



Horizon 2020 is a totally new type of research programme for the EU that has been designed to deliver results that make a difference to people's lives. Built on three pillars – **Excellent Science**, **Industrial Leadership** and **Societal Challenges** - it will fund all types of activities, from frontier science to close-to-market innovation.

After the Parliament's vote, the programme needs to be formally adopted by the EU Member States too, in the coming weeks. The programme is due to start on 1 January, 2014.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn,
Commissioner for Research,
Innovation and Science:

"This is a vote of confidence in the power of EU research and innovation funding. It paves the way for more investment in knowledge and competitiveness in Europe. The European Parliament's support for and input to Horizon 2020 has been very important."

EU Insight - Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 adopted by the European Parliament with implications for the ERC

The European Parliament approved Horizon 2020, the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for 2014 to 2020. With a budget of €70.2 billion, Horizon 2020 will be a key component of Europe's strategy to create economic growth and to reinforce its global competitiveness. The budget jump in real terms over the current Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013) is nearly 30%. In the light of the EU annual budget for 2014 which is down 6% when compared to this year's budget, the increase in funding secured for research and innovation is particularly remarkable.

The amendments to the framework programme included by the European Parliament (EP) address the improved support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), the goal of attracting more people into science and the importance of non-fossil energy research.

The Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) made it a target that at least 11% of the Horizon 2020 budget should go to SMEs. Moreover, there will be a specialized SMEs department, with its own budget, to ensure that the programme's calls for tenders are SME-friendly.

To further EU climate goals, MEPs have earmarked 85% of the Horizon 2020 energy budget (around €5.4 billion) for non-fossil fuel energy research.

In order to attract new people into research, Horizon 2020 will include measures to widen the group of researchers participating in the programme and to attract young students to take up careers in science.

Key elements of Horizon 2020 are:

- Increased funding for the European Research Council (ERC), already one of the world's premier frontier-research funding agencies.
- Increased funding for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), funding research fellowships, and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
- Innovative public-private partnerships in areas such as new medicines, greener aircraft technologies and electronics.
- Investment in Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) such as photonics, nanotechnologies and biotechnology.



Prof. Helga Nowotny, ERC President:

"[...] I interpret this as a vote of confidence for the ERC.

This substantial budget increase over the coming seven years will allow the ERC to continue its mission – finding and funding the very best researchers with the most creative ideas – with renewed vigour."

- A challenge-based approach to key issues facing societies, such as healthcare, sustainable agriculture, smarter and greener transport, and climate change.
- A renewed focus on widening participation in less well-performing EU countries, including better synergies with European Structural and Investment Funds.
- A dedicated SME Instrument, and a "Fast Track to Innovation" pilot scheme to speed up the time from idea to market, and to increase the participation of industry, SMEs and first time applicants in Horizon 2020.
- A programme for "Science for and with society", in order to engage European society, increase the attractiveness of science careers and address gender imbalance in the field.

ERC, supporting excellent researchers

The European Research Council (ERC) will receive over €13 billion, around 17% of the total budget. This represents an approximate 75% increase of the ERC budget compared to the previous seven-year programme. The ERC will be part of the first pillar of Horizon 2020, which is 'Excellent Science'.

The summary of the main features of the ERC in 2014 as presented in the [Draft Work Programme](#) which is made public before its final adoption¹:

Three ERC frontier research grants will be available under Work Programme 2014: Starting, Consolidator (both on 11 December 2013) and Advanced Grants (17 June 2014).

The two streams of what was previously known as the ERC Starting Grant were divided into two separate calls under Work Programme 2013.

The Scientific Council will analyse the pilot phase of the ERC Synergy Grant (calls were made under Work Programmes 2012 and 2013) before deciding on the scope and timing of future calls. There will be no call under Work Programme 2014.

Important extensions to the restrictions on applications will apply from the 2015 calls based on the outcome of the evaluation of the 2014 calls – see restrictions on submission of proposals under "[Eligibility criteria](#)".

ERC Principal Investigators will also continue to be able to apply for the Proof of Concept Grant, first introduced under the revised Work Programme 2011.

Sources:

[1] [EP press release on the EU budget 2014](#)[2] [Draft Work Programme of the ERC](#)

[3] [ERC press release regarding the European Parliament vote on Horizon 2020](#)

[4] [EP press release on the adoption of Horizon 2020](#)

[5] [EC press release on the approval of Horizon 2020 by EP](#)

[6] [Commissioner's speech on the launch of Horizon 2020 in Madrid](#)

[7] [EC press release on MSCA and EIT](#)