



**Resolution by the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly on Europe's big Horizon – open for the best researchers, as adopted on 30 October 2025**

(C/2026/1112)

THE EURONEST PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY,

- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 <sup>(1)</sup> (the Horizon Europe Regulation),
- having regard to Council Decision (EU) 2021/764 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, and repealing Decision 2013/743/EU <sup>(2)</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/819 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology <sup>(3)</sup>,
- having regard to the report by the Commission Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon Europe of 16 October 2024 entitled 'Align, Act, Accelerate: Research, Technology and Innovation to boost European Competitiveness',
- having regard to the Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027 analysis,
- having regard to the joint staff working document of 2 July 2021 entitled 'Recovery, resilience and reform: post 2020 Eastern Partnership priorities' (SWD(2021)0186),
- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2025 on the assessment of the implementation of Horizon Europe in view of its interim evaluation and recommendations for the 10th Research Framework Programme <sup>(4)</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 22 October 2024 entitled 'Implementation of the European Research Area (ERA) – Strengthening Europe's Research and Innovation: The ERA's Journey and Future Directions' (COM(2024)0490),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 18 May 2021 on the Global Approach to Research and Innovation Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world (COM(2021)0252),
- having regard to its resolution of 6 April 2022 on a global approach to research and innovation: Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world <sup>(5)</sup>,
- having regard to the European Research and Innovation Area Committee Opinion of 26 June 2024 entitled 'Guidance for the next Framework Programme for Research & Innovation',
- having regard to the Draghi report of 9 September 2024 entitled 'The future of European competitiveness',
- having regard to the ongoing call for proposals under the 'Choose Europe for Science' programme,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/695/oj>.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 1671, 12.5.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/764/oj>.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 61, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/819/oj>.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ C, C/2025/3147, 20.6.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/3147/oj>.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ C 434, 15.11.2022, p. 23.

- A. whereas the EU and Eastern Partnership countries share an interest in promoting mobility and access to research facilities for researchers in mutually important fields;
  - B. whereas Horizon Europe, the largest European research and innovation (R&I) funding programme to date, with a budget of EUR 93,5 billion for 2021–2027, has the potential to catalyse significant public and private investments in support of high-quality research and innovation initiatives, with significant societal and economic benefits;
  - C. whereas investing in people and knowledge societies and aiming for 70 000 individual mobility opportunities for students and staff, researchers, young people and youth workers is one of the Eastern Partnership's stated top ten targets for 2025;
  - D. whereas the EU launched the 'Choose Europe for Science' programme in 2025 to make the EU the world's most attractive destination for researchers and innovators, offering them attractive careers while also boosting the European Research Area;
  - E. whereas both the EU and Eastern Partnership countries need to be better equipped to respond to crises and developments through foresight and preparation, making use of new R&I policies and initiatives that play a crucial role in addressing current and future challenges, offering sustainable solutions, and driving economic growth, competitiveness and transformative changes;
  - F. whereas the EU still lags behind the United States, Japan and China in terms of research and development expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), and such expenditure is significantly lower in Eastern Partnership countries; whereas addressing this gap is crucial to ensure European technological leadership;
  - G. whereas the EU and its Member States declared the objective of reaching 3 % of GDP for investment in research and development by 2030, supporting a competitive, skills- and knowledge-driven European economy;
  - H. whereas the EU is struggling to match other major economies in terms of exports and job creation in knowledge-intensive services;
  - I. whereas both technological output (as measured, for example, by patents) and the production of high-quality research publications continue to be highly concentrated in a limited number of regions, and regional disparities in technological innovation have been increasing;
  - J. whereas the EU has set the policy objective of strengthening excellence and the technological base by increasing to 700 the number of instances of partner country participation in Horizon Europe and EU4Innovation;
  - K. whereas the confluence of multiple crises has resulted in more uncertainties and prompted urgent reflection on the EU's strategic autonomy and resilience, alongside a review of the EU's strategic alliances, technological and resource dependencies and international cooperation;
  - L. whereas the Russian Federation sharply increased expenditure on propaganda in its budget for 2026, creating challenges for Europe as a whole, without exception;
  - M. whereas the Horizon Europe Regulation states that in order to guarantee scientific excellence, and in line with Article 13 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the framework programme should promote respect for academic freedom in all of the countries benefiting from its funds;
- 1. Underlines the importance of exploiting the full potential of cooperation and mobility in the area of research, innovation and mobility between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries, including through intra-regional exchanges, appropriate funding and improved access to EU programmes, EU programme participation, and structured partnerships aimed at boosting strategic innovation, competitiveness and societal impact;
  - 2. Remains convinced that cooperation and mobility in the area of science, research and education brings substantial added value and constitutes a win-win outcome for society and Europe's overall competitiveness, delivering measurable benefits for European societies, economies and global leadership in innovation;

3. Recalls the substantial gains from investment in research and innovation, as for every euro that it costs EU society, Horizon Europe is expected to generate up to EUR 6 to the benefit of EU citizens, and up to EUR 11 in GDP gains by 2045, according to the Commission's evaluation;
4. Highlights the challenge of disparities and the widening gap in research and innovation performance both within the EU and in the Eastern Partnership region and acknowledges initial positive signs with regard to addressing this divide within the EU; underlines the potential of Horizon Europe and other forms of cooperation to play a role in boosting the research and innovation potential of the Eastern Partnership countries, especially when exploiting synergies with the Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership to reduce innovation gaps and enhance strategic autonomy across the EU and partner countries; stresses that innovation policy must take into account the social dimension, ensuring decent work, equal opportunities and social sustainability during the transition to new economic models;
5. Stresses the crucial role of science and research in addressing the specific societal challenges emerging in our shared European space, including climate change and the energy transition, harnessing artificial intelligence, addressing digital transformation and tackling Russian disinformation and other malign foreign interference; calls for urgent and effective action to prevent the spread of disinformation by the Russian government and to combat hybrid attacks against critical infrastructure and democratic institutions;
6. Stresses the key role of science and research in preventing and combating human trafficking, domestic violence and violence against women through the use of new technologies and artificial intelligence;
7. Stresses the need to include the social reintegration of war-affected persons, in particular veterans, persons with disabilities and internally displaced persons, in research and educational programmes implemented within the Eastern Partnership;
8. Notes that countries on the path to EU accession should align with the research and innovation ecosystem of the EU and the European Research Area by frontloading their preparations and related reforms; points out that this in turn would facilitate earlier, gradual integration into EU programmes and the single market; calls, in this context, for targeted programmes to facilitate timely preparations in this field;
9. Welcomes the role of the national contact points and calls for further innovative efforts to facilitate participation of partners from the Eastern Partnership region in Horizon Europe; underlines the need to address the challenge of brain drain and transform it into a strategic opportunity for EU innovation leadership and regional knowledge cohesion; calls for increased participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in joint educational and scientific programmes, ensuring adherence to the principles of gender equality and inclusion;
10. Welcomes the creation of the Eastern Partnership University Cluster that aims to develop inter-university cooperation in education, science and research under the umbrella of the 4EU+ European University Alliance; notes that this model could be replicated to integrate other universities in similar cooperation arrangements, especially universities from countries with Horizon association agreements;
11. Encourages eligible Eastern Partnership entities to benefit from the recently launched Choose Europe for Science initiative, as it represents a complementary opportunity to increase the attractiveness of European research careers by offering excellent and predictable working conditions, and to turn the challenge of brain drain in the research and innovation sector into brain gain, in line with strategic EU innovation and competitiveness priorities;
12. Considers that several major events and crises are affecting researchers in the Eastern Partnership region and putting them at risk; welcomes the efforts being made by the European Commission, Member States, academic networks and civil society to address these researchers' situation; concludes, however, that under the current programme, the EU does not have sufficient funding available to support researchers at risk and that efforts by some Member States and civil society remain fragmented;
13. Draws attention to the social consequences of war and conflict in the Eastern Partnership region, which are affecting employment, population well-being and worker mobility, and supports the development of targeted programmes to increase social resilience in the region;

14. Reiterates Parliament's position that the forthcoming 10th EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10) should include a newly established European fellowship programme for researchers at risk, incorporating the lessons learned from the ongoing preparatory work; stresses that this should also target the Eastern Partnership region, including Belarus;
  15. Recommends strengthening cooperation between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries in the field of social policy and inclusion through the exchange of experience, participation in joint research on social processes and the implementation of programmes to enhance social cohesion;
  16. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the President of the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Commissioner for Enlargement, the European External Action Service, and the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States and the Eastern Partnership countries.
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