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**HORIZON EUROPE**

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# **Widening Participation & Strengthening the European Research Area (WIDERA)**



**Info Day Horizon Europe,  
Croatia**

**28 October, 2021**

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# Topics

## 1. Introduction

## 2. Lessons learned under Horizon 2020 Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

## 3. Horizon Europe: What's new?



# 1. Introduction

- **EU-13 countries have participated in FPs since 1998**
- **There are different patterns in participation, but the difference is more nuanced than EU 13 *versus* EU 15**
- **No single indicator to describe the patterns of FP participation of widening and non widening countries**
- **A combination of factors to explain the underperformance of certain countries**
- **Measures and instruments to bridge the research and innovation gap in Europe exist at national and European levels**

***Source: STOA study, 2018***

## 2. Lessons learned - Horizon 2020, Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

- **Disparities in research and innovation performance: barrier to competitiveness, growth and jobs across Europe**
- **Some countries experience low participation in the EU Framework Programmes because of:**
  - **insufficient national R&D investments**
  - **lack of synergies between national research systems and the EU research landscape**
  - **system learning effects**
  - **reduced access to international networks**
  - **lack of information, communication and training**

## 2. Best practices - Horizon 2020, Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation

### *Some examples:*

- **Facilitated scientific meetings**
- **Industry - research collaboration model**
- **Fostering interdisciplinary projects**
- **Advanced partners offering doctoral candidate positions**
- **Creation of new PhD study programs in universities from widening countries**
- **Increased visibility and scientific reputation of the coordinating institution**
- **Increased exchanges and collaboration of international scientists in widening research institutions**

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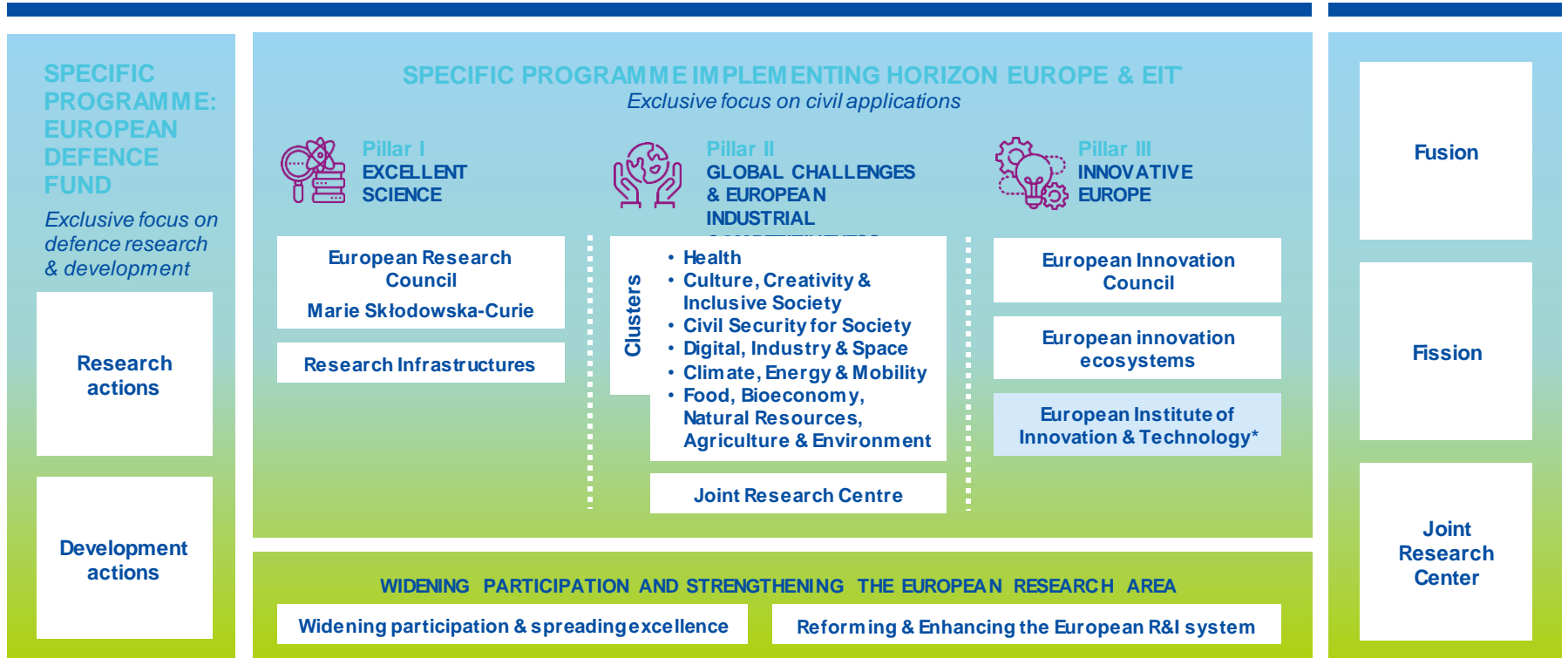
# 3. Horizon Europe - WIDERA, Widening Participation and Strengthening ERA

- **Objectives of WIDENING: Reduce RI gap in Europe**
  - **Support research and innovation activities**
  - **Encourage structural reforms**
  - **Build the necessary R&I capacity**
  - **Expand transnational collaboration**



# HORIZON EUROPE

# EURATOM



\* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

# Widening Participation & Strengthening the European Research Area:

Optimising strengths & potential for a more innovative Europe

## Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence

- Teaming
- Twinning
- ERA Chairs
- COST
- Support to NCPs
- Brain circulation
- Excellence initiatives:
  - a. Excellence initiatives
  - b. European Excellence Initiative for HEIs
- Hop-on

## Reforming and enhancing the European R&I system

- Scientific evidence & foresight
- Open Science
- Policy Support Facility
- Attractive researcher careers
- Citizen science, Responsible Research & Innovation
- Gender equality



# Widening Participation & Strengthening the European Research Area (ERA):

## Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence

- Teaming, Twinning, ERA Chairs,
- European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST)
- Boosting National Contact Points' (NCPs) activities, pre-proposal checks and advice
- Brain circulation
- Excellence initiatives:
- Possibility for entities from widening countries to join already selected collaborative R&I actions
- Recognition of participation
- Matchmaking services

€2.96 billion

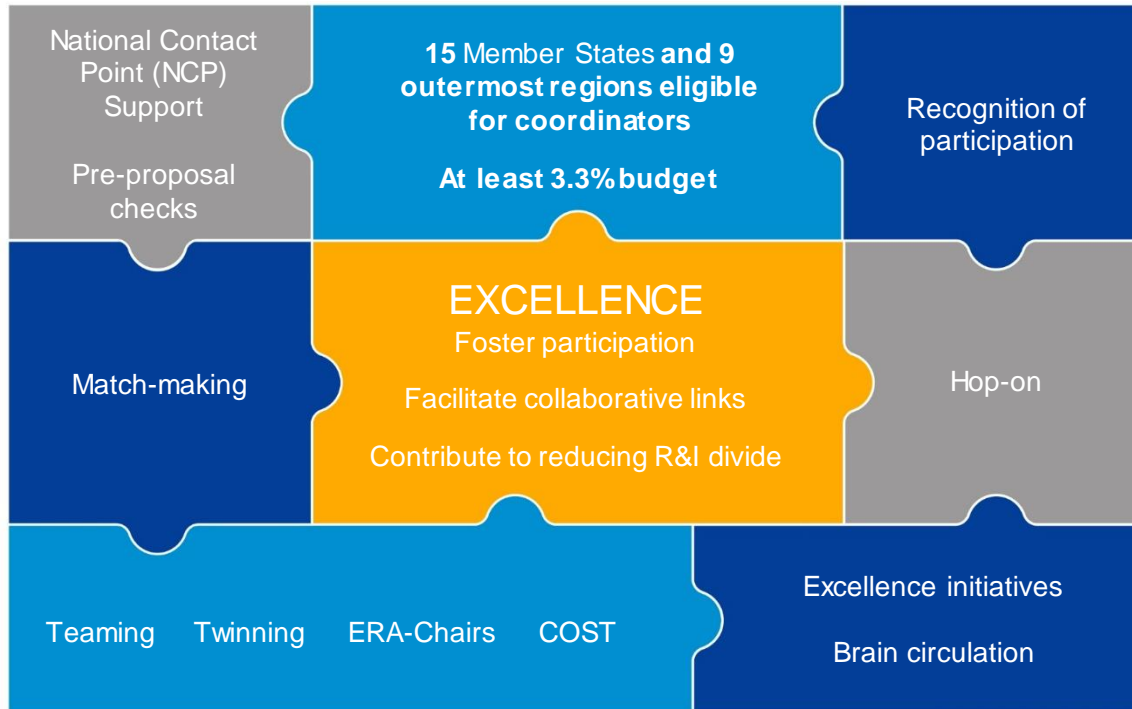
## Reforming and enhancing the EU R&I system

- Strengthening the evidence base for R&I policy
- Foresight
- Support for policy makers to the ERA development
- Support to national R&I policy reform, including Policy Support Facility
- Attractive researcher careers and links with higher education
- Open science, citizen science and science communication
- Gender equality
- Ethics and integrity
- Support to international cooperation
- Scientific input to other policies
- Support to the Programme implementation
- Support for National Contact Points
- Support to dissemination & exploitation

€0.44 billion



## Widening participation/spreading excellence



# Novelties for Widening under Horizon Europe:

- Full alignment with new ERA strategic priorities
- Continuation of core widening instruments Teaming, Twinning and ERA Chairs with some improvements in response to lessons learnt
- Research cost for CSA eligible under Teaming, Twinning and ERA Chairs
- More emphasis on developing research management capacities
- Full integration of COST under widening, 80% of actions must have significant widening dimension

# Novelties for Widening under Horizon Europe:

- **Fixed list of eligible Member States to host the main beneficiary (EU13 + PT + EL) + Associated Countries**
- **EU Outermost Regions fully eligible to host the coordinator**
- **Full implementation of “Advancing Europe” package with a number of additional support schemes to boost participation of less research performing countries**
- **More integrated policy approach and enhanced synergies with regional policy, transnational missions, regional smart specialisation strategies etc.**

# Widening participation and strengthening the ERA WP

## ➤ **Destination #1: Improved access to excellence**

- Teaming
- Twinning (incl. special call Western Balkans)
- Excellence Hubs
- European Excellence Initiative for Higher Education Institutions
- R&I Policy making in Western Balkans
- Hop-on facility
- (**under** other actions) COST

## ➤ **Destination #2: Attracting and mobilising the best talents**

- ERA Chairs
- Fostering balanced brain circulation: ERA Fellowships
- Fostering balanced brain circulation: ERA Talents

## ➤ **Destination #3: Reforming and enhancing the EU research and innovation system 2021-2024**

# Destination #1: Improved access to excellence

**Objective:** to create a portfolio of complementary actions that will build R&I capacities in Widening countries enabling them to advance to the competitive edge at European and international level.

## **Main impact:**

- **Increased science and innovation capacities for all actors in modernised and more competitive R&I systems in widening countries**
- **Reformed institutions and increased attractiveness for talents**

# Destination #1: Improved access to excellence

- Higher participation success in Horizon Europe and more consortium leadership roles
- Stronger linkages between academia and business and improved career permeability
- Strengthened role of the Higher Education sector in research and innovation
- Better involvement of regional actors in R&I process
- Improved outreach to international scale for all actors

## **Destination #2: Attracting and mobilising the best talents**

### **Main impacts:**

- **Inciting institutional reforms in research institutions in widening countries**
- **Better use existing research infrastructures and populate them with excellent talents**
- **Attract first-class talents and turn them into game changers in institutions and revert brain drain**
- **Improved linkages between academic and business, notably by overcoming sectoral barriers**
- **Free circulation of knowledge and expertise in line with ERA priorities**



# Comparison of key characteristics widening actions with other schemes outside widening WP

Actions in WP	Consortium structure	Target group and scale of operation	Policy objectives
Teaming	Main beneficiary + 1 or 2 strategic advanced partners	Single centre of excellence to be modernised or created, relevant at national scale	Develop light houses and role models to stimulate reforms of national R&I system, increase level of excellence of national R&I system, mobilise new investments
Twinning	Main beneficiary and focused network of partnering organisations	Individual institutions and small network of advanced partnering institutions. Institutional scale with European outreach	Develop excellence in a chosen R&I domain for the main beneficiary with the help of twinning partners, increase visibility of main beneficiary and upskill its staff
ERA Chairs	Mono-beneficiary host organisation with optional single partner organisation	Excellent individuals and their teams, institutional scale	Excellent scientists and their teams to become game changers at institutional level, develop new research strands and raise level of excellence
Excellence hubs	Group of 2 or 3 placed based innovation ecosystems based on the quadruple helix approach	Research institutions, firms, local/regional government, societal actors, local regional scale with cross border dimension	Foster innovation excellence in place based (local/regional) innovation ecosystems, improve science business linkages, regional dimension of widening, <b>bottom-up approach</b>
Excellence Universities	Network of European Universities, co-ordinates by university from widening country	Universities at European Level	Support transformation of HE institutions towards excellence and international profile

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## HOP ON FACILITY

**What it is:** Legal entities established in **Widening countries** may join **already selected actions**, subject to the agreement of the respective consortium and provided that legal entities from such countries are not yet participating in it.

**Policy objective:** Contributes to achieving the **Inclusiveness ambition of the future ERA** policy by involving research institutions from Widening countries in Horizon Europe Pillar 2 actions.

**Call: HORIZON-WIDERA-2022-ACCESS-07-01**

**Type of action:** RIA

**Opening: 04 Jan 2022 – Cut-Off dates: 20 Apr 2022; 10 Nov 2022**

**Indicative budget (EUR million): 40.00**

**Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million) 0,2 to 0,5**

**Expected number of projects to be funded: 80**

## HOP ON FACILITY: KEY FEATURES (1)



### Who:

- A **consortium funded under Pillar 2** of Horizon Europe with a valid grant agreement but with no partner from a Widening country;
- A **legal entity from a Widening Country** wishing to join this collaborative R&I action.

### How:

- The proposal must be **submitted by the coordinator of the consortium** funded under Pillar 2 of Horizon Europe.
- **All consortium partners need to agree** on the accession of the new partner.
- Proposal should include a detailed description of the **profile of the new partner** and its role in the existing project and the **R&I relevance and complementarity** needs to be demonstrated.
- The additional partner and task should be presented in a **track changes document based on the Description of the Action (DOA)** of the ongoing action.

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## HOP ON FACILITY: KEY FEATURES (2)



### Implementation:

- Selected consortia will be invited to submit an **amendment request** for accession of a new partner, modification of the description of the action and upgrade of the budget.

### Costs:

- The budget increase must be **exclusively for the benefit of the new partner.**
- An additional **coordination fee of up to 10%** of the increased budget can be allocated to the coordinator of the consortium.

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## HOP ON FACILITY: *EXPECTED IMPACTS*

- At system level, **mobilise excellence and increase visibility** of the participants from the Widening countries, improve knowledge circulation, and **reduce lack of participation** of Widening countries in thematic domains.
- At organisation level, **open up silos** of established closed consortia and improve research excellence of the Widening country's institutions in specific fields.
- At the level of the beneficiary, provide **new competencies and skills** (from working in transnational projects) **including on research management and dissemination and exploitation of results**.



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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## EXCELLENCE HUBS

**Can a single institution participate as a beneficiary in more than one project proposal?**

- YES, but in case of success in multiple applications the risk of double funding will be meticulously scrutinized.

**How narrowly can a cutting-edge scientific domain chosen as a focus of the proposal be defined?**

- In general a broad approach will be possible, taking into account that excellence can also ly in innovation.

**Which territorial units should the actions target (cities, regions, countries)?**

- The definition is left to the applicants who need to explain who the placed based approach will be implemented.



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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## EXCELLENCE HUBS

**How are R&I pilot projects defined and are R&I costs of HEI and businesses eligible (researchers, consumables, etc.)?**

- The definition is left to the applicants and the same cost categories are eligible like for a RIA.

**Can you confirm that the participation of institutions and ecosystems from non-widening EU regions should be limited (budget-wise) to no more than 30%?**

- There is no sharp rule but the value of 30% for non widening partners would give a good orientation for the center of gravity being in widening country.



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## TWINNING

If one project has more than one widening partner, can they distribute the 70% of the budget among themselves or is it reserved only for the coordinator?

- No.

The research part of the project must be presented by a dedicated work package and plan including the scientific objectives, tasks and roles of the partner. At least 70% of the research budget must be used at the premises of the coordinator. The applicants should provide detailed information on how their proposal addresses the specific requirement of the Work Programme with respect to the R&I activities, the corresponding costs and the allocation of such costs to each beneficiary. The Work Programme states: “A research component not exceeding 30% of the total Horizon Europe grant may include an exploratory research project”. ...





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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## TWINNING

**If one project has more than one widening partner, can they distribute the 70% of the budget among themselves or is it reserved only for the coordinator?**

- ... For example, if we are referring to a total grant amount of EUR 1,500,000, the research component should not exceed EUR 450,000. In addition, at the Eligibility Conditions, it is mentioned: “at least 70% of the budget for research activities must be allocated to the coordinator from the above stated eligible countries.” Therefore, for this example at least EUR 315,000 from the research component costs must be allocated to the coordinator.



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



## TWINNING

### **Will the application be eligible if the institution doesn't have an official GEP at the time of deadline?**

- A transition/grace period will take place during the first year of Horizon Europe: this eligibility criterion does not concern calls for proposals with deadlines in 2021 and will only be enforced as of calls with deadlines in 2022. Furthermore, for calls with deadlines in 2022 and beyond, once a project proposal is selected for funding following evaluations, consortium partners concerned by the eligibility criterion will have until Grant Agreement signature to confirm they have a GEP in place\*.

### **Should the distribution of WP activities be equal between partnering institutions or between all persons in the project (number not the same at all partners)?**

- This all depends on the project and on the discipline. The number of WP and the number of persons/month allocated to each WP will again depend on the project's needs. It does not have to be equal.

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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## TWINNING

### What do the coordination and support measures specifically refer to?

- The definition of a CSA, Coordinated and Support Measure under Horizon Europe is: a funding scheme sustaining activities that contribute to the objectives of Horizon Europe programme, normally excluding research and innovation activities.
- Actions consisting primarily of accompanying measures such as standardisation, dissemination, awareness-raising and communication, networking, coordination or support services, policy dialogues and mutual learning exercises and studies, including design studies for new infrastructure and may also include complementary activities of strategic planning, networking and coordination between programmes in different countries. Funding rate: 100%.



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## TWINNING

### What is the difference between the work-oriented and training-oriented agreement concerning the PhD students' participation?

- Twinning should not be used as a vehicle for increasing the population of PhD students of the coordinating institution. Twinning does not aim to fund PhD programs. However, PhD students' participation to Twinning is possible and highly desirable. Costs of students that work for the beneficiary can be accepted, if the agreement is work-oriented (not training-oriented: i.e. not aimed at helping the student to acquire professional skills). PhD agreements will be considered work-oriented. However, time for training, if any, may NOT be charged to the action. Fellowships/scholarships/stipends —can be charged to the action (as personnel costs), if they fulfil the conditions set out in Article 6 of the [Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#), and in particular:
  - the remuneration complies with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security;
  - the assignment of tasks respects the laws in force in the country of the beneficiary;
  - the students have the necessary qualifications to carry out the tasks allocated to them under the action.





European  
Commission

# Thank you!

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