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## TEXTS ADOPTED

*Provisional edition*

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### **P8\_TA-PROV(2017)0253**

#### **Assessment of Horizon 2020 implementation**

**European Parliament resolution of 13 June 2017 on the assessment of Horizon 2020 implementation in view of its interim evaluation and the Framework Programme 9 proposal (2016/2147(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1314/2013 of 16 December 2013 on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2014-2018) complementing the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to Council Decision 2013/743/EU of 3 December 2013 establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon 2020 –the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1292/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 amending Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 establishing the European Institute of Innovation and Technology<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to Decision No 1312/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Strategic Innovation Agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT): the contribution of the EIT to a more

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 948.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 965.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 174.

innovative Europe<sup>1</sup>,

- having regard to Council Regulations (EU) No 557/2014, 558/2014, 559/2014, 560/2014 and 561/2014 of 6 May 2014<sup>2</sup> and Council Regulations (EU) No 642/2014<sup>3</sup> and 721/2014<sup>4</sup> of 16 June 2014 establishing the Joint Undertakings funded under Horizon 2020,
- having regard to Decisions No 553/2014/EU, 554/2014/EU, 555/2014/EU and 556/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014<sup>5</sup> establishing the Article 185 P2Ps funded under Horizon 2020,
- having regard to the Issue papers of 3 February 2017 for the High Level Group on maximising the impact of EU research and innovation programmes<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission Horizon 2020 Monitoring Reports 2014 and 2015,
- having regard to the report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled ‘The European Research Area: time for implementation and monitoring progress’ (COM(2017)0035),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘European Defence Action Plan’ (COM(2016)0950),
- having regard to the report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘Implementation of the strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation’ (COM(2016)0657),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘European Cloud Initiative – Building a competitive data and knowledge economy in Europe’ (COM(2016)0178) and the accompanying Commission staff working document (SWD(2016)0106),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘On the Response to the Report of the High Level Expert Group on the Ex Post Evaluation of the Seventh Framework programme’ (COM(2016)0005),
- having regard to the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council entitled ‘Annual Report on Research and Technological Development Activities of the European Union in 2014’ (COM(2015)0401),
- having regard to the Commission reports of 2014 and 2015 entitled ‘Integration of

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 892.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 169, 7.6.2014, pp. 54-178.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 177, 17.6.2014, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> OJ L 192, 1.7.2014, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 169, 7.6.2014, pp. 1-53.

<sup>6</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/hlg\\_issue\\_papers.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/hlg_issue_papers.pdf)

Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon 2020: participants, budgets and disciplines’,

- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Better regulations for innovation-driven investment at EU level’ (SWD(2015)0298),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled ‘European Research Area: Progress Report 2014’ (COM(2014)0575),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘Research and innovation as sources of renewed growth’ (COM(2014)0339),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Second Situation Report on Education and Training in the Nuclear Energy Field in the European Union’ (SWD(2014)0299),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘FET Flagships: A novel partnering approach to address grand scientific challenges and to boost innovation in Europe’ (SWD(2014)0283),
- having regard to the report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled ‘Second Interim Evaluation of the Clean Sky, Fuel Cells and Hydrogen and Innovative Medicine Initiative Joint Technology Initiatives Joint Undertakings’ (COM(2014)0252),
- having regard to the Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the Role and effect of JTIs and PPPs in implementing Horizon 2020 for sustainable industrial change<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 16 February 2017 on the European Cloud Initiative<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 14 March 2017 on EU Funds for Gender Equality<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 6 July 2016 on synergies for innovation: the European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other European innovation funds and EU programmes<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 September 2016 on Cohesion Policy and Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3)<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure, as well as Article 1(1)(e) of, and Annex 3 to, the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2002 on the

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 34, 2.2.2017, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0052.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0075.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0311.

<sup>5</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0320.

procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports,

- having regard to the report of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Regional Development and the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0209/2017),
- A. whereas Horizon 2020 is the EU’s largest centrally managed R&I programme, and the world’s largest publicly funded R&I programme;
- B. whereas, in negotiating Horizon 2020 and the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), Parliament asked for EUR 100 billion, rather than the EUR 77 billion initially agreed; whereas the budget seems very limited if Horizon 2020 is to fully explore excellence potential and adequately respond to the societal challenges currently faced by European and global society;
- C. whereas the report of the High Level Group on maximising impact of EU Research and Innovation Programmes and the interim evaluation planned for the third quarter of 2017 will lay the foundations for the structure and content of FP9, on which a proposal will be published in the first half of 2018;
- D. whereas the economic and financial crisis was a determining factor in the design of Horizon 2020; whereas emerging challenges, new political and socio-economic paradigms and continuing global trends are likely to shape the next Framework Programme (FP);
- E. whereas the FP must be founded on European values, scientific independence, openness, diversity, high European ethical standards, social cohesion and equal access by citizens to the solutions and answers it provides;
- F. whereas investments in R&D are essential for European economic and social development and global competitiveness; whereas the importance of excellent science for fostering innovation and long-term competitive advantages needs to be reflected in the funding of FP9;

### ***Structure, philosophy and implementation of Horizon 2020***

1. Considers that, more than three years after the launch of Horizon 2020, it is time for Parliament to develop its position on its interim evaluation and a vision of the future FP9;
2. Recalls that the objective of Horizon 2020 is to contribute to building a society and an economy based on knowledge and innovation, and to strengthen the scientific and technological base and ultimately the competitiveness of Europe by leveraging additional national R&D funding, both public and private, and by helping to attain the target of 3 % of GDP for R&D by 2020; regrets that the EU invested only 2,03 % of GDP in R&D in 2015, with the individual figures for different countries ranging from 0,46 % to 3,26 %<sup>1</sup>, while major global competitors are outperforming the EU on R&D

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<sup>1</sup> EPRS study of February 2017 entitled ‘Horizon 2020, the EU framework programme for research and innovation. European Implementation Assessment’.

expenditure;

3. Recalls that the European Research Area (ERA) faces direct competition with the world's top-performing research regions and that the strengthening of the ERA is therefore a collective European duty; encourages the relevant Member States to contribute adequately to meeting the target of 3 % of EU GDP for R&D; notes that an overall increase to 3 % would bring an extra amount of more than EUR 100 billion per year for research and innovation in Europe;
4. Stresses that the evaluation of FP7 and monitoring of Horizon 2020 show that the EU FP for research and innovation is a success and brings clear added value to the EU<sup>1</sup>; recognises there are still possibilities to improve the FP and future programmes;
5. Considers that the reasons for its success are the multidisciplinary and collaborative setting and the excellence and impact requirements;
6. Understands that the FP intends to incentivise industry participation in order to increase R&D spending by industry<sup>2</sup>; notes that industry participation, including SMEs, is significantly higher than in FP7; recalls, however, that on average industry has not sufficiently increased its share of R&D spending as agreed in the Barcelona Council conclusions<sup>3</sup>; asks the Commission to assess the European added value and relevance to the public of funding for industry-driven instruments such as Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs)<sup>4</sup>, as well as the coherence, openness and transparency of all joint initiatives<sup>5</sup>;
7. Notes that the programme budget, management and implementation is spread over 20 different EU bodies; queries whether this results in excessive coordination efforts, administrative complexity and duplication; calls on the Commission to work towards streamlining and simplifying this;
8. Notes that Pillars 2 and 3 are mainly focused on higher Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs), which could limit the future absorption of disruptive innovations that are still in the pipeline of research projects with lower TRLs; calls for a careful balance of TRLs in order to promote the entire value chain; considers that TRLs may exclude non-technological forms of innovation generated by fundamental or applied research, particularly from social sciences and humanities (SSH);
9. Calls on the Commission to offer a balanced mix of small, medium and large-sized

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<sup>1</sup> With over 130 000 proposals received, 9 000 grants signed, 50 000 participations and EUR 15,9 billion of EU funding.

<sup>2</sup> Two-thirds of the 3 % of GDP for R&D should come from industry. See Eurostat private R&D expenditure:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tsc00031&plugin=1>

<sup>3</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/download\\_en/barcelona\\_european\\_council.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/download_en/barcelona_european_council.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> In total, the seven JTIs account for more than EUR 7 billion of the Horizon 2020 funds, approximately 10 % of the whole Horizon 2020 budget and more than 13 % of the actual available funding for Horizon 2020 calls (approximately EUR 8 billion per year over seven years).

<sup>5</sup> See Council conclusions of 29 May 2015.

projects; notes that the average budget for projects has increased under Horizon 2020 and that larger projects are more onerous as regards preparation of the proposal and project management, which favours participants with greater experience with FPs, creates barriers for newcomers and concentrates funding in the hands of a limited number of institutions;

### ***Budget***

10. Stresses that the current alarmingly low success rate of less than 14 %<sup>1</sup> represents a negative trend compared to FP7; emphasises that oversubscription makes it impossible to make funding available for a large number of very high-quality projects and regrets that the cuts inflicted by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) have deepened this problem; calls on the Commission to avoid making further cuts to the Horizon 2020 budget;
11. Highlights the budgetary pressures facing the Union's Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation; regrets the adverse effect that the payment crisis in the EU budget had on the implementation of the programme during the first years of the current MFF; notes, inter alia, the artificial delay amounting to EUR 1 billion worth of calls in 2014 and the significant reduction in the level of pre-financing for the new programmes; highlights in this context that, in accordance with Article 15 of the MFF Regulation, a frontloading of resources was implemented in 2014-2015 for Horizon 2020; underlines that this frontloading was fully absorbed by the programme, demonstrating its strong performance and capacity to absorb even more; emphasises that this frontloading does not change the overall financial envelope of the programmes, leading to fewer appropriations respectively for the second half of the MFF; calls on the two arms of the budgetary authority and the Commission to ensure an adequate level of payment appropriations in the upcoming years and to make every effort to prevent a new payment crisis towards the last years of the current MFF;
12. Stresses that Horizon 2020 must be primarily grant-based and geared towards funding fundamental and collaborative research in particular; insists that research may be a high risk investment for investors and that funding research through grants is a necessity; emphasises, in this connection, that in any case many public bodies are legally excluded from accepting loans; regrets the tendency, in some cases, to move away from grants and towards the use of loans; recognises that financial instruments should be available for high TRL, close to market activities as part of InnovFin financial instruments, and outside of the FP (e.g. EIB, EIF schemes);
13. Underlines the fact that several Member States are not respecting their national R&D investment commitments; stresses that the 3 % of GDP target needs to be met and hopes that this target can be raised to the level of the EU's largest global competitors as soon as possible; calls on the Commission and the Member States, therefore, to drive national strategies to reach that objective and calls for the earmarking of parts of the Structural Funds for R&D activities and programmes, especially investments in capacity-building, research infrastructure and salaries, as well as supporting activities for the preparation of FP proposals and project management;

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<sup>1</sup> EPRS study of February 2017 entitled 'Horizon 2020 EU framework programme for research and innovation - European Implementation Assessment'.

## *Evaluation*

14. Confirms that ‘excellence’ should remain the essential evaluation criterion across all three pillars of the FP, while noting the existing ‘impact’ and ‘quality and efficiency of the implementation’ criteria, which might help to indicate a project’s added value to the EU; invites the Commission, therefore, to explore ways to take into consideration under the ‘impact’ and ‘quality and efficiency of the implementation’ criteria: the lack of involvement of the underrepresented EU regions, the inclusion of the underrepresented fields of science, such as SSH, and the exploitation of research infrastructure financed by European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), which seem to be important for the successful implementation of the ERA and for providing synergies between FPs and ESIF;
15. Calls for better and more transparent evaluation and quality assurance by the evaluators; stresses the need to improve the feedback given to participants throughout the evaluation process and urges that complaints made by unsuccessful applicants that the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs) lack depth and clarity on what should be done differently in order to succeed be taken into consideration; calls on the Commission, therefore, to publish, in conjunction with the call for proposals, detailed evaluation criteria, to provide participants with more detailed and informative ESRs and to organise calls for proposals in such a way as to avoid excessive oversubscription, which badly affects researchers’ motivation and the reputation of the programme;
16. Calls on the Commission to provide a broader definition of ‘impact’, considering both economic and social effects; stresses that the assessment of the impact of fundamental research projects should remain flexible; asks the Commission to maintain the balance between bottom-up and top-down calls and to analyse which evaluation procedure (one or two stage) is more useful to avoid oversubscription and to conduct quality research;
17. Calls on the Commission to assess to what extent a more precise thematic focus would make sense in the context of sustainability;
18. Calls on the Commission to make the participant portal more readily available and to extend the network of National Contact Points, providing it with more resources, so as to ensure an efficient service for micro and small enterprises in particular during project submission and evaluation;
19. Considers that the European Research Council should engage in more collaboration projects across Europe, and in particular take on board low-capacity regions and institutions in order to disseminate EU R&I policy and know-how all over EU;

## *Cross-cutting issues*

20. Notes that the Horizon 2020 structure and societal challenges approach in particular are broadly welcomed by stakeholders; calls on the Commission to continue to enhance the societal challenges approach and emphasises the importance of collaborative research involving universities, research organisations, industry (especially SMEs), and other actors; asks the Commission to consider assessing the adequacy and individual budgets of the societal challenges on the basis of the current economic, social and political context during FP implementation and in close cooperation with the European

Parliament;

21. Acknowledges the Commission's efforts to streamline the administration and reduce the time between the publication of a call and allocation of a grant; calls on the Commission to continue its endeavours to cut red tape and simplify administration; welcomes the Commission's proposal to introduce lump sum payments in order to simplify administration and auditing;
22. Calls on the Commission to assess whether the simplified funding model introduced for Horizon 2020 has, as intended, led to increased industry involvement; calls, in this connection, for the effectiveness of the funding model to be assessed;
23. Calls on the Commission to assess to what extent the use of national or specific accounting systems instead of the system specified in the rules governing participation in the programme could make for a significantly simplified accounting procedure and thus reduce the error rate in connection with the auditing of European funding projects; calls, in this connection, for closer cooperation with the European Court of Auditors and for the introduction of a 'one-stop audit';
24. Notes that synergies between funds are crucial to make investments more effective; stresses that RIS3 are an important tool to catalyse synergies setting out national and regional frameworks for R&D&I investments and, as such, should be promoted and reinforced; regrets the presence of substantial barriers to making synergies fully operational<sup>1</sup>; seeks, therefore, an alignment of rules and procedures for R&D&I projects under ESIF and FP, and notes that an effective use of the Seal of Excellence scheme will only be possible if the above conditions are met; calls on the Commission to earmark part of ESIF for RIS3 synergies with Horizon 2020; calls on the Commission to revise the State Aid rules and to allow R&D structural fund projects to be justifiable within the FP rules of procedure, while at the same time guaranteeing their transparency; calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the correct application of the principle of additionality, which in practice means that the contributions of European funds should not replace the national or equivalent expenditure by a Member State in the regions where this principle applies;
25. Notes that the successful implementation of the ERA requires full usage of the R&D&I potential of all Member States; recognises the problem of the participation gap in the Horizon 2020 programme, which must be addressed both at EU and national level, including through ESIF; calls on the Commission and the Member States to adapt existing tools or to adopt new measures to bridge this gap, by, for example, the development of networking tools for researchers; welcomes the Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation policy; calls on the Commission to assess whether the three widening instruments have achieved their specific objectives: to provide an adequate budget and a balanced set of instruments that address existing disparities in the EU in the field of research and innovation; calls on the Commission and Member States to come forward with clear rules enabling the full implementation of the Seal of Excellence scheme and to explore funding synergies; asks the Commission to create

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<sup>1</sup> Large research infrastructure fits within the scope and goals of the ERDF, but ERDF funds allocated nationally cannot be used to co-finance it; construction costs associated with new research infrastructures are eligible under the ERDF, but operational and staff costs are not.



mechanisms enabling the inclusion in FP projects of research infrastructure financed through ESIF; calls for the indicators used to define ‘underrepresented’ countries and regions to be reviewed and for the list of those countries and regions to be regularly verified during implementation of the FP;

26. Notes that according to the Commission’s annual reports on Horizon 2020 implementation for 2014 and 2015, the EU-15 received 88,6 % of the funds while the EU-13 received just 4,5 % – a figure even less than the funding for association countries (6,4 %);
27. Welcomes efforts to secure better links between the ERA and the European Higher Education Area, with a view to facilitating ways of training the next generation of researchers; recognises the importance of incorporating STEM, research and entrepreneur skills into Member States’ education systems from an early stage in order to encourage young people to develop these skills, as R&D should be viewed in structural rather than cyclical or temporal terms; calls on the Member States and the Commission to enhance employment stability and attractiveness for young researchers;
28. Stresses the importance of closer cooperation between industry and the university and scientific establishment, so as to facilitate the creation of dedicated structures within universities and scientific centres for the purpose of forging closer links with the production sector;
29. Stresses that global cooperation is an important means of strengthening European research; confirms that international participation fell from 5 % in FP7 to 2,8 % in Horizon 2020; recalls that the FP should contribute to ensuring that Europe remains a key global player, while underlining the importance of science diplomacy; calls on the Commission to review the terms of international cooperation in FP and to establish concrete, immediate measures and a long-term strategic vision and structure to support this objective; welcomes, in this regard, initiatives such as BONUS and PRIMA;
30. Underlines the need to strengthen international cooperation within FP9 and to spread science diplomacy.
31. Recalls that SSH integration means SSH research in interdisciplinary projects and not an ex-post add-on to otherwise technological projects, and that the most pressing problems faced by the EU require methodological research that is more conceptually focused on SSH; notes that SSH are underrepresented in the current Framework Programme; calls on the Commission to strengthen the possibilities for SSH researchers to participate in the interdisciplinary FP projects and to provide sufficient funding for SSH topics;
32. Highlights the balance of research and innovation within the Horizon 2020 programme and calls for a similar approach to be taken in the next FP; welcomes the creation of EIC<sup>1</sup>, but insists that this should not lead to the separation of research from innovation or to further fragmentation of funding yet again; underlines that Horizon 2020 is not sufficiently focused on bridging the ‘valley of death’, which constitutes the main barrier

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<sup>1</sup> Commission communication entitled ‘Europe’s next leaders: the Start-up and Scale-up Initiative’ (COM(2016)0733).

to turning prototypes into production;

33. Calls on the Commission to clarify the objectives, instruments and functioning of the EIC and stresses the need to evaluate the EIC pilot results; calls on the Commission to propose a balanced mix of instruments for the EIC portfolio; stresses that the EIC should under no circumstances become a replacement for Pillar 2 and that Pillar 2 should not develop into an individual supporting instrument but rather should continue to focus on collaborative research; underlines the need to retain and strengthen the SME Instrument and the Fast Track to Innovation; invites the Commission to design mechanisms to better include SMEs in larger interdisciplinary FP9 projects in order to harness their full potential; calls on the Commission to keep KICs in the current EIT structure, stressing the importance of transparency and extensive stakeholder involvement, and to analyse how EIT and KICs may interact with the EIC; asks the Commission to design a framework for private venture capital investments in cooperation with the EIC, so as to encourage venture capital investments in Europe;
34. Welcomes initiatives which bring the private and public sectors together to stimulate research and innovation; stresses the need for enhanced EU leadership in prioritising public research needs and for sufficient transparency, traceability and a fair level of public return on investment of Horizon 2020 in terms of affordability, availability and the suitability of end products, and particularly in some sensitive areas such as health, safeguarding the public interest and equitable social impact; calls on the Commission to further explore mechanisms, especially with a view to the long-term exploitation of all projects funded by grants provided by the FP, combining a fair public return and incentives for industry participation;
35. Welcomes the fact that Open Access is now a general principle under Horizon 2020; draws attention to the fact that the substantial number of publications linked to Horizon 2020 projects up to December 2016<sup>1</sup> shows that new policies on enforcing the sharing of data and knowledge are required in order to maximise research results and the amount of scientific data available; calls on the Commission to review the flexibility criteria that could be a barrier to that objective, and to increase knowledge and development;
36. Welcomes the Open Research Data pilot funding as a first step towards the Open Science Cloud; recognises the relevance and potential of e-infrastructures and supercomputing, the need for the involvement of public and private sector stakeholders and civil society, and the importance of citizen science in ensuring that society plays a more active part in defining and addressing the problems and in jointly putting forward the solutions; calls on the Commission and the public and private research community to explore new models that integrate private cloud and networking resources and public e-infrastructures and the launch of citizen agendas in science and innovation;
37. Welcomes the Commission's newly introduced concept of innovation hubs, which further strengthen the European innovation landscape by supporting firms, and SMEs in particular, in enhancing their business models and production processes;

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<sup>1</sup> OpenAIRE report: In Horizon 2020, 2 017 out of a total number of 10 684 projects (19 %) have been completed, while 8 667 are ongoing. OpenAIRE identified 6 133 publications linked to 1 375 Horizon 2020 projects.

38. Encourages the NCPs to be more involved in promoting projects awarded the Seal of Excellence, and in assisting in the search for other sources of public or private funding, whether national or international, for those projects, by strengthening the cooperation in this field within the network of NCPs;

### ***FP 9 recommendations***

39. Believes that the EU has the potential to become a world-leading global centre for research and science; believes, furthermore, that in order to promote growth, jobs and innovation to this end, FP9 has to become a top priority for Europe;
40. Welcomes the success of Horizon 2020 and the 1:11 leverage factor; calls on the Commission to propose an increased overall budget of EUR 120 billion for FP9; considers that beyond the budget increase, a framework incorporating innovation is needed and calls on the Commission, therefore, to clarify the concept of innovation and its different types;
41. Notes that the EU faces numerous significant and dynamic challenges and calls on the Commission, in conjunction with the European Parliament, to provide in Pillar 3 a balanced and flexible set of instruments responding to the dynamic nature of emerging problems; underlines the need to provide a sufficient budget for the specific challenges in Pillar 3, as well as the need for regular revision of the adequacy of those challenges;
42. Calls on the Commission to retain a balance between fundamental research and innovation within FP9; notes the need to strengthen collaborative research; underlines the importance of better involvement of SMEs in collaborative projects and innovation;
43. Encourages the Commission to enhance synergies between FP9 and other dedicated European funds for research and innovation, and to establish harmonised instruments and aligned rules for those funds, both at a European and national level, and in close cooperation with the Member States; calls on the Commission to continue to take into account in future FPs the important role which standardisation plays in the context of innovations;
44. Notes that FP9 should tackle the possible problem of oversubscription and low success rates faced of Horizon 2020; suggests that the reintroduction of the two stage evaluation procedure be considered, with a unified first stage and specified second stage dedicated to the selected applicants; calls on the Commission to ensure sufficiently comprehensive ESRs with indications on how the proposal could be improved;
45. Stresses that European added value must remain an undisputed core component of the framework research programme;
46. Calls on the Commission to separate defence research from civil research in the next MFF, providing two different programmes with two separate budgets that do not affect the budgetary ambitions of civilian research of FP9; calls on the Commission, therefore, to present to Parliament the possible ways for financing the future defence research programme in accordance with the Treaties, with a dedicated budget with fresh resources and specific rules; highlights the importance of parliamentary oversight in this respect;

47. Considers that the Future and Emerging Technologies programme has great potential for the future and represents a good tool for spreading innovative ideas and know-how at national and regional levels;
48. Underlines the need, in the context of the Paris Agreement and the EU's climate objectives, to prioritise funding for climate change research and climate data collection infrastructure – particularly as the United States is considering significant budgetary cuts to US environmental research institutions;
49. Stresses that FP9 for R&I should strengthen societal progress and the competitiveness of the EU, creating growth and jobs and bringing new knowledge and innovations in order to tackle the crucial challenges faced by Europe, as well as delivering further progress towards developing a sustainable ERA; welcomes in this respect the current pillar structure of the FP and calls on the Commission to retain this structure for the sake of continuity and predictability; asks the Commission therefore to continue work on coherence, simplification, transparency and clarity of the programme, on improving the evaluation process, reducing fragmentation, duplication and avoiding unnecessary administrative burdens;
50. Recognises that administrative tasks and research to a large extent cancel each other out; stresses, therefore, the importance of keeping reporting obligations to a minimum in order to prevent red tape from obstructing innovation and to ensure an effective use of FP9 funding, while also ensuring the autonomy of research; encourages the Commission to intensify its efforts on simplification to this end;
51. Notes that the Commission is referring increasingly frequently to output-based support; calls on the Commission to define 'output' more precisely;
52. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to increase synergies between FP and other funds and to tackle the problem of research deficiencies faced by convergence regions in some Member States, in application of the principle of additionality; regrets that financial allocations from the Structural and Investment Funds can lead to a reduction in national R&D spending in regions where those funds apply, and insists that these must be additional to national public expenditure; calls also on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that public funding for R&I is considered an investment in the future rather than a cost;
53. Notes that effective investment in research and innovation under the Structural Funds is only possible if the groundwork has been properly laid in the Member States; calls, therefore, for closer linkage between country-specific recommendations for structural reforms and investments in R&I;
54. Underlines the need for new higher excellence centres and regions and the importance of continuing to develop the ERA; stresses the need to provide more synergies between FP, EFSI and ESIF in order to achieve this goal; calls for policies to remove barriers such as lower salaries that are faced by Eastern and Southern countries in order to avoid brain drain; calls for the excellence of the project to be prioritised over the excellence of leading 'elite' institutions;
55. Takes the view that there is a need to include stronger incentives to use ESI funds for R&I investments where there are country-specific recommendations to that effect or

where weaknesses are identified; concludes that the ESI Funds for R&I investments will deliver EUR 65 billion in the period 2014- 2020; proposes, therefore, that the established ESI Funds performance reserve in the Member States is used to invest a substantial proportion of the revenue from the Structural Funds in R&I;

56. Welcomes the principle and the potential of the Seal of Excellence, as a quality label for synergies between ESI Funds and Horizon 2020, but notes that it is insufficiently applied in practice, caused by the lack of finance in the Member States; believes that projects – that have been submitted for funding under Horizon 2020, passed stringent selection and award criteria with a positive outcome, but could not be funded due to budget constraints – should be financed by ESI Funds resources, if these resources are available for that purpose; points out that a similar mechanism should also be defined for collaborative research projects;
57. Calls on the Commission to provide increased levels of support in FP9 for young researchers such as pan-European networking tools and to reinforce funding schemes for early-stage researchers with less than two years of experience after PhD completion;
58. Observes that the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions are a widely recognised source of funding among researchers and promote the mobility of researchers and the development of young researchers; takes the view that, in the interests of continuity, it would be desirable for Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions to continue to be funded in FP9;
59. Calls on the Commission and Member States to continue to encourage private investments in R&D&I that must be additional and not substitutive to the public ones; recalls that two-thirds of the 3 % R&D GDP target should come from the private sector<sup>1</sup>; appreciates efforts made by industry hitherto and, in view of the generally scarce resources for public R&D spending, calls on the private sector to engage more in R&D spending, as well as in Open Access and Open Science; calls on the Commission to determine the degree of participation of large industry (be that through loans, grants or at their own cost), depending on the extent of the European Added Value of the project and its potential to be a driving force for SMEs, while considering the specificities and needs of each sector; asks the Commission to monitor the ‘in kind’ contributions in order to make sure that investments are real and new;
60. Calls on the Commission to improve the transparency and clarity of rules for public-private cooperation within FP9 projects following the results and recommendations stemming from the evaluation; asks the Commission to verify and assess the existing instruments for public-private partnerships;
61. Highlights the fact that, irrespective of the SME Instrument, industry involvement should continue to be supported, since industry has the necessary expertise in many areas and makes a significant financial contribution;
62. Regrets the mixed set of results achieved by the gender equality focus in Horizon 2020, as the only target reached is the share of women in the advisory groups, while the share of women in the project evaluation panels and among project coordinators, and the gender dimension in research and innovation content, remain below target levels;

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<sup>1</sup> See Council conclusions of 29 May 2015.

stresses the need to improve participation and gender mainstreaming in FP9 and to reach the target levels set in the Horizon 2020 regulation and calls on the Commission to undertake a study to explore the barriers or difficulties that may be conditioning an underrepresentation of women in the programme; encourages Member States, according to the ERA objectives, to create a gender-balanced legal and political environment and to provide incentives for change; welcomes the Commission's Guidance on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020<sup>1</sup>; recalls that according to this guide, gender balance is one of the ranking factors to prioritise proposals above threshold with the same scores;

63. Notes that the next FP will have to take into consideration the UK's departure from the EU and its implications; notes that R&I benefits from clear and stable long-term frameworks, and that the UK has a leading position in the field of science; expresses the wish that networks and collaboration between the UK and the EU can continue in the field of research, and that, subject to certain conditions, a stable and satisfying solution can be found quickly, so as to ensure that the EU does not miss out on the scientific results generated in Horizon 2020 and FP9;

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64. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> See Horizon 2020 Programme Guidance on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020. [http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/h2020-hi-guide-gender\\_en.pdf](http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/h2020-hi-guide-gender_en.pdf)