

EUROTECH UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCE AISBL

Square de Meeûs 23

1000 Brussels

Tel. +32 2 771 7353

www.eurotech-universities.eu

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Suggestion to increase transparency in relation to the Horizon Europe budget

Dear Commissioner Gabriel,

Dear Director-General Paquet,

We welcome the European Commission proposal for a budget increase in Horizon Europe in 2023. This is a clear recognition of the importance of research and innovation in solving societal issues in the EU and globally. More and more institutions such as universities, RTO's, SME's, start-ups and large corporations collaborate across the EU and beyond through the means of Horizon Europe.

The Horizon Europe Programme, as the EU's key research and innovation funding programme, is a proven success, facilitating collaboration and strengthening the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges. All this is thanks to the EU Commission's and the Member States' commitment, the availability of budget and a combination of bottom-up and top-down calls for proposals and a genuinely transparent framework.

However, in the last years, we begin to see an increasingly less transparent process when it comes to the allocation of the Horizon Europe budget. In Regulation 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the European Council on Establishing Horizon Europe framework, different benchmarks have been agreed upon, e.g., regarding how much money should go to the Missions, digital priorities, climate change endeavors and different kind of partnerships.

At the same time, we have seen that Horizon Europe is progressively becoming a financial source for other Commission-led priorities outside of the programme. This covers the European Chips Act, the Health and Emergency Response Agency and lately the Hydrogen Valley initiative under the REPowerEU Plan. Together, these three initiatives will be financed through Horizon Europe with a budget of close to EUR 1bn. This redirection of funds from Horizon Europe to other EU Commission's initiatives gives uncertainty to researchers and innovators across EU member states with regard to the availability of funds. In addition, budget allocations are becoming an increasingly complex matter, which makes it difficult to understand how much money is actually available for research.

We, as an Alliance of leading science and technology universities and our partners from the other first-class universities from around Europe, urge you to increase the transparency of budget allocation and implementation and openly to inform stakeholders on how much of the Horizon Europe funds have been allocated and granted to non-Horizon Europe priorities in

order to understand how much budget remains available within Horizon Europe funds for researchers' applications.

We would advocate adding an additional set of indicators to the Horizon Europe Dashboard, which can help to assess in real-time, how much of the Horizon Europe budget has already been committed to which initiative and how much has been paid. This would also provide visibility as to the commitments targeting the original Horizon Europe objectives or objectives outside of the programme.

EuroTech Universities Alliance will be pleased to support the European Commission in developing the above-mentioned set of indicators.

With kind regards,



Tatiana Panteli
Head of Brussels Office

