

EU funding instruments for catching up countries and regions – opportunities with the programme ‘Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation’ and the ‘Seal of Excellence’

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Structure of the Presentation

- 1) Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation (SEWP)
 - Rationale and policy context
- 2) SEWP – actions and calls under Horizon 2020
- 3) European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and synergies with R&I Framework Programmes
- 4) The Seal of Excellence (SoE) – concept and lessons learnt
- 5) Outlook

SEWP -Background

- 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
 - problems with information, communication and training

Specific eligibility criteria for WIDENING

- Particular political objectives of WIDENING in H2020
- Necessitate a targeted approach to help those participants with low performance in R&I
- H2020 legal text >> "low performing RDI Member States and regions"

Eligibility Criterion: **The Composite Indicator of Research Excellence**

➤ Threshold: MS below 70% of the EU average

"Low RDI Performing" or "Widening" Countries:

MS: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

AC: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine

The Widening Package under Horizon 2020

Measures in Horizon 2020 under **Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation**:

- Teaming (institution building)
- Twinning (institutional networking)
- ERA Chairs (bringing excellence to institutions)
- NCPs (information, communication, support)
- Policy Support Facility (support for R&I Policy design)
- COST (stimulating cross border science networks)

Total Budget in H2020 ~ **€ 900 million**

Teaming in Horizon 2020

Objective:

- Creation of new (or significant upgrade of existing) Centres of Excellence (CoE) in low R&I performing or "Widening" countries

The Partnership: 2 parties in each Teaming project

- (1) the COORDINATOR from the "Widening" country
- (2) an institution with an international reputation in R&I excellence (from all EU28 or AC)

➤ Implementation in 2 Phases

Twinning: Aim, Objectives & Partnership

Aim of the action:

Strengthen a defined field of research in a university or research organisation from a Widening country by linking it with at least two internationally-leading research institutions in other Member States or Associated Countries.

Main objectives:

- Enhance the **S&T capacity** of the institutions- Focus on institution in Widening country
- Raise the research profile of the **institution and** of its research **staff**

The Partners: (Minimum Conditions)

- **ONE** institution located in a "Widening" MS/AC (**COORDINATOR**)
- A **minimum of TWO** additional partners from two different MS or AC other than the country of the coordinator.

Twinning: Proposal Design & Activities

Proposals:

- Scientific **strategy for excellence and innovation** with proposed formulation of joint new/ongoing research project(s) in a defined area of research ;
- Outline the scientific qualities of the **partners**;
- Focus on promoting early stage researchers (dedicated Work Package).

Activities supported:

- Short term staff exchanges; expert visits and short-term training; workshops; conference attendance; dissemination, networking and outreach activities.

Infrastructure, equipment & research costs (except for training) will **NOT** be funded.

ERA Chairs - Objectives

Objectives of the action:

- Create the appropriate conditions and bring high quality researchers and managers **(the ERA Chair and his/her team)** to universities and other research organisations with the potential for research excellence.
- Institutions should implement structural changes to achieve excellence on a sustainable basis.

Participants

- One single applicant (mono-beneficiary action) located in a Widening country.

ERA Chairs: Proposal Design & Impact

Proposals:

- Bottom-up approach in the field of research but connected with the ERA Chair holder expertise to fully capitalise on his/her presence;
- Measures to foster structural changes for excellence including compliance with ERA priorities (open recruitment, peer review, gender balance, Charter & Code);
- Include a plan to increase Research Capacity - if infrastructures foreseen present a strategy for funding (including possible use of ESIF funding).

Eligible Costs:

- Salaries of ERA Chairs and his/her team.
- Contribution towards measures aimed at facilitating structural changes at the institution: - ERA priorities;
- Costs including training, meetings, publication and patenting costs, **minor part of budget for equipment and consumables**;
- The grant will not cover infrastructure costs.

ERA Chairs lessons learned

Lessons learned for future calls:

- Clearly define objectives towards **institutional changes**
- Demonstrate the role and **autonomy** of the ERA Chair holder
- Work Packages should be consistent and contribute to an **overall Action Plan**
- Management structures need to be **well defined** and **simple**.



Widening call 2014-2017 results

| | Proposals submitted | Projects funded | Call Success Rate | Project Size |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Twinning 2015 | 552 | 67 | 12% | €1 mil. |
| Twinning 2017 | 482 | 30 | 6% | €1 mil. |
| ERA Chairs 2014 | 89 | 14 | 16% | €2.5 mil. |
| ERA Chairs 2017 | 100 | 13 | 13 % | €2.5 mil |
| Teaming Phase 1 2017 | 208 | 30 | 14% | €0.4 mil. |
| Teaming 1&2 combined (2014+2016 calls) | 169 | 11 | 6.5% | €15 mil. €0.5 mil. |
| TOTAL/ AVERAGE SUCCESS RATE | 1604 | 165 | 10% | - |



Budget Breakdown – Widening vs. non-Widening

| Budget Distribution | Widening | Non-Widening |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| ERA Chairs 2014 | 34.024.659 € | 0 |
| ERA Chairs 2017 | 32.454.580 € | 0 |
| Twinning 2015 | 31.669.789 € | 34.612.125 € |
| Twinning 2017 | 13.900.000 € | 15.800.000 € |
| Teaming Phase 1 2014 | 8.205.160€ | 5.888.968 € |
| Teaming Phase 2 | 111.082.892 € | 28.755.173 € |
| Teaming Phase 1 2017 | 6.866.673 € | 5.019.595 € |
| TOTAL | 238.203.753€ | 90.075.861 € |
| % budget distribution | 73% | 27% |

Widening calls 2018-20

| Topics (Type of Action) | 2018 Budget (EUR million) | 2019 Budget (EUR million) | 2020 Budget (EUR million) | Deadlines |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| WIDESPREAD-01-2018-2019 (Teaming 2) | 103.00 | 111.00 | | 15 Nov 2018 |
| WIDESPREAD-03-2018 (Twinning) | 30.00 | | | 15 Nov 2018 |
| WIDESPREAD-04-2019 (ERA Chairs) | | 30.00 | | 15 Nov 2018 |
| WIDESPREAD-05-2020: Twinning | | | tbc | tbc |
| WIDESPREAD-06-2020: ERA Chairs | | | tbc | tbc |
| Overall indicative budget | 133.00 | 141.00 | 119.00 | |





Synergies in Horizon Europe – why?



Main findings of the **Horizon 2020 interim evaluation** include:

- Despite political willingness to increase coherence and linkages with other EU programmes, there are still many barriers to making synergies operational.
- Given different rules and implementing structures, and varying scale and scope of programmes, promoting synergies at project level remains difficult.
- The varying rules and arrangements lead to legal uncertainty for applicants, in particular as regards state aid rules.
- The objectives of different programmes sometimes overlap or duplicate.

The need to improve and operationalise synergies from the design stage is a key recommendation of the December 2017 Council Conclusions (*From the Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 to the Ninth Framework Programme*).

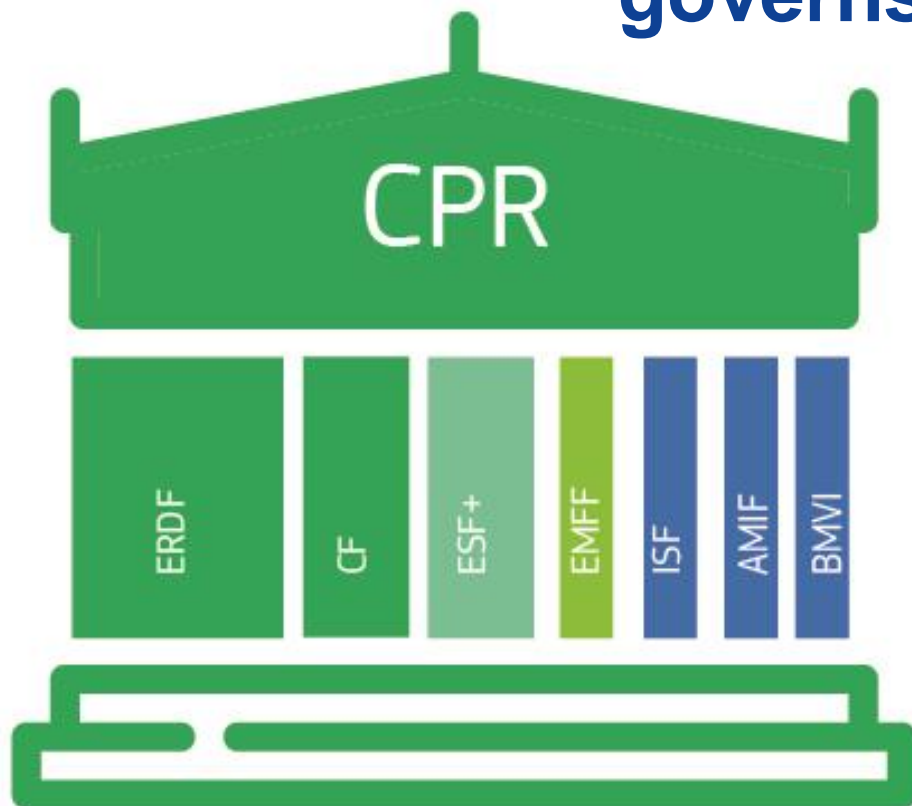
Basic approach to Horizon Europe – ERDF synergies

Complementarity ... with some exceptions

| Horizon Europe | ERDF |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on <u>European research and innovation excellence</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• focus on <u>regional relevance</u> and economic transformation, based on smart specialisation strategies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on <u>frontier research</u>, generation and exploitation of <u>new knowledge</u> and <u>disruptive, market-creating</u> innovations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Broad innovation concept</u>; focus on <u>diffusion and exploitation of existing knowledge & technology</u> to places that need it |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality-based competition for funds, incl. beyond EU | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus of support on where it is most needed inside the EU |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Predominantly trans-national projects and consortia | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Predominantly "mono-beneficiaries" or actors in the same country/region |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on R&I <u>activities</u> and "<u>R&I community</u>" in view of contributing to other policies• Centralised Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on R&I <u>capacities</u> and innovation ecosystem development, as one part of a <u>comprehensive policy</u> with sustainable & inclusive growth and a broad partnership• Shared Management |

- A renewed European Agenda for Research and Innovation - Europe's chance to shape its future (COM(2018) 306)
- Explanatory memoranda of proposals for HE and CPR/ERDF

Post-2020 MFF proposal: Common Provisions Regulation * governs 7 Funds

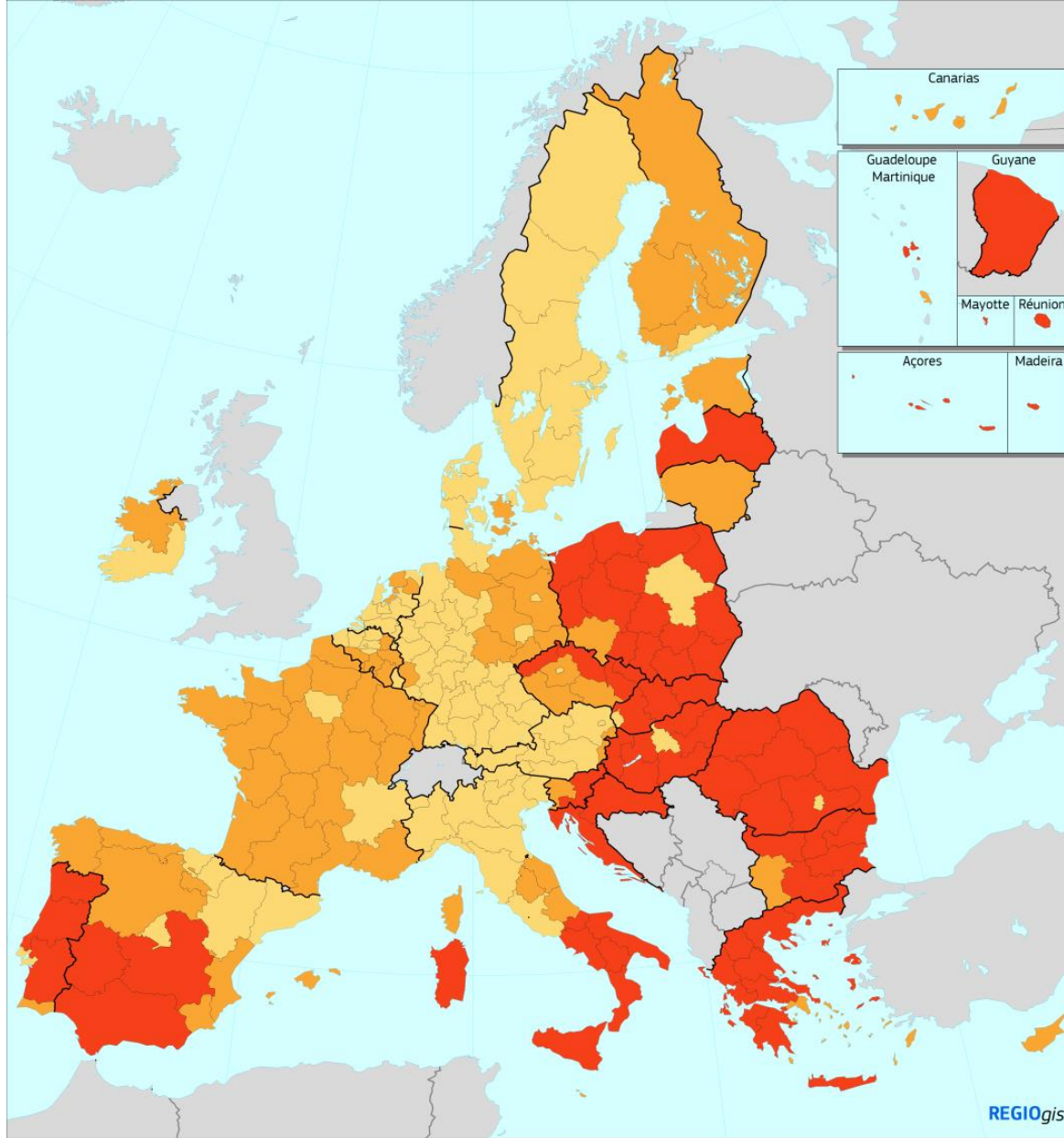


- **European Regional Development Fund** (€ 200 billion, incl. €8.4 billion "Interreg")
- **Cohesion Fund** (€ 41 bn, incl. €11bn under CEF2)
- **European Social Fund Plus** (€101 bn)
- **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund** (€6.1 bn)
- **Asylum and Migration Fund** (€ 11.3 bn)
- **Internal Security Fund** (€ 2.5 bn)
- **Border Management and Visa Instrument** (€ 8 bn)

Not included anymore: European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (€ 78.8)

*) https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/regional-development-and-cohesion_en

New regional eligibility map 2021-2027



GDP/head (PPS) by NUTS2 region, average 2014-2015-2016

Index, EU-27 = 100

- < 75% (less developed regions)
- 75% - 100% (transition regions)
- >= 100% (more developed regions)



Policy objectives

11 objectives are simplified and consolidated to 5 policy objectives:

1. **A smarter Europe (innovative & smart economic transformation)**
2. A greener, low-carbon Europe (including energy transition, the circular economy, climate adaptation and risk management)
3. A more connected Europe (mobility and ICT connectivity)
4. A more social Europe (the European Pillar of Social Rights)
5. A Europe closer to citizens (sustainable development of urban, rural and coastal areas and local initiatives)

Horizontal issues: administrative capacity building, cooperation outside the programme area

Smart Growth specific objectives

In accordance with the policy objectives, the ERDF shall support the specific objectives of "*a smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation*" by:

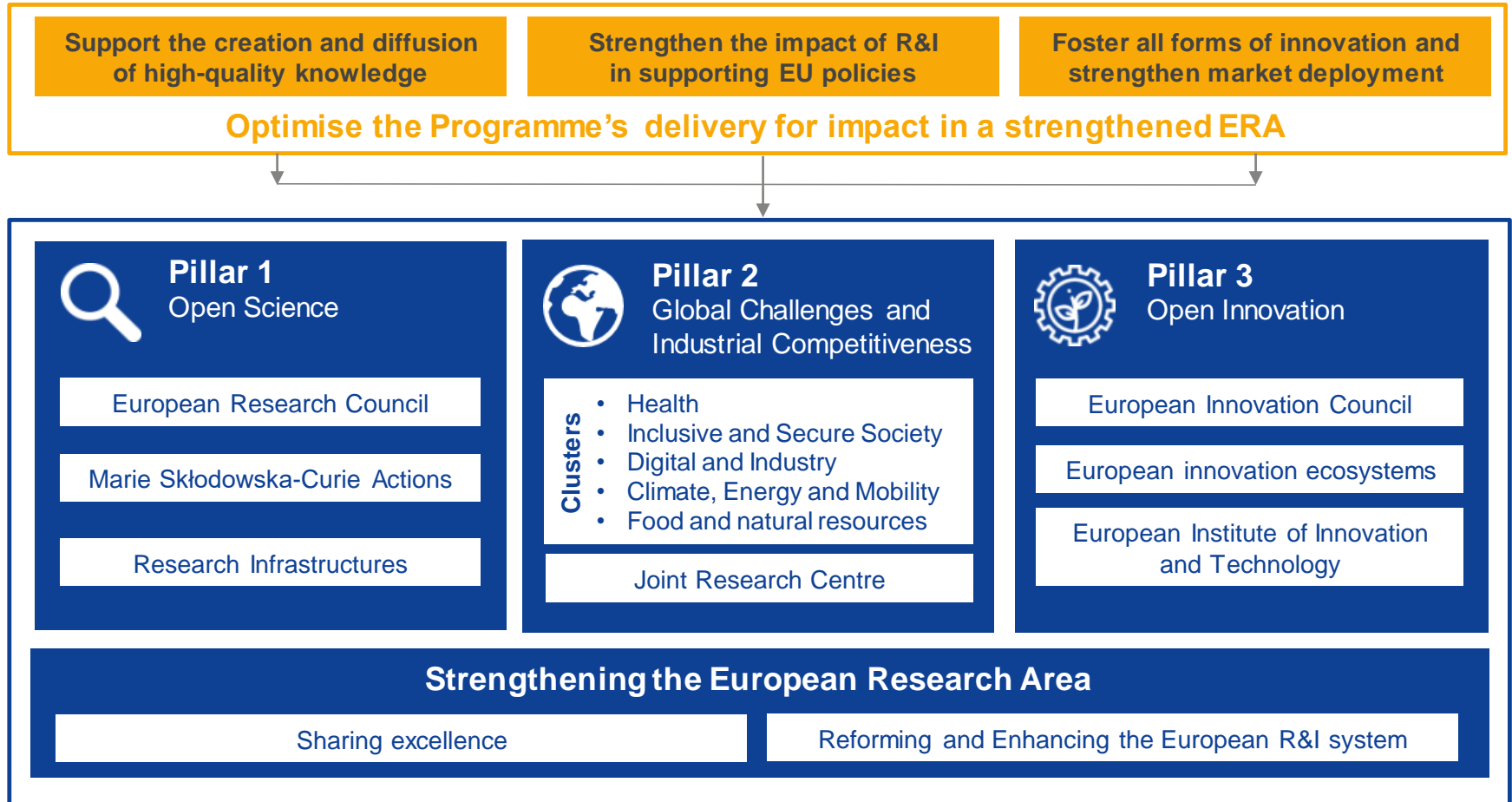
1. enhancing research and innovation **capacities** and the **uptake of advanced technologies**;
2. reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies and governments;
3. enhancing growth and competitiveness of SMEs;
4. **developing skills for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship**;

Summing up:

Main points for ERDF-Horizon Europe synergies

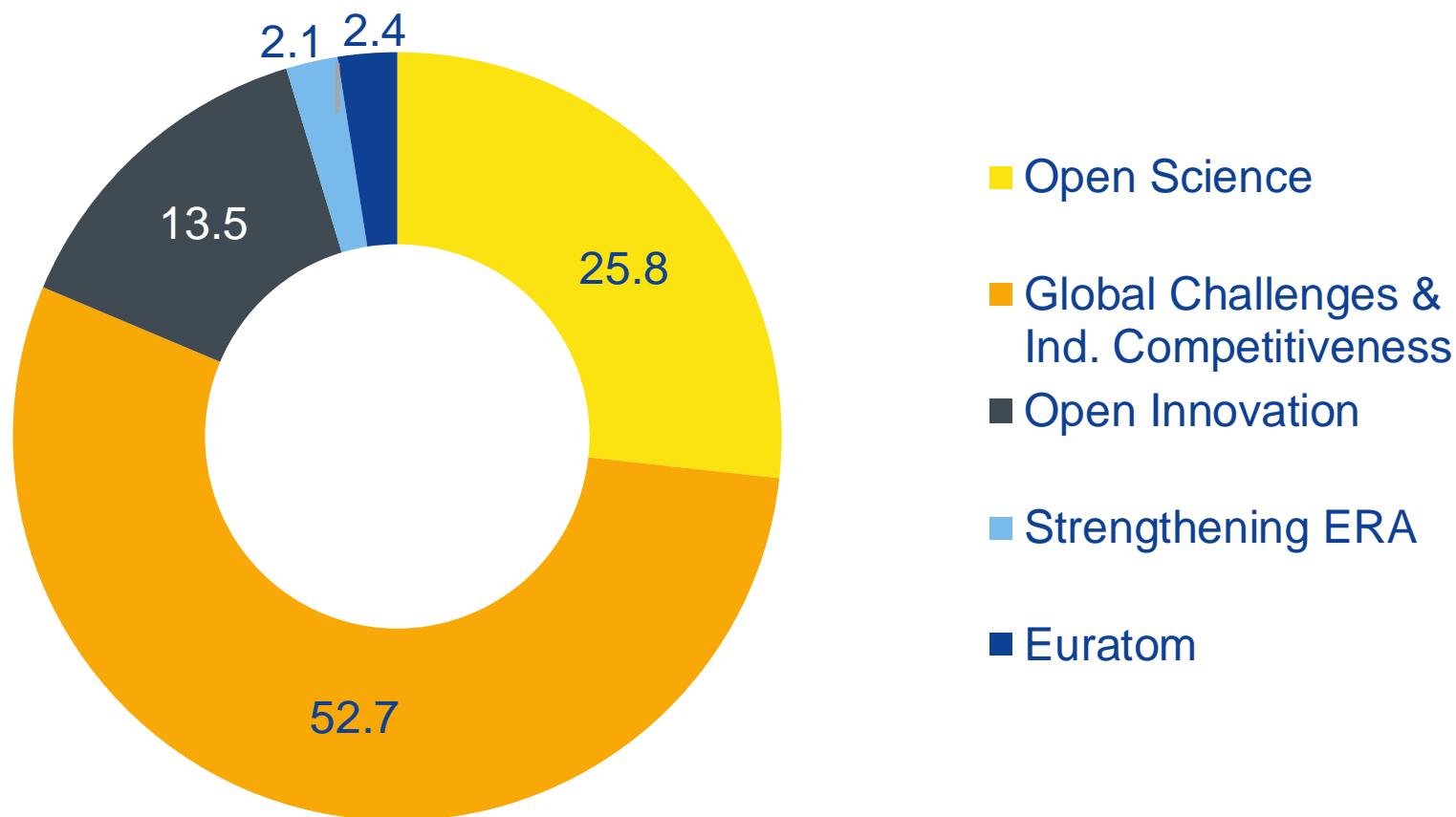
- **Strategic planning process:**
 - European Semester – Country specific recommendations
 - Partnership Agreements (Art.8 CPR), and programmes (Art. 17 CPR)
 - Smart Specialisation Strategies
- Options for synergies at **financial level:**
 1. **Sequential funding:** draw on results of previous EU funding for new projects, e.g. research infrastructures, technology absorption
 2. **Alternative funding: Seal of Excellence** expanded, with less red tape and more possibility to align ERDF funding to HE conditions (Art.67(5) CPR, Art 11, 20(5), 43(6) Horizon Europe Regulation)
 3. **Transfer** of up to 5% to any EU fund/instrument, incl. Horizon Europe (Art 21 CPR, Art 9(8) Horizon Europe Regulation)
 4. **Cumulative funding:** Joint funding for projects on costs-split or pro rata basis (Art. 57(9) CPR, Art 9(8) Horizon Europe Regulation)
- Option for synergies at **management level:**
 - Managing Authorities may identify Horizon implementing bodies (e.g. for programme co-fund / partnerships / JUs) as **intermediate bodies for implementing cumulative or alternative funding under ERDF rules.** (Art. 65(3 & 5) CPR)

Horizon Europe: evolution, not revolution



Budget: €100 billion*

(2021-2027, current prizes, incl. € 3.5 InvestEU)



Lessons learned

from Horizon 2020 Interim Evaluation



Support breakthrough innovation



Create more impact through mission-orientation and citizens' involvement



Strengthen international cooperation



Reinforce openness



Rationalise the funding landscape



More synergies with other EU programmes



Key novelties

in Horizon Europe

European Innovation Council

R&I Missions

Extended association possibilities

Open science policy

New approach to Partnerships

Synergies with 16 other programmes



European
Commission

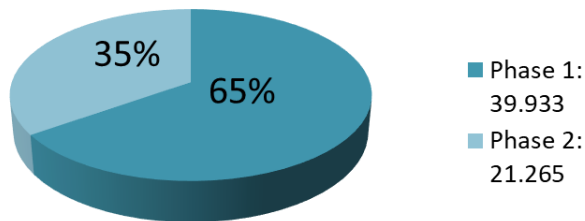
PRACTICAL EXAMPLE FOR SYNERGIES – ALTERNATIVE FUNDING



★ SEAL OF
EXCELLENCE

SME INSTRUMENT SEALS

Proposals Submitted



Highly Competitive

Proposals above quality threshold

9 162
7 291

Proposals below quality threshold

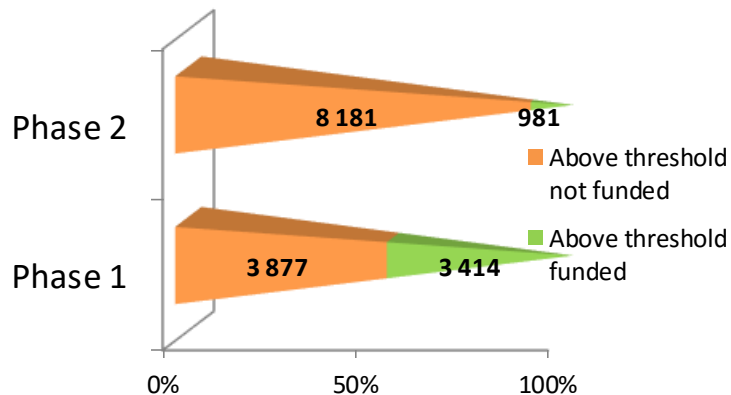
11 795
32 113

Evaluated

20 957
39 404

0 10 000 20 000 30 000 40 000
■ Phase 2 ■ Phase 1

The Seal population



- **61.198 proposals submitted**
- **4.395 proposals funded**
- **12.058 Seal of Excellence**

A) Most popular topics (2014-2017):

- **ICT**
- **Biotechnology**
- **Nanotechnology**

B) Thematic keywords (2018)

Health, Information and Communication, Engineering and Technology, construction and transport networks etc.

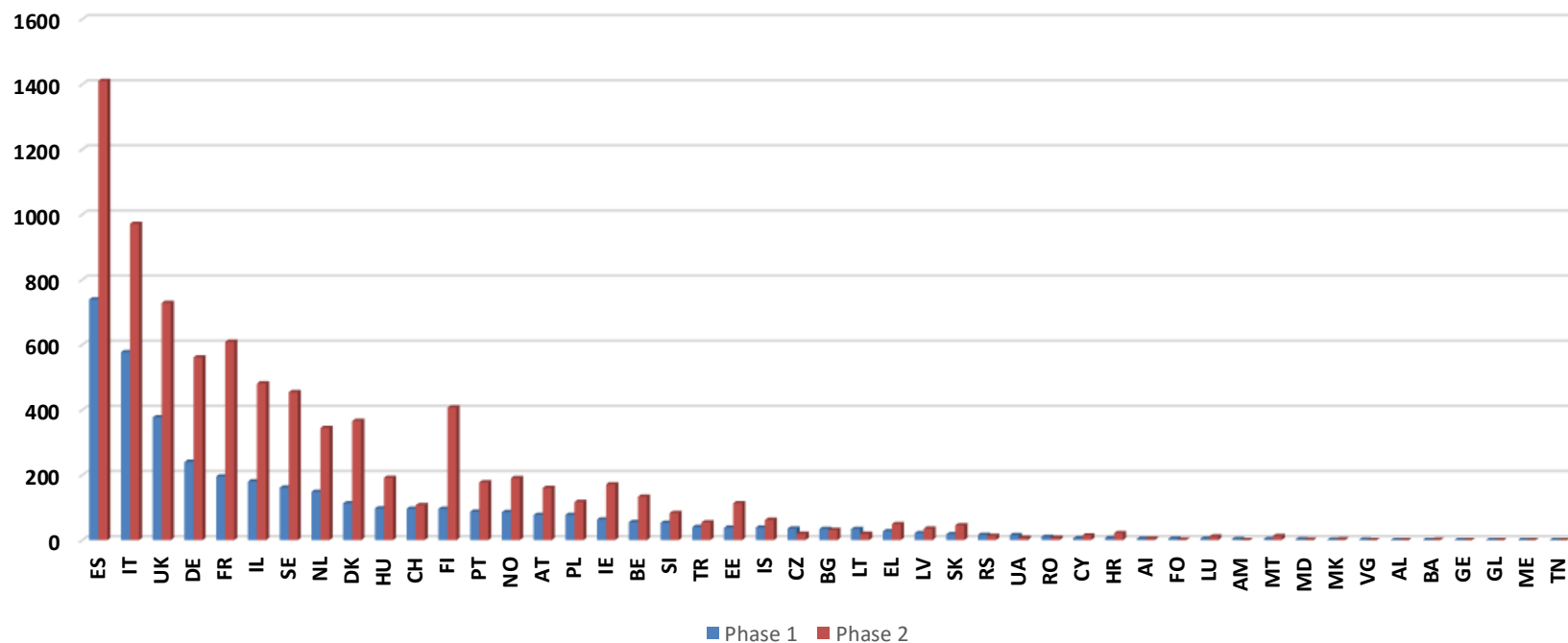
Data: Horizon 2020 SME Instrument Phase 1 & 2 including Nov 2018 cut-off.

- **Extended to MSCA Individual Fellowships and Teaming**
- **To be extended to other areas such as ERC Proof of Concept**

★ SEAL OF
EXCELLENCE ★



Total Seal of Excellence_SMEI Phase 1&2_EU&AC (Nov.18 cut-off incl.)



| Seal Scheme (SME, MSCA, Teaming) | Number of 'Seal' Schemes | Countries |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 30 SME Instrument Seal schemes | 16 PHASE 1 schemes in 14 countries | CY (1), IT (1), ES (2), HU (1), SI (1), SE (1), CZ (2), NO (1), PL (1), UK (1), SK (1), BE (1) and soon EL (1) and LT(1) |
| | | National: 12 Regional: 4 |
| | 14 PHASE 2 schemes in 10 countries | IT(4), ES (2), FR (1), SI (1), PL (1), CY (1), BE (1), LV(1) and soon HR(1), EL (1) |
| | | National: 5 Regional: 8 |
| 10 Marie Skłodowska-Curie | MSCA schemes in 8 countries | CY(1), CZ (1), SE (1), SI (1), IT (3), LT(1), BE Flanders (1), BG (1) |
| | | National: 6 Regional: 1 Institutional: 3 |
| 1 Teaming | Teaming Scheme in 1 country | SK (1) |
| | | National: 1 |
| 1 European Research Council* | 1 scheme in 1 country | CY (1) |
| | | National: 1 |
| TOTAL | 42 Schemes in 18 countries | CY (4)*, CZ (3), IT (8), ES (4), FR (1), HU (1), SI (3), SE (2), NO (1), PL (2), UK (1), HR(1), LV (1), EL (2), SK (2), LT (2), BE (3), BG (1) |
| | | *CY has a programme with 2 modules and it funds (Ph1&2, MSCA and ERC starting and consolidator grants) |
| | | 25 National schemes in 13 countries: CY (4), CZ (2), ES (1), HU (1), SI (3), SE (2), NO (1), PL (2), UK (1), HR (1) and soon EL (2) and SK (2), LT (2), BG (1) |
| | | 13 regional schemes in 4 countries: IT (6), ES (3), FR (1), CZ (1) |
| | | 3 Institutional IT (3) |

Outlook and conclusions

- Continuation of SEWP in Horizon Europe under the Heading 'Widening Participation and Sharing Excellence'
- Core actions will be retained but adjusted to new requirements
- Reflections on new actions for brain circulation and improved support for applicants
- Stronger alignment with ERA objectives
- Improved compatibility of legislation and rules between funds under direct and shared management
- Commission proposal prepares legislative ground for co-funding, seal of excellence and voluntary transfer across programme
- Major simplification
- Streamlined policy objectives

Thank you!