

# Horizon Europe – Pillar I ‘Excellent Science’

## What is Horizon Europe?

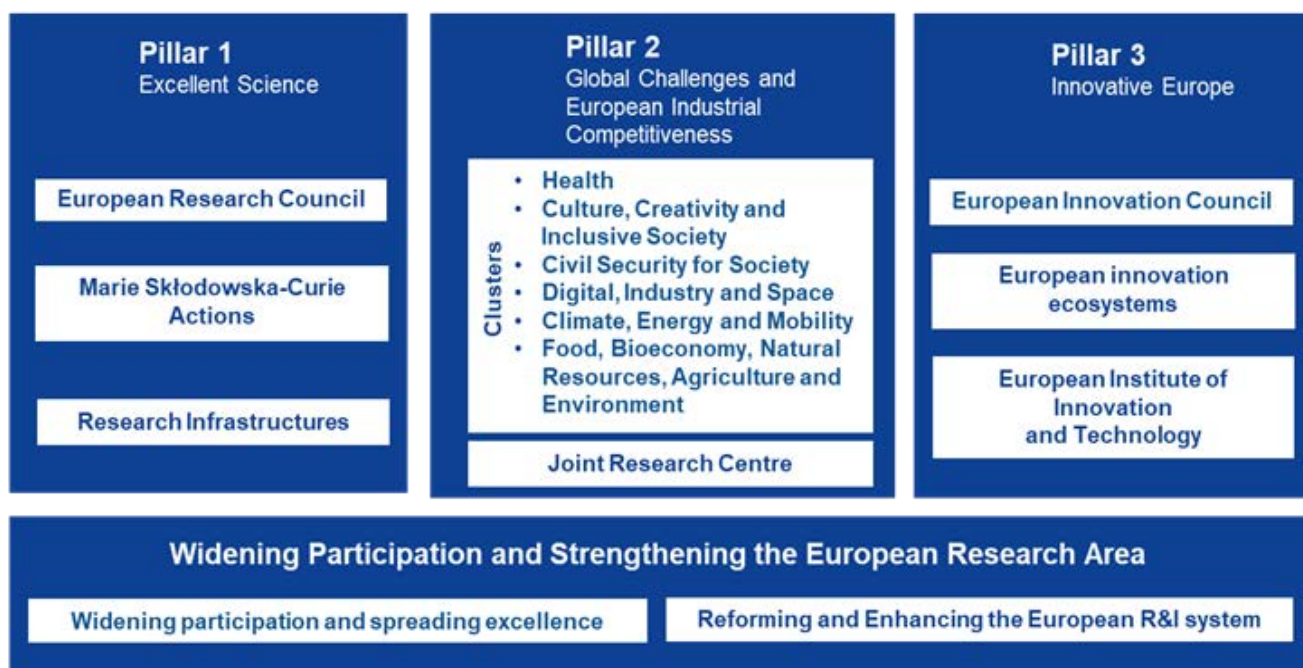
Horizon Europe is the EU’s key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion for the period 2021-2027. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals and boosts Europe’s competitiveness and growth.

The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting, and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges. It supports the creation and better sharing of knowledge and technologies.

It also creates jobs, fully engages Europe’s talent pool, boosts economic growth, promotes industrial competitiveness, and optimises investment impact within a strengthened European Research Area.

For information on UK participation in the programme see UKRO’s [dedicated factsheet](#).

Horizon Europe consists of three main pillars – reflecting the current R&I priorities of the Union – and an additional transversal element, focused on widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area:



## What does Pillar I cover?

The aim of Pillar I is to promote scientific excellence and attract highly skilled researchers and innovators to Europe to increase its competitiveness. It focuses on enabling and supporting the next generation of science, technology, research, and innovation. Moreover, Pillar I sets out to support the creation and diffusion of scientific excellence, high-quality knowledge, technologies, methodologies, and skills, as well as solutions to global social, environmental, and economic challenges. In addition, it promotes access to, and the development of, world-class research infrastructures, as well as boosting the training and mobility of researchers. Pillar I is primarily bottom-up, with applicants able to define their own projects without pre-determined topic areas.

## What is funded under Pillar I?

The goal of Pillar I is to reinforce EU scientific leadership through the European Research Council (ERC), Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and Research Infrastructures programmes:

The **European Research Council** (ERC) funds ground-breaking, high-gain/high-risk research to advance the frontiers of knowledge. The ERC provides attractive and flexible funding, which enables talented and creative individual researchers (and their teams) from anywhere in the world to pursue ground-breaking research at the frontiers of science in Europe. This ensures funding is directed towards the newest and most promising scientific endeavours purely based on the criterion of scientific excellence.

The **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions** (MSCA) are designed to fund, support, and train the individuals and institutions behind research and innovation. MSCA funds excellent doctoral and post-doctoral training programmes, equipping researchers with new knowledge and skills through encouraging mobility and exposure across borders, sectors and disciplines. MSCA actions also aim to enhance training and career development systems thereby having a structuring impact on institutions.

The **Research Infrastructures** programme provides Europe with world-class and sustainable national and transnational research infrastructures which are open and accessible to the best researchers from Europe and beyond. Projects funded through this programme part contribute to reducing fragmentation in the landscape of national and regional infrastructures.

## More information

- [Horizon Europe website](#)
- [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#)
- [European Research Council](#)
- [Research Infrastructures](#)

Horizon Europe's legal basis

- [Regulation establishing Horizon Europe](#)
- [Decision establishing the Specific Programme of Horizon Europe](#)
- [Second Strategic Plan for Horizon Europe \(2025-2027\)](#)

UKRO Portal

- [UKRO Portal](#) (subscriber access required)
- [European Research Council UK NCP](#)
- [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions UK NCP](#)