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Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth



This briefing follows up the commitments made by the commissioner since 2019.

Commitment	State of play
<p>Ensure swift agreement on and full implementation of the future Horizon Europe programme</p> <p><i>"[...] I will vigorously defend the budget increase for the Horizon Europe programme, because it will have to be understood that the budget for Horizon Europe is not an expense, it is an investment."</i></p> <p><i>"[...] I intend to work extremely closely with Parliament right now. I will not wait until, for example, missions begin in 2021 to keep Parliament informed of what is happening. That's why I suggested for the mission councils, the mission boards, to designate each time a person who will be the interface of the Parliament to be able to answer at any time and indicate what are the evolutions and how the decisions are taken."</i></p>	<p>On 11 December 2020, the EU institutions reached a political agreement on Horizon Europe. The Commission's proposal for the Horizon Europe budget was €95.5 billion in current prices, or €84.9 billion in constant 2018 prices, a 30% increase versus Horizon 2020 for EU27, in constant prices.</p> <p>On 10 May 2022, the Commission amended the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022, increasing the budget, including for WomenTechEU, to support women-led start-ups, and other actions to boost European innovation potential.</p> <p>On 18 March 2021, in the structured dialogue with the European Parliament, Commissioner M. Gabriel reiterated the involvement of the EP in the organisation of Horizon Europe's missions. On 15 March 2021, the Commission had adopted Horizon Europe's strategic plan, identifying the EU missions to be supported. On 29 September 2021, the Commission launched the five missions to promote research results.</p> <p>In the structured dialogue of 13 June 2022, the Commissioner provided the ITRE Committee with an update on the relevant policy areas, including the state of play on the implementation of the Horizon Europe programme, as well as on special actions of</p>



"Then, to go even further, I would like to insist on the possibility of launching an information campaign and making sure that 'science meets young people'. That's why I'll be organising a 'science meets regions and schools' initiative so that researchers show our young people the results of their research and inspire them to take this path."

"If we really want to make sure that there is no selection that does not meet the criteria we believe in, for me there is one word: it is transparency. If we really want to know how the European Innovation Council selects these projects, we need to receive regular information on the selection process."

"I would like to make a real commitment with my services, before the implementation of Horizon Europe, to go to the regions, in the different countries, and to talk about Horizon Europe."

Ensure sufficient investment flows to disruptive research and breakthrough innovations

"I will therefore be extremely careful that, as part of the next industrial strategy, through research and innovation, Europe is investing smartly, Europe is counting on its assets, but Europe as well, does not hesitate to be at the helm of the next wave of innovation."

the European support to the Ukrainian research community.

After the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Commissioner issued a [statement](#) on the relevant EU response. As announced, the Commission took steps to [suspend cooperation with Russia](#) (and later Belarus) and to assist Ukrainian researchers, including by [launching](#) the 'European Research Area for Ukraine' ([ERA4Ukraine](#)) portal, the [Horizon4Ukraine](#) and [ERC for Ukraine](#) initiatives.

On 1 April 2022, the Commission launched the [Horizon Europe calls Youth 2022 initiative](#) in the framework of the [European Year of Youth 2022](#). The aim of the initiative is to allow Master's students, from any discipline, to witness the evaluation and funding processes of Horizon Europe, thereby increasing the awareness of research and innovation career opportunities, and bringing more young people to research, innovation and knowledge valorisation career paths.

On 23 February 2021, the Commission proposed a new [European Partnerships' \(EPs\)](#) structure between the EU, Member States and industry to improve transparency and simplify their management. The number of [candidate EPs](#) was reduced from over 120 in Horizon 2020 to 49 in Horizon Europe.

On 16 July 2021, the Commission adopted its [proposal](#) for a Council Recommendation on "A Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe" to support the implementation of national European Research Area (ERA) policies. The first round of ERA 'Tour des Capitales' was followed by [digital ERA 'Tour des Capitales'](#) in 2020 by means of bilateral meetings, due to COVID-19.

On 18 March 2021, Horizon Europe launched the [European Innovation Council \(EIC\)](#), with a budget of €10 billion for 2021-2027. On 6 January 2021, following up on its [new industrial strategy](#), the Commission had [announced](#) the first round of direct equity investment for €178 million through the new European [Innovation Council \(EIC\) Fund](#), providing venture capital for high-risk and high-impact innovation. Grant financing had already been provided since December 2019 through the EIC Accelerator Pilot to enable companies to scale up

faster. Issues arising from restructuring the EIC Accelerator further to the new Horizon Europe legislation are being addressed in the ongoing [implementation process](#).

On 5 July 2022, the Commission adopted a [New European Innovation Agenda](#), proposing 25 [dedicated actions](#) under five flagship areas. Its aim is to place Europe in the lead of the new wave of deep tech innovation, which requires breakthrough R&D as well as large capital investment and addresses pressing societal challenges.

The Commission has also set up €20 million [support for Ukrainian start-ups](#) through a targeted amendment of the 2022 [European Innovation Council](#) (EIC) work programme.

Build a true European Research Area

"I want give a new life to the European Research Area." "The European Commission will issue a Communication on the European Research Area in the second half of 2020."

"I really want to help revitalise the European Research Area: one of the issues I would like to bring to the fore is exactly the brain drain and how to attract and retain talent."

"I will touch on a much more sensitive question; it is the salaries of researchers. We have made the commitment to do a study, to follow the evolution and I am sure that this evolution will give us many lessons to be able to act more quickly."

"[...] we are committed to thinking about [an] incentive, a scholarship that will allow a researcher to return to their own country and be able to do research there."

On 30 September 2020, the Commission adopted a [Communication on a new European Research Area for Research and Innovation](#).

On 16 July 2021 the Commission adopted a [proposal for a Council Recommendation on 'A Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe'](#) as the basis for the future governance of the [European Research Area](#).

On 5 July 2022, the Commission published the 2022 edition of the [Science, Research and Innovation Performance \(SRIP\) report](#), with a focus on the EU's innovation performance in a global context and suggesting measures to address inter alia the difficulty in attracting and retaining talent.

The [Staff Working Document](#) (SWD) accompanying the Communication on a new ERA for Research and Innovation focuses on increasing the attractiveness of EU researchers' careers.

Under the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#) European Fellowships (part of the ERA Talent Platform) researchers coming back to Europe are given support in finding a new position.

As part of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, the Commission has set up the [MSCA4Ukraine](#) scheme, which will support displaced Ukrainian researchers to continue their work in Europe and, when possible, allow them to rebuild Ukraine's research and innovation capacity.

Ensure that research, policy and economic priorities go hand in hand

"In the next Horizon Europe programme, SMEs will be a prime target of the third pillar 'Innovative Europe', thanks to the creation of the European Innovation Council. Our ambition is to create a one-stop shop for SMEs, so that they can bring us innovative ideas and products and help them access the market faster. They can also participate in other activities. I am thinking, for example, of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and the different Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). We must ensure synergies between the two."

"We must help the energy-intensive regions and coal areas in their transition towards a low-carbon economy, we must provide skills. Education and learning will have a key role here. We must ensure that these regions can count on resources so as not to lose their competitiveness at all."

"I will support space technologies, especially since their potential is huge, but also and above all because space services open up markets in new markets and new applications."

"Especially since the Parliament was very clear: 70 percent of the budget will be dedicated to SMEs."

"[...] I will also pay particular attention to the activities of the European Institute of Innovation, because they also have initiatives aimed at regional innovation. They are also aimed at small and medium-sized businesses."

"[...] I will place a strong emphasis on the change needed to integrate this culture of exploitation

On 18 March 2021, the Commission launched the [European Innovation Council \(EIC\)](#), established under Horizon Europe, and the [EIC Fund](#), a dedicated equity fund to scale up innovative start-ups and SMEs with a budget of around €3 billion.

On 8 January 2021, the Commission announced the [signature of a Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the European Innovation Council (EIC) and the [European Institute of Innovation and Technology \(EIT\)](#). Both of them will contribute to accelerating the twin transition to a green and digital economy as well as to create jobs and opportunities for all the talented innovators across Europe.

On 9 December 2021, the Commission published its [annual Education and Training Monitor](#), which monitors recent policy developments and provides an overview of how Member States will make use of the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) to adapt and strengthen education and training systems.

On 30 September 2020, the Commission published a [Communication on achieving the European Education Area by 2025](#) and the [Digital Education Action Plan](#) to strengthen the contribution of education and training to the EU's recovery from the coronavirus crisis.

On 15 February 2022, the Commission published a proposal for a [Regulation on a space-based secure connectivity](#) and a [Joint Communication on an EU approach on Space Traffic Management \(STM\)](#).

On 22 February 2021, the Commission launched the [Action Plan on synergies between civil, defence and space industries](#).

The [European Innovation Council Fund](#) dedicated equity fund to scale up innovative start-ups and SMEs will have a budget of around €3 billion.

On 11 July 2019, the Commission proposed a reinforcement of the activities of the EIT, including in the area of education and in the regional dimension. With two new [Knowledge and Innovation Communities \(KICs\)](#), the EIT is also able to put more emphasis on its regional dimension: the strengthened EIT [Regional Innovation Scheme](#) targets countries that lag behind in innovation performance.

On 7 January 2021, through its Proof-of-Concept grant scheme, the European Research Council

and commercialisation as early as possible, including in universities.”

“[...] I will support all those projects that will allow us to reduce emissions, to have investments in hydrogen, and perhaps to have other solutions that we are not aware of yet.”

“If we really want to succeed in being autonomous, if we want to take the new wave of innovation, it's time to invest. Europe has its assets and now is the time to invest in order to then ensure our technological sovereignty.”

[awarded](#) 55 researchers funding of €8.25 million in total, to help them bring their research findings closer to market and spur innovation.

On 23 February 2021, the Commission proposed to set up 10 new [European Partnerships](#) between the European Union, Member States and/or industry to speed up the transition towards a green, digital and resilient Europe. The EU provides nearly €10 billion in funding which the partners match with at least an equivalent amount of investment.

On 23 February 2021, the Commission proposed to set up a new [European Partnership](#) on clean hydrogen.

On 15 December 2021, following up on its [hydrogen strategy](#), the Commission proposed a new [EU framework to decarbonise gas markets](#), promote hydrogen and [reduce methane emissions](#).

On 24 June 2022, the Commission [launched](#) the Alliance for Zero Emission Aviation, to prepare the aviation ecosystem for the entry into service of hydrogen- and electric-powered aircraft, with a view of the contribution of air transport to Europe's 2050 climate neutrality objective.

On 8 February 2022, the Commission proposed the [Chips Act](#) on semiconductor shortages in order to strengthen Europe's technological leadership.

On 15 March 2021, the Commission adopted the [strategic plan](#) for Horizon Europe with four strategic orientations for R&I investments. The first orientation promotes an open strategic autonomy.

On 23 February 2021, the Commission proposed to set up a new [European Partnership](#) on Key Digital Technologies. The partnership was [approved](#) on 19 November 2021.

Promote creative industries as a catalyst for innovation, jobs and growth

“The portfolio that the President-elect has in mind for me [...] incorporates such prominent programmes as Horizon Europe, Erasmus, Creative Europe or DiscoverEU. This forms a consistent whole and we need to build synergies”. [...] “I will remain faithful to the increase [of the Creative Europe budget] that we called for. I'll secure it and try and achieve the best possible impact by working together with other programmes, such as Horizon Europe.” [...] “I reiterate my support to SMEs, particularly regarding culture, that's where we can really count on creativity and innovation. In the

On 13 January 2022, the Commission adopted the [2022 work programme](#) of Creative Europe, with a budget of around €385 million, nearly €100 million more compared to 2021.

On 14 December 2020, the Commission [welcomed](#) the political agreement reached between the European Parliament and EU Member States on the new [Creative Europe programme](#) (2021-2027), with a dedicated budget of more than €2.4 billion, made up of €1.8 billion in current prices and an additional top-up of €0.6 billion in 2018 prices, an 36% budget increase.

Creative Europe programme, there is the idea of creative innovation laboratories. [...] I expect SMEs to have privileged access to that."

"The European Institute of Innovation and Technology, plans to create a new KIC [Knowledge and Innovation Communities] in 2022 on the creative and cultural industries. It would be very important right now to think about the possible synergies, to see how they can cooperate, and then to cooperate with what is already being done at Horizon Europe level. That will require constant cooperation and coordination to make sure that the issues as regards audio-visual content are not left solely under the MEDIA programme."

"Today we need to adapt our [E-Commerce Directive] rules to the new realities of the digital transformation."

On 10 December 2020, the Commission [welcomed](#) the political agreement reached between the European Parliament and the Council on Horizon Europe (2021-2027), with budget of €95.5 billion in current prices.

On 11 December 2020, the Commission [welcomed](#) the political agreement reached between the European Parliament and the Council on [Erasmus+](#) (2021-2027), with budget of more than €26 billion in current prices.

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) will [launch](#) two new [Knowledge and Innovation Communities](#) in the coming years, one operating in the field of the Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries.

In the framework of Horizon 2020, the Commission had a call for [Evolving media landscapes and Europeanisation](#), three research projects on the European media landscape that will start early in 2021.

On 15 December 2020, the Commission proposed the [Digital Services Act](#) and the [Digital Markets Act](#), a comprehensive set of new rules for all digital services.

The Erasmus + programme

"I will propose a green Erasmus. [...]"

"I will support all measures that make [Erasmus] more inclusive, for vocational education and training and for teaching staff. [...]. I would like to see Erasmus focusing on informal levels, small organisations, local authorities."

The Erasmus + programme now incorporates the [green Erasmus + initiative](#), which improves the programme's environmental sustainability, raises awareness about sustainable internationalisation and channels the funding into research on the programme's environmental impact.

On 22 October 2021, the Commission adopted a new [framework](#) of inclusion measures for the Erasmus + and European Solidarity Corps programmes 2021-2027, at Parliament's insistence. This framework aims to facilitate access for people with fewer opportunities with a focus on small-scale partnerships, which widen access to the programme.

European Education Area

"I would also like to insist on the new idea of the European Education Area ... where no border hamper learning, studying or carrying out research. I will continue the work started on key competences, quality early childhood education, mutual recognition of diplomas and learning outcomes and language learning."

"The new (research and education) programmes will provide [...] even more synergies. "From this moment onwards, we need to ensure that research is fully integrated in a new vision for European universities."

"We do not just learn within the four walls of a school, university or work place. That is part of the thinking of lifelong learning [...]. That is the objective of Erasmus+ and I want to ensure that it is more open [...]. It is important to diversify careers and personalise possible pathways. I will pay attention to how European universities take that into account."

"I would really like to introduce the European Student Card by 2021."

"I will wholeheartedly defend academic freedom. I will defend the freedom for research to be led by curiosity [...]. We have charters at the European level and they are not coincidental. I will really try to do my best to ensure that they are complied with."

In its [communication](#) of 30 September 2020, the Commission shared its renewed vision for the European Education Area (EEA), which will strengthen synergies with other initiatives in education and training, including the European Research Area (ERA). However, this proposal still falls short of Parliament's more ambitious vision for a future EEA. The higher education package launched by the Commission on 18 January 2022, paved the way for a deeper transnational cooperation within the European higher education sector (the package includes a [Communication on a European strategy for universities](#) and a [proposal for a Council recommendation on building bridges for effective European higher education cooperation](#); this [Council Recommendation](#) was adopted on 6 April 2022).

As part of the ambitions of the EEA, the Commission announced that Horizon 2020 would support the Erasmus + European Universities pilot in order to maximise synergies between education and research and innovation. The [Horizon 2020 complementary support](#) would further contribute to the research and innovation dimension of the European Universities initiative. A budget of EUR 34 million from Horizon 2020 was made available for 17 European University alliances.

As part of its communication on achieving the European Education Area, the Commission expressed its intention to build on the results of the cooperation between EU countries in the field of lifelong learning. It indicated that the EEA would depend on a stronger Erasmus + programme with innovative lifelong learning strategies and teaching practices in order to foster an inclusive education system.

The [European student card initiative](#) was included in the 2021 Erasmus + programme guide. While the initiative is still ongoing, it has yet to be deployed. Scaling-up of the European Student Card initiative makes also part of four flagship initiatives of the European Strategy for universities, as announced in the above higher education package of 18 January 2022.

The European Education Area works in synergy with the [European Research Area](#), whose policy agenda for 2022-2024 includes the protection of academic freedom in Europe as one of its main priorities. Nevertheless, academic freedom is still under pressure in some EU Member States.

Digital Education Action Plan

"As part of the next digital education plan, which I want to have updated by next year, we are going to address media literacy."

"(We need) to equip the young generations with strong digital skills [...] for example through focusing on digital literacy, computer science and informatics for all, so that children and young people understand and deal critically with digital technology[...]. Expanding digital education opportunities (such as) massive open online courses, [...] is another priority [...]. We need to [...] make education both more effective and more inclusive. Teachers should be a particular focus (of an upgrade of the action plan)."

The Commission's proposal for a renewed [digital education action plan for 2021-2027](#) was adopted on 30 September 2020. This action plan prioritises the fostering of a high-performing digital education ecosystem and the enhancement of digital skills and competences for the digital age. The former addresses the actions taken to improve the digital competences of educators, including teachers. The latter promises to support the provision of basic digital skills and competences from an early age.


Youth

"My main priority in youth policy is to make sure more young people benefit from EU policies and programmes and to ensure equal participation. [...]"

"We have to make our policies and programmes more inclusive and get more young people to participate regardless of background, educational level or financial means."

In the context of the coronavirus pandemic, the Commission [announced](#) that 2022 would be the [European Year of Youth](#). The Year of Youth complements other EU programmes, such as [Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps](#), that implement youth policies focusing on the accessibility of EU programmes, making them more inclusive for people that face barriers or have fewer opportunities in education, training and youth work.

Sport

 *"After years of blockage [...] the Convention on Manipulation of Sports Competitions process could be unblocked."*

"Integrity of sport [...] is also about promoting good governance, transparency, democracy and gender equality in sport organisations."

"We need to [...] use sport to enhance the health of European citizens but also to promote social inclusion and gender equality. "The sport part [of Erasmus+] can be very effective for integrating migrants." "In the area of sport [...] my key word is inclusivity. I want to ensure that people with reduced mobility can be included."

The Convention has still not been signed by the EU.

As part of its [sport actions](#), Erasmus + provides organisations with opportunities for cooperation partnerships. Promoting integrity and values in sport, combating violence and tackling racism, discrimination and intolerance in sport represent part of the specific priorities of the 2022 Erasmus + call for proposals for sport.

The [new EU work plan for sport](#) prioritises the promotion of physical activity and includes actions on gender equality in sport. The [Erasmus + programme of 2021-2027](#) aims to promote inclusion at the level of sport policies, taking note of the barriers faced by different groups of people, including those with reduced mobility and people with migrant or refugee backgrounds, as reiterated in the [programme guide](#). Physical activity and inclusion in sport are also promoted through several initiatives,

"I want to use sport as a driver for economic growth, employment and innovation."

including the [European Week of Sport](#), the [#BeActive Awards](#), [HealthyLifestyle4All](#) and other [initiatives](#).

In line with the [European Climate Pact](#), the new work plan for sport emphasises innovation in all areas of the sport sector in order to stimulate green sporting practices.

Cultural heritage

"I will devote attention to digitalisation of the cultural heritage. [...] I will also use 'Europeana'."
"The first pillar of our cultural [heritage] policy has to be increasing accessibility. I will steer policy on [...] inclusion, sustainable development and climate change."

On 10 November 2021, the Commission proposed a [common European data space for cultural heritage](#), using the digital cultural platform [Europeana](#). The Europeana [strategy for 2020-2025](#) shares its vision for a cultural heritage sector that is open, inclusive and sustainable. Europeana currently offers access to 52 million cultural heritage assets, 45 % of which can be reused in various sectors.

Creative Europe and the cultural and creative sectors:

"We need to build synergies (between Horizon Europe, Erasmus, Creative Europe or DiscoverEU)."

The 2022 work programme announced synergies with other EU funding programmes, such as Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and the European Solidarity Corps. The [New European Bauhaus](#), launched in 2021, also makes use of synergies to bring together partners from the cultural and creative sectors with those from research and industrial fields. A new funding guide, [CulturEU](#), was launched on 29 November 2021. It contains over 75 funding opportunities linked to around 20 EU funding programmes.

"We have created exceptions for research, education, libraries and cultural heritage [in the Copyright Directive]. What I would like now is to follow the process more closely to see how it is implemented."

On 4 June 2021, the Commission published its [guidance on Article 17 of the new Copyright Directive](#) which aims to support a coherent application across the Member States of this important provision of the new EU copyright rules.

Cultural cooperation

"Cultural diplomacy is a real soft power tool. [...] Our partners in the Western Balkans need to hear that we will provide them with some palpable support. [...] The creative industries and culture [...] [are] an area in which we will continue to have very close cooperation."

The [Cultural Relations Platform](#) is an initiative funded by the EU, as a response to the Commission's [2018](#) new European agenda for culture and the Council's [conclusions](#) on an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations. Through cultural cooperation, the platform aims to strengthen the EU's ability to engage meaningfully with different audiences and stakeholders in its partner countries, including the Western Balkans.

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Manuscript completed: July 2022.

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This document is available on the internet at: www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses

Print ISBN 978-92-846-9551-5 | doi:10.2861/937622 | QA-07-22-492-EN-C
PDF ISBN 978-92-846-9550-8 | doi:10.2861/046347 | QA-07-22-492-EN-N