

European Partnerships under Horizon Europe 2028-2034

European Partnerships Stakeholder Forum 2025

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Why European Partnerships matter

- Partnerships remain an essential instrument for long-term collaboration and co-investment between the Union, public, and private partners
- They provide strategic orientation to funding, in line with Union priorities, create critical mass, and foster vibrant ecosystems
- They are expected to contribute directly to competitiveness, resilience, and strategic capabilities
- Horizon Europe 2028-2034 strengthens their framework to ensure impact, coherence and accountability



Re-imagining European Partnerships under Horizon Europe 2028-2034

- Simplified toolbox, mainstreaming ambitious tripartite collaborations
- A strategic, streamlined portfolio
- Strengthened reciprocity by partners through tangible contributions
- Based on lessons learned from Horizon Europe 2021-2027



The legal package

- **Regulation** establishing Horizon Europe including the rules for participation and dissemination (as required by the Treaty)
- **Specific programme** to implement 'Horizon Europe' (as required by the Treaty)
- **Impact assessment** (European Competitiveness Fund, ECF)
- Complemented by the **Regulation for the ECF**, including **Specific Programme for Defence**
- **Performance Framework** for the Union programmes and activities

European Partnership provisions

- **Title I – The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation**
 - Chapter I - General Provisions
 - Chapter II - Excellent Science
 - Chapter III - Competitiveness and Society
 - Chapter IV - Innovation
 - Chapter V - European Research Area
- **Title II - Rules for participation and dissemination**
 - Chapter I - General provisions
 - Chapter II - Grants
 - Chapter III - European Innovation Council
- **Legislative Financial and Digital Statement**

**EP and COUNCIL
REGULATION (preceded
by an EXPLANATORY
MEMORANDUM)**



- Chapter I - General Provisions
- Chapter II - Excellent Science
- Chapter III - Competitiveness and Society
- Chapter IV – Innovation
- Chapter V - European Research Area
- Chapter VI - Transitional and final provisions

**COUNCIL DECISION
(preceded by an
EXPLANATORY
MEMORANDUM)**



Key principles

- **Necessity:** Only created when EU action alone or other FP instruments are not enough
- **Strategic Coordination:** Tackle major challenges with joint effort and resources
- **Policy Alignment:** Support key EU policies and initiatives
- **Selection and portfolio:** Competitive selection based on clear, measurable criteria and a strong portfolio approach
- **Shared Commitment:** long-term, formal commitments from all partners, with centrally managed financial resources unless exceptions are justified
- **Lifecycle approach:** Include a clear implementation plan and exit strategy from EU funding



European Partnership provisions: Portfolio building & selection

- Evidence-based portfolio building approach
- Competitive selection procedure
- Revised, more quantifiable selection criteria:
 - Portfolio relevance
 - Critical mass
 - Partners' composition
 - Pan-European relevance
 - Mission-orientation
 - Business plan
 - Openness and transparency
 - Legacy
- Limited number of partnerships → streamlined landscape

European Partnership provisions: The toolbox

- Simplified toolbox:
 - One default work programme-based instrument, consolidating current co-programmed and co-funded implementation modes
 - A Memorandum of Understanding sets the framework (results, reporting requirements, commitments, governance)
 - Partnership calls co-designed and co-funded with partners and implemented through the Horizon Europe work programmes
 - Central management of financial resources
 - Art. 185 and 187 in exceptional and duly justified cases
- Tripartite (Union, public, and private partners) collaborations by default



European Partnership provisions: Harmonisation

- Revised partner contribution framework:
 - Matching principle to ensure leverage
 - Tangible partner contributions: Reliance on financial contributions and co-financing a project level
- Harmonised rules and implementation modalities
- More transparency and openness
- Continuous monitoring, including on common indicators
- Sunset clause (final calls launched by 31 December 2034) and arrangements for transitioning



Key takeaways

- More strategic, transparent, and performance-driven partnerships
- Stronger co-investment, clearer rules, and better results
- Partnerships positioned as major drivers of EU competitiveness and resilience

Thank you



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