

From ambition to implementation: The Guild welcomes leading parliamentarians' clarion call for Europe

On 13 March, [MEP Christian Ehler](#) and [MEP René Repasi](#) published their draft reports for the European Parliament on the European Commission's proposals for the Horizon Europe framework programme 2028-34 (FP10). The Guild warmly welcomes their ambition for a reform of FP10 so that it can more effectively and efficiently boost Europe's scientific leadership, competitiveness and prosperity.

We echo the call to increase the budget to €200 billion – as advised by Mario Draghi in his [report on the future of Europe's competitiveness](#). The proposed amendment to reinject decommitted funds in the same FP10 instruments would also significantly contribute to ringfencing the budget of these instruments and to the financial predictability of FP10. We also welcome MEP Ehler and MEP Repasi's proposal to contain defence R&I projects into the European Innovation Council and to finance them through the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF). This provides much-needed clarity on the civilian essence – and funding – of FP10.

We fully share the urgency to increase Europe's resilience against the multiple crises it is facing, and this is precisely why FP10 must build on instruments with [proven success](#). The draft reports provide a necessary protection of the unique model of the European Research Council (ERC): their amendments reassert the curiosity-driven and excellence-focused nature of the ERC and reintroduce well-needed provisions reinforcing the autonomy of the ERC Scientific Council and the role of the ERC President. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) in attracting and training early-career researchers is rightfully recognised. The bottom-nature of MSCA significantly contribute to such success and must therefore be safeguarded.

We take note of MEP Ehler's and MEP Repasi's proposal for new instruments and welcome their efforts to allow for bottom-up and collaborative R&I projects, which the ongoing Horizon Europe framework programme (FP10) overlooks. Moreover, a new instrument for Researchers at Risk will be well-aligned with President von der Leyen's vision of Europe as "the home of academic and scientific freedom,"¹ hence its undisputable relevance. While we are fully convinced of the academic, strategic and moral added value of such an instrument, we recall more generally that all proposed instruments must be carefully calibrated to maximise their impact, and any new instruments must face the same test. That is also why we welcome many ideas in these reports for more impactful instruments and initiatives, for instance in relation to partnerships and moonshots.

We commend especially MEP Ehler and MEP Repasi's joint call for the "Framework Programme to mature" through a renewed governance based on a stronger expert engagement. We regard their proposal as balanced since it does not exclude any of the EU institutions and gives them a key role of political framing in the implementation of FP10, while returning to experts the operationalisation of

¹ Closing speech by President von der Leyen at the 'Choose Europe for Science' event at La Sorbonne, 5 May 2025: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/da/speech_25_1130

thematic priorities into call texts. We praise the idea of creating Councils and expert groups with the role of steering the implementation of the work programmes, to ensure that FP10 keeps investing in R&I at the knowledge frontier.

Both MEPs also contribute to a better and more sensible definition of the connections between FP10 and the ECF. In line with [our joint statement](#), they articulate the importance of these connections, and the need to maximise these through distinct governance logics for FP10. Their amendments make critical clarification on intervention logics, with FP10 focusing on generating knowledge, and the ECF accelerating innovation deployment and scale-up to increase socio-economic impact. Importantly, the rapporteurs also disentangle FP10's Pillar 2 and ECF in line with the approach we called for: FP10 should mirror the ECF policy windows, while the Pillar 2 work programmes must be designed by the relevant FP10 committee configurations with the calls and projects abiding by the FP10 rules.

The European Commission puts emphasis on simplification, but MEP Ehler and MEP Repasi proposed a more appropriate approach for researchers and research organisations. They rightfully deny that lump sum funding should be the default form of funding, and instead propose amendments that will ensure simplification for beneficiaries: better access to information on calls, higher predictability of project and participation rules (including through the Annotated Grant Agreement to be published when FP10 will be kicked off), and increased availability of policy officers to support project coordinators and other beneficiaries. Simplification must never lead to legal uncertainty. This is also the reason why we support MEP Ehler and MEP Repasi's proposal to clarify research security rules that may apply to FP10-funded projects.

The Guild strongly welcomes this strong contribution from the European Parliament, and calls on other parties to support these proposals, basing the discussions on the objectives set out by MEP Ehler and Repasi, for an FP10 of the highest quality and ambition. MEP Ehler and Repasi have laid out the foundations of a very strong position on FP10 by the European Parliament. The Guild remains committed to engaging with MEP Ehler, MEP Repasi, their respective teams and the shadow rapporteurs, to flesh out these promising ideas and turn FP10 into a mature framework programme.