



Council of the European Union

**PRESS**  
**EN**

**BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>**  
Brussels, 27 September 2020

## **COMPETITIVENESS COUNCIL**

### **Brussels, 29 September 2020**

The Council will focus on research and innovation issues. The session will be chaired by Ms Anja Karliczek, German federal minister of education and research.

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The meeting will start at 10:00 and will be concluded by lunchtime (+/- 13:30). Ministers will be invited to adopt general approaches on the Horizon Europe regulation and on the decision on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe.

Over lunch, ministers will exchange views on how future missions can help overcome the current COVID-19 pandemic and advance research on the utilisation of green hydrogen, as well as on how research and innovation can contribute to strengthening Europe's resilience and technological sovereignty.

**Online press briefing:** Monday 28 September 2020 at 15:30

#### **Online press conference:**

Tuesday 29 September at +/- 15.15

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[Competitiveness Council meeting page](#)

[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

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<sup>1</sup> This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

## Regulation establishing Horizon Europe

On the basis of a presidency proposal, ministers will be invited to adopt a general approach on the proposed regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing Horizon Europe, the EU framework programme for research and innovation for the years 2021 to 2027, including the outstanding issues that were not covered by the common understanding reached with the European Parliament on 27 March 2019.

The main outstanding issues covered by the proposed text are :

- additional funding from the EU recovery instrument entitled Next Generation EU (NGEU) to Horizon Europe (presented after the conclusion of the common understanding);
- the internal break-down of Horizon Europe's budget;
- international cooperation and the association of third countries;
- technical provisions allowing synergies with other EU funding programmes, and
- provisions subject to the horizontal guidance drawn up as a result of the European Council's conclusions.

If the Council adopts the envisaged general approach, it will be able to conclude negotiations with the European Parliament allowing for an early second reading agreement on the proposed regulation. Horizon Europe could then start on time in 2021.

### Background

The proposed Horizon Europe regulation, tabled by the Commission in June 2018, is the EU framework programme for research and innovation laying down the objectives, the budget, the forms of EU funding and the rules for providing such EU funding in the field of research and innovation for the years 2021–2027.

On 27 March 2019, the Council reached with the European Parliament a common understanding on most parts of the proposed regulation. Pending an overall agreement on the next EU multiannual financial framework, the common understanding did not cover provisions with budgetary implications, nor provisions on international cooperation and association of third countries or on synergies with other EU funding programmes.

On 17 April 2019, the European Parliament adopted its position at first reading.

On 29 November 2019, the Council adopted a partial general approach on recitals as well as on the provisions of Annex IV of the draft regulation dealing with synergies with other EU funding programmes.

On 4 June 2020, the European Commission presented an amended proposal of the Horizon Europe regulation to allow additional funding from the NGEU to flow to Horizon Europe.

Following the agreement reached on 21 July 2020 by the heads of state or government on the **recovery plan for Europe**, which combines the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the years 2021-2027 and the funds to be made available through the NGEU, the Council is now ready to adopt its position, including on issues that remain outstanding.

Based on the agreement by the heads of state or government on the MFF, Horizon Europe's budget will amount to EUR 85.5 billion (current prices).

[Presidency Note to the Council](#)

[EU agreement on future research and innovation programme \(press release of 27 March 2019\)](#)

[Council policy page on a recovery plan for Europe](#)

## **Decision on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe**

On the basis of a Presidency proposal, ministers will be invited to adopt a general approach on the draft Council decision on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe, including the outstanding issues that were not covered by the partial general approach adopted by the Council on 15 April 2019.

These issues are almost exclusively of a financial nature and are subject to a prior agreement on the budgetary provisions of the Horizon Europe regulation. The two legal acts will therefore be dealt with as a package.

### **Background**

The proposed decision on the specific programme, tabled by the Commission in June 2018 as part of the Horizon Europe package, sets out the operational objectives and types of activities envisaged for implementing Horizon Europe, the EU's framework programme for research and innovation for the years 2021 to 2027.

On 27 March 2019, the Council reached with the European Parliament a common understanding on the Horizon Europe package, including on the majority of the provisions of the proposed decision. Pending an overall agreement on the next EU multiannual financial framework, the common understanding did not cover provisions with budgetary implications, nor the disputed legal basis.

On 15 April 2019 the Council adopted a partial general approach on the proposed decision.

On 17 April 2019, the European Parliament adopted its position at first reading based on the legal basis proposed by the Commission.

On 4 June 2020, the European Commission presented an amended proposal of the decision on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe to allow additional funding from the European Union recovery instrument entitled Next Generation EU (NGEU) to flow to Horizon Europe.

Following the agreement reached on 21 July 2020 by the heads of state or government on the recovery plan for Europe, which combines the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for the years 2021-2027 and the funds to be made available through the NGEU, the Council is now ready to adopt its position, including on issues that remain outstanding.

[Presidency Note to the Council](#)

[EU future research programme : Council defines key objectives \(press release of 15 April 2019\)](#)

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