- FP Art. 5(b) to streamline with other text the descriptive part is moved to new recital 4a
- Recital 18 reduced to simple reference to ERA PACT, not listing only some values and principles
- To note, human embryos stem cells to be handled under RfP Art. 21 (question of joint declaration)

Some ‘easy’ points/questions

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- FP Art. 9: reporting requirements to the Commission introduced – your opinion ?
- To note, recital 8 better linked to Art. 10
- To note, recital 23 better linked to ECF PWs under pillar 2
- FP Art. 10.2/Recital 32: COM to clarify relevance of non financial donations for Horizon
- SP Art 18.6: COM to clarify inclusion of international organisations as observers and confirm third countries observers should be associated countries

Still open discussions: points of focus for today

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- *FP Art. 4 → to note, structure to be discussed in related parts*
- FP Art. 8: *In particular Today's discussion on seals*
- FP Art. 10: lump sums and unit costs discussion → COM paper
  - Simplification agenda – is more needed?
  - Unit costs seems to be core of problem
  - MoU partnerships will need actual costs to allow matching funds
- FP Art. 10 + SP Art. 4: Evaluation and redress, is it enough? → COM paper
  - Reference to evaluation review procedure (redress) added in SP Art. 4
- Art. 18: strength of MS involvement needs further attention

General provisions: Trying to stabilise text

Framework programme

- Art 1 [duration, 1.2 and 1.3] (subject matter)
  - Recitals 1,2,5,7 – new 2a
- Art 2 (definitions) – living part of document
- Art 3 (programme objectives)
  - [Recital 3]
- Art 4 [1st sentence] (programme structure)
- Art 5 (horizontal principles)
  - Recital 4,18 – new 4a
- Art 6 [bracketed] (budget)
  - Recital 31
- Art 7 (additional resources)
- Art 8 (alternative, combined, cumulative funding)
- Art 9 (third countries association)
  - Recital 21
- Art 10 [10.3 bracketed] (implementation, forms of Union funding)
  - Recital 26, 30, 32, 33, 35
- Art 35 (repeal) – Recital 38
- Art 36 (transitional provisions)
- Art 37 (entry into force and application)

Other recitals: 8, 23, 24, 25, 36, 37

Specific Programme

- Art 1 [1.2 bracketed] (subject matter)
  - Recital 1
- Art 2 (operational objectives)
  - Recital 2
- Art 3 [bracketed] (budget)
  - Recital 4
- Art 4 [4.3 bracketed] (work programmes)
  - Recital 5
- Art 18 (committee procedure)
  - Recital 6
- Art 19 (repeal)
  - Recital 7
- Art 20 (transitional provisions)
- Art 21 (entry into force and application)

Other recitals: 8

Main blocks of today: 1st Block; 2nd block; 3rd block; 4rd block; 5th block; 6th block + remaining

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Lunch break



Innovation: Articles and recitals

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Framework programme

- Art 16 (European Innovation Council)
- Art 34 (European Innovation Council specific rules)
  - Recitals 15, 16 – new recital 15a

- Art 17 (Innovation ecosystems)
  - Recital 29

Specific Programme

- Art 12 (The European Innovation Council Board)

- Art 13 (Innovation ecosystems)

EIC: Overview of changes and remaining questions

The European Innovation Council (EIC)

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- FP Art. 16(3) description of ARPA like tasks for programme managers added to clarify what is meant. Input stemming from EIC Board
    - Recital 15 sentence on ARPA like included
- FP Art. 34(1) impendence of external experts emphasised
- FP Art. 34(2) midcaps only exceptionally to be supported by accelerator
- FP Art. 34(3) accelerator actions to be submitted by one or more entities in support of one recipient → COM to clarify if ever used
- FP Art. 34(5) certified national and regional programmes and bodies for Plug-in and Fast-track
    - New recital 15a on certification for national and regional programmes and bodies for plug-in – should it cover fast-track also?
- FP Art. 34(11a) new paragraph on de-investments returning to EIC Fund for R&I only
- SP Art. 12 Consensus on terms of office of President (4+renewable) and Board as well as necessary support

– The Board shall remain independent and communicate to the PC via the EC and is only in charge of the EIC portfolio of projects. Note, alignment of emerging technology trends with forthcoming observatory of emerging technologies

- Request for pre-accelerator grants is heard – COM states text on accelerator grants can cover it
- *Boarder line between EIC and ECF instruments still to be further discussed (Art 16 and 34 in FP) – see next slide*
- *DARPA/Defence needs further discussion – Art 16.5 and Recital 15 – see next slide*

EIC: Links to ECF to be clarified

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- Is it enough of a differentiation to say that EIC focuses on high-risk deep-tech and disruptive innovation? To note, all types of innovation to be supported under the ECF
- How to guarantee/support that EIC funded companies can transit to ECF support, i.e. ensuring the pipelines in view of scaling up, etc.?
- How to ensure funding possibilities offered under the EIC to protect some innovative companies at higher TRL levels described now in Horizon are ensured by ECF or shall they be kept in EIC?
- Articles of concern:
  - Art 16(2) the connection to the ECF scaleup facility and the Scaleup Europe Fund is now added specifically
  - Recital 16 meaning spelled out, incl. clarified link to Scaleup Europe Fund – interface to ECF
  - Art 16(2.c) blended finance and investment only – where is the boundary to InvestEU support?
  - Art 16(2.e) Business Accelerator Service versus ECF in view of Project Advisory versus EU for Business Network (versus support under Innovation Ecosystems)
  - Art 34(7) investment in bankable entities not supported by ECF (for now at least)
  - Art 34(10) follow-up investments

EIC: DARPA-like approach (Defence applications)

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- FP Art. 16(5) + part in recital 15 now in ***bold italics.***

- Art. 16(5) funding of defence applications. The PCY sees three possible solutions:
  1. Go with EC proposal, i.e. use of EIC and Horizon funding
  2. Feed the EIC DARPA-like approach by funds from the ECF defence part
  3. Add the DARPA-like approach under the ECF defence part

- Recital 15 contains reference to DARPA like approach in the EIC and shall be adopted according to final decision made.

Innovation ecosystems: Overview of changes and remaining questions

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Innovation ecosystems

- FP Art. 17(1) synergies to other parts of programme have been added to ensure the innovation ecosystems have an integrating role. Note these ecosystems go beyond R&I.
- FP Art. 17(2) and SP Art. 13.b remains instrument open until decision on EIT has been taken, and therefore University Alliances has not be added. Classical definition of knowledge triangle kept – entrepreneurship embedded.
- Recital 29 fostering valorisation and uptake added.
- SP Art. 13.a researchers included in list, valorisation is covered already.
- SP Art. 13.c the link to the innovation ecosystems and hubs specified – providing a more combined approach for this subcomponent. To note, the link to the ECF and EIC with regards to supporting innovative SMEs, startups and scaleups is to be kept an eye on.
- SP Art 13.d remains very generic.

“If we knew what we were doing, it wouldn’t be called Research.”

quote by Albert Einstein

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