

## ENSURING PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND SOCIETAL IMPACT, PRIORITISING GLOBAL CHALLENGES IN FP9: REACTION TO THE LEAKED FP9 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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Based on the leak of the draft Impact Assessment of the EU's next research framework programme (FP9), **we strongly warn against the proposed merging of parts of Horizon 2020 Pillar II (Industrial Leadership) with Pillar III (Societal Challenges) in the next framework.**

According to the assessment, “the [new] second pillar [“global challenges”] will integrate the Horizon 2020 *Societal Challenges* and *Leadership in Enabling Industrial technologies* parts to better address EU **policy priorities (including meeting the SDGs) and support industrial competitiveness**”. Moreover, changes under the new framework will include a **“higher visibility for industry’s role in solving global challenges”**.

All publicly-funded R&I should be focused on delivering societal impact, and industry is a key partner in this. Under FP9, however, the **objective of delivering societal impact should not be diluted by adding the objective of industrial competitiveness** to the same pillar. This will negatively impact:

**Diversion of funds:** A future pillar that has to address the two priorities risks limiting the already-scarce funding available for addressing societal challenges.

**Accountability for public investments:** Merging profit-oriented with societal-impact-oriented objectives threatens the traceability of public funding, which is needed to make sure there is a public return on public investments.

**Societal impact:** Past evaluations of FP7 and H2020<sup>1</sup> show that any evidence of societal impact in general, and on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular, remains very limited. That is why there is a need to design a pillar that can focus on, deliver for, and track impact on sustainable development.

**Economic impact:** Scientific excellence that focuses on sustainable development already creates jobs and has a significant economic return on investment, in and of itself, and without having to rely on adding “industrial competitiveness” to the programme pillar.

**Political priorities:** The European Parliament has already called on the Commission to “enhance the societal challenges approach”<sup>2</sup> and Member States have called for more societal impact in their national positions on FP9 – contrary to what would happen if the pillars were merged.

**Dedicated and ambitious funding, together with a corresponding strategy and vision, need to feature prominently in FP9** if the EU is serious about delivering on international commitments such as the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement.

**Societal challenges, as per the SDGs, need to be addressed in an independent pillar for global societal challenges**, while at the same time being mainstreamed through all other parts of the future programme, facilitating necessary cross-pillar collaboration and synergies.

**Adequate safeguards and conditionalities need to be in place** to ensure that the allocation of public funds responds to public needs, delivers affordable and accessible R&I solutions to improve people’s lives and well-being, and contributing to realising the EU’s commitments as part of the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ex-Post-Evaluation of the 7th EU Framework Programme (2007-2013), available at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/fp7\\_final\\_evaluation\\_expert\\_group\\_report.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](https://ec.europa.eu/research/evaluations/pdf/fp7_final_evaluation_expert_group_report.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>2</sup> European Parliament resolution on the assessment of Horizon 2020 implementation, available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P8-TA-2017-0253&language=EN&ring=A8-2017-0209>

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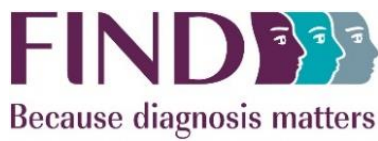
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