



**Dr. Christian Ehler**  
CDU MEP for Brandenburg  
ITRE EPP Group Coordinator  
Rapporteur for Horizon Europe/FP10

## **Strong signal for an independent FP10 – opposing attempts to be sucked up by a centrally managed superfund**

"Today, the European Parliament's Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) voted with overwhelming majority for my report on the assessment of the implementation of Horizon Europe in view of its interim evaluation and recommendations for the 10<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. From this report, I would like to highlight three important messages. First, we urge the Commission to honour the Treaties and ensure FP10 remains an independent Union Programme. Second, the Framework Programme's budget should receive a substantial upgrade to 220 billion euros, in line with the target of 3% of GDP being spend on R&D. Finally, Horizon Europe is too strongly influenced by top-down, short-term policy objectives. Therefore, we should double down on what works and especially support the bottom-up instruments currently part of the Programme, such as the ERC and the EIC."

### **Background summary**

The European Parliament takes, with this Own-Initiative Report, a strong stance against integrating the budget for Research and Innovation in a broader Competitiveness Fund. Overall, it constitutes a clear message from the Parliament to the Commission on how we should further shape Horizon Europe and how we should build the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. We underline that if Europe intends to achieve sustainable competitiveness through innovation, it needs to put Research and Innovation (R&I) at the heart of its economy and society, and it needs to do so on the terms of R&I. This must begin with a European Framework Programme (FP) that fosters the best science, research and innovation in the world. The current FP, Horizon Europe, is an excellent programme which supports some of the best science in the world through the European Research Council, accelerates the large scale development of strategic technologies such as through the Quantum Flagship, successfully leverages private Research and Development investment in sectoral technology development with, for example, the Joint Undertaking on Clean Aviation and has created the largest venture capital investment effort in deep tech start-ups in Europe through the European Innovation Council.

However, based on the results of the Programme and the feedback from stakeholders, we concluded that Horizon Europe is lacking in several key-areas. Some parts of Horizon are not attractive enough for the best and the brightest, the Programme is too complex, and calls are not relevant enough. As a whole, Horizon Europe is too strongly influenced by top-down, short-term policy objectives. This conclusion means that FP10 has to be a game changer that focuses on funding the best possible science, research and innovation to secure the Union's long-term competitiveness. This Framework Programme should, therefore, be centred around three core objectives: (1) creating a European competition of ideas, (2) supporting strategic research initiatives and advancing the European Research Area and, (3) implementing an improved governance based on expertise with a bottom-up approach.

Not only the Programme's content should be improved, but its budget should also receive a significant increase. The European Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation are

central features of our European Research Area and have been so for decades. They are the Union's contribution to achieving the target of 3% of GDP being spend on R&D and help to attract and retain talent for Europe. Unfortunately, high oversubscription jeopardizes all of this. Therefore, it is vital for European competitiveness that FP10 receives a budget of at least EUR 220 billion, in line with the Union's share towards the 3% spending-target.

Furthermore, the FP10-budget should remain independent. As clearly put forward in the Commission's recent Competitiveness Compass, Research and Innovation will be an essential part in the road to securing Europe's long-term competitiveness. While FP10 can and will play a crucial role for EU competitiveness, it should not be driven by it, but by science, research and deep-tech entrepreneurs.