

# Shaping Europe's Research Future: Towards ECF and FP10



*Muriel Attané,  
EARTO Secretary General*

4 March 2026





# Executive Board



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CEO, VITO, BE



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Director, Jozef Stefan Institute, SI

The EARTO Executive Board meets twice a year and is composed of representatives from each Full European Member country, elected through national elections among RTOs. – The Slovenian representative is Leon Cizelj, Director at JSI.

# EARTO's Key Strength: Working Groups' Experts

## Policy Working Groups

1. EU RD&I Programmes
2. Financial Experts
3. Legal Experts
4. Impact

## Technology Oriented Working Groups

5. Security and Defence Research
6. Emerging Technologies for Healthcare

**EARTO WGs are giving the expertise to produce well-rounded and knowledgeable position papers:**

- ~ 800 experts in our different WGs & TFs
- Between 20-30 papers published per year
- With other key stakeholders as well as International or European institutions

**EARTO Working Groups may be complemented by dedicated Task Forces on specific topics:**

1. EARTO TF on Quantum
2. EARTO-JRC Joint TF on Foresight
3. EARTO TF on EU Strategy on Start-ups & Scale-ups
4. WG Legal - Sub-group on Public Procurement

# Slovenian RTOs' experts in EARTO WGs and TFs

## Policy Working Groups

### **WG EU RD&I Programmes:**

**JSI**

- Romana Jordan

**NIC**

- Barbara Tišler

### **WG Financial Experts:**

**JSI**

- Marja Mali

**NIC**

- Marusa Rajovec

### **WG Legal Experts:**

**NIC**

- Jasmina Štifter

### **WG Impact:**

**JSI**

- Miha Mohorcic
- Robert Blatnik

**NIC**

- Barbara Tišler

## Technology Working Groups

### **WG S&D:**

**JSI**

- Uroš Cvelbar

### **WG Healthcare:**

**JSI**

- Nina Kostevšek
- Milica Perišić Nanut
- Robert Blatnik

## Task Forces

### **TF on Startups & Scaleups:**

**JSI**

- Robert Blatnik

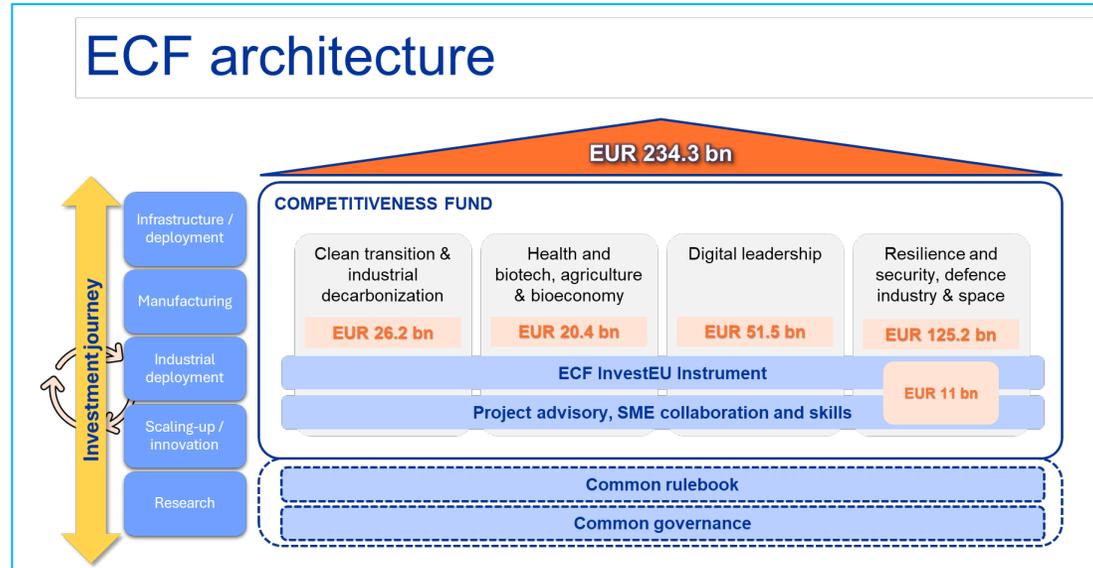
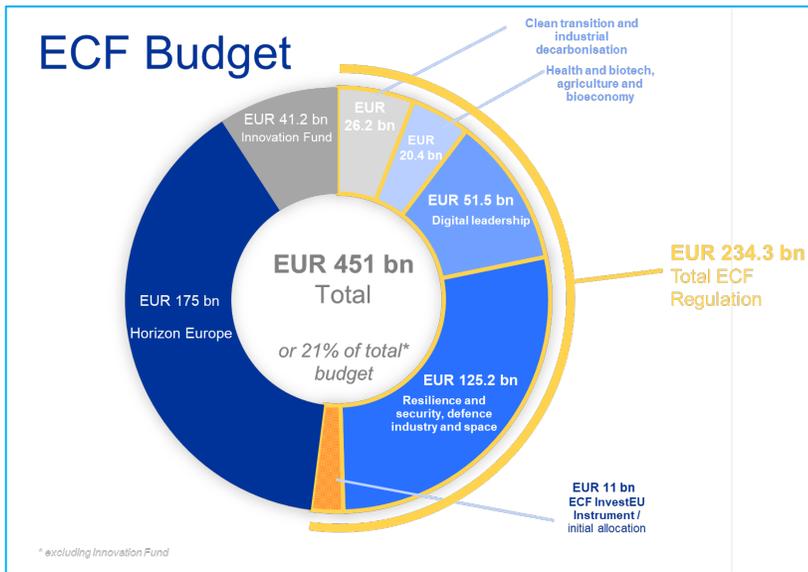
### **TF on Quantum:**

**JSI**

- Andrej Seljak
- Anže Mraz

# Latest EU RD&I Developments

# MFF Pillar II: Competitiveness, including the New Competitiveness Fund (ECF) & Horizon Europe – €589bn



# MFF/EU Budget - EC Proposal (MFF + ECF + HE 2.0 regulations)

Funding Instruments \ Policy Windows		Clean transition and industrial decarbonisation	Health and biotech, agriculture and bioeconomy	Digital Leadership	Resilience and security, defence industry and space	Total Budget
European Competitiveness Fund (excluding HE 2.0)		€67.4bn <i>incl. €41.2bn Innovation Fund</i>	€22.6bn	€54.8bn	€131bn	€275.8bn
Horizon Europe 2.0	Pillar II	€25.3bn	€19.7bn	€16.9bn	€6.4bn	€75.9bn
	Other Pillars	Pillar I (ERC/MSCA) + Pillar III (EIC) + Pillar IV (RTIs with budget €10.9bn/Widening)				€99.1bn
						<b>€451bn</b>

New Financial Toolbox/  
Single Rulebook

RD&I Grants/  
Exempt State-aids

# Council's Position on ECF, HE & HE SP Regulations



## Council Presidency compromise text for the ECF proposal

Council of the European Union	
Brussels, 18 November 2025 (OR en)	
184655	
Interinstitutional File: 2025044 (C02)	
LIBTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COMPT 1154</li> <li>COMPT 108</li> <li>COMPT 109</li> <li>COMPT 110</li> <li>COMPT 111</li> <li>COMPT 112</li> <li>COMPT 113</li> <li>COMPT 114</li> <li>COMPT 115</li> <li>COMPT 116</li> <li>COMPT 117</li> <li>COMPT 118</li> <li>COMPT 119</li> <li>COMPT 120</li> <li>COMPT 121</li> <li>COMPT 122</li> <li>COMPT 123</li> <li>COMPT 124</li> <li>COMPT 125</li> <li>COMPT 126</li> <li>COMPT 127</li> <li>COMPT 128</li> <li>COMPT 129</li> <li>COMPT 130</li> <li>COMPT 131</li> <li>COMPT 132</li> <li>COMPT 133</li> <li>COMPT 134</li> <li>COMPT 135</li> <li>COMPT 136</li> <li>COMPT 137</li> <li>COMPT 138</li> <li>COMPT 139</li> <li>COMPT 140</li> <li>COMPT 141</li> <li>COMPT 142</li> <li>COMPT 143</li> <li>COMPT 144</li> <li>COMPT 145</li> <li>COMPT 146</li> <li>COMPT 147</li> <li>COMPT 148</li> <li>COMPT 149</li> <li>COMPT 150</li> <li>COMPT 151</li> <li>COMPT 152</li> <li>COMPT 153</li> <li>COMPT 154</li> <li>COMPT 155</li> <li>COMPT 156</li> <li>COMPT 157</li> <li>COMPT 158</li> <li>COMPT 159</li> <li>COMPT 160</li> <li>COMPT 161</li> <li>COMPT 162</li> <li>COMPT 163</li> <li>COMPT 164</li> <li>COMPT 165</li> <li>COMPT 166</li> <li>COMPT 167</li> <li>COMPT 168</li> <li>COMPT 169</li> <li>COMPT 170</li> <li>COMPT 171</li> <li>COMPT 172</li> <li>COMPT 173</li> <li>COMPT 174</li> <li>COMPT 175</li> <li>COMPT 176</li> <li>COMPT 177</li> <li>COMPT 178</li> <li>COMPT 179</li> <li>COMPT 180</li> <li>COMPT 181</li> <li>COMPT 182</li> <li>COMPT 183</li> <li>COMPT 184</li> <li>COMPT 185</li> <li>COMPT 186</li> <li>COMPT 187</li> <li>COMPT 188</li> <li>COMPT 189</li> <li>COMPT 190</li> <li>COMPT 191</li> <li>COMPT 192</li> <li>COMPT 193</li> <li>COMPT 194</li> <li>COMPT 195</li> <li>COMPT 196</li> <li>COMPT 197</li> <li>COMPT 198</li> <li>COMPT 199</li> <li>COMPT 200</li> </ul>
NOTE	
From:	Presidency
To:	Delegation
No. prev. doc.:	1202725
No. doc. doc.:	1202725
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) for the period 2028-2034, laying down the rules for participation and dissemination under that Programme, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2022/1693
Delegation will find attached a consolidated compromise text on the aforementioned document.	
Changes in comparison to document 1202725 (checked texts of the Commission proposal) are marked in red/yellow in the attached text and to be added to the text in blue/yellow to correspond to legal-technical drafting rules.	
1516824	COMPT 1 LIBTE EN

## Council Presidency compromise text for HE

Council of the European Union	
Brussels, 3 December 2025 (OR en)	
183225	
Interinstitutional File: 2025044 (C02)	
LIBTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COMPT 1154</li> <li>COMPT 108</li> <li>COMPT 109</li> <li>COMPT 110</li> <li>COMPT 111</li> <li>COMPT 112</li> <li>COMPT 113</li> <li>COMPT 114</li> <li>COMPT 115</li> <li>COMPT 116</li> <li>COMPT 117</li> <li>COMPT 118</li> <li>COMPT 119</li> <li>COMPT 120</li> <li>COMPT 121</li> <li>COMPT 122</li> <li>COMPT 123</li> <li>COMPT 124</li> <li>COMPT 125</li> <li>COMPT 126</li> <li>COMPT 127</li> <li>COMPT 128</li> <li>COMPT 129</li> <li>COMPT 130</li> <li>COMPT 131</li> <li>COMPT 132</li> <li>COMPT 133</li> <li>COMPT 134</li> <li>COMPT 135</li> <li>COMPT 136</li> <li>COMPT 137</li> <li>COMPT 138</li> <li>COMPT 139</li> <li>COMPT 140</li> <li>COMPT 141</li> <li>COMPT 142</li> <li>COMPT 143</li> <li>COMPT 144</li> <li>COMPT 145</li> <li>COMPT 146</li> <li>COMPT 147</li> <li>COMPT 148</li> <li>COMPT 149</li> <li>COMPT 150</li> <li>COMPT 151</li> <li>COMPT 152</li> <li>COMPT 153</li> <li>COMPT 154</li> <li>COMPT 155</li> <li>COMPT 156</li> <li>COMPT 157</li> <li>COMPT 158</li> <li>COMPT 159</li> <li>COMPT 160</li> <li>COMPT 161</li> <li>COMPT 162</li> <li>COMPT 163</li> <li>COMPT 164</li> <li>COMPT 165</li> <li>COMPT 166</li> <li>COMPT 167</li> <li>COMPT 168</li> <li>COMPT 169</li> <li>COMPT 170</li> <li>COMPT 171</li> <li>COMPT 172</li> <li>COMPT 173</li> <li>COMPT 174</li> <li>COMPT 175</li> <li>COMPT 176</li> <li>COMPT 177</li> <li>COMPT 178</li> <li>COMPT 179</li> <li>COMPT 180</li> <li>COMPT 181</li> <li>COMPT 182</li> <li>COMPT 183</li> <li>COMPT 184</li> <li>COMPT 185</li> <li>COMPT 186</li> <li>COMPT 187</li> <li>COMPT 188</li> <li>COMPT 189</li> <li>COMPT 190</li> <li>COMPT 191</li> <li>COMPT 192</li> <li>COMPT 193</li> <li>COMPT 194</li> <li>COMPT 195</li> <li>COMPT 196</li> <li>COMPT 197</li> <li>COMPT 198</li> <li>COMPT 199</li> <li>COMPT 200</li> </ul>
NOTE	
From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegation
No. prev. doc.:	1202725
No. doc. doc.:	1202725
Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) for the period 2028-2034, laying down the rules for participation and dissemination under that Programme, and repealing Regulation (EU) 2022/1693
Delegation will find attached a consolidated Presidency compromise text on the aforementioned proposal.	
Changes in comparison to document 1202725 (checked texts of the Commission proposal) are marked in red/yellow in the attached text and to be added to the text in blue/yellow to correspond to legal-technical drafting rules.	
1516824	COMPT 2 LIBTE EN

## Council Presidency compromise text for HE Specific Programme proposal

Council of the European Union	
Brussels, 3 December 2025 (OR en)	
183225	
Interinstitutional File: 2025044 (C02)	
LIBTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COMPT 1154</li> <li>COMPT 108</li> <li>COMPT 109</li> <li>COMPT 110</li> <li>COMPT 111</li> <li>COMPT 112</li> <li>COMPT 113</li> <li>COMPT 114</li> <li>COMPT 115</li> <li>COMPT 116</li> <li>COMPT 117</li> <li>COMPT 118</li> <li>COMPT 119</li> <li>COMPT 120</li> <li>COMPT 121</li> <li>COMPT 122</li> <li>COMPT 123</li> <li>COMPT 124</li> <li>COMPT 125</li> <li>COMPT 126</li> <li>COMPT 127</li> <li>COMPT 128</li> <li>COMPT 129</li> <li>COMPT 130</li> <li>COMPT 131</li> <li>COMPT 132</li> <li>COMPT 133</li> <li>COMPT 134</li> <li>COMPT 135</li> <li>COMPT 136</li> <li>COMPT 137</li> <li>COMPT 138</li> <li>COMPT 139</li> <li>COMPT 140</li> <li>COMPT 141</li> <li>COMPT 142</li> <li>COMPT 143</li> <li>COMPT 144</li> <li>COMPT 145</li> <li>COMPT 146</li> <li>COMPT 147</li> <li>COMPT 148</li> <li>COMPT 149</li> <li>COMPT 150</li> <li>COMPT 151</li> <li>COMPT 152</li> <li>COMPT 153</li> <li>COMPT 154</li> <li>COMPT 155</li> <li>COMPT 156</li> <li>COMPT 157</li> <li>COMPT 158</li> <li>COMPT 159</li> <li>COMPT 160</li> <li>COMPT 161</li> <li>COMPT 162</li> <li>COMPT 163</li> <li>COMPT 164</li> <li>COMPT 165</li> <li>COMPT 166</li> <li>COMPT 167</li> <li>COMPT 168</li> <li>COMPT 169</li> <li>COMPT 170</li> <li>COMPT 171</li> <li>COMPT 172</li> <li>COMPT 173</li> <li>COMPT 174</li> <li>COMPT 175</li> <li>COMPT 176</li> <li>COMPT 177</li> <li>COMPT 178</li> <li>COMPT 179</li> <li>COMPT 180</li> <li>COMPT 181</li> <li>COMPT 182</li> <li>COMPT 183</li> <li>COMPT 184</li> <li>COMPT 185</li> <li>COMPT 186</li> <li>COMPT 187</li> <li>COMPT 188</li> <li>COMPT 189</li> <li>COMPT 190</li> <li>COMPT 191</li> <li>COMPT 192</li> <li>COMPT 193</li> <li>COMPT 194</li> <li>COMPT 195</li> <li>COMPT 196</li> <li>COMPT 197</li> <li>COMPT 198</li> <li>COMPT 199</li> <li>COMPT 200</li> </ul>
NOTE	
From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegation
No. prev. doc.:	1202725
No. doc. doc.:	1202725
Subject:	Proposal for a COUNCIL DECISION on establishing the Specific Programme for Horizon Europe for the period 2028-2034, laying down the rules for participation and dissemination under that Programme, and repealing Decision (EU) 2022/1744
Delegation will find attached a consolidated compromise text on the aforementioned document.	
Changes in comparison to document 1202725 (checked texts of the Commission proposal) are marked in red/yellow in the attached text and to be added to the text in blue/yellow to correspond to legal-technical drafting rules.	
1516824	COMPT 2 LIBTE EN

### EARTO Analysis of EC Regulation Proposal: Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), including the Specific Programme for Defence Research & Innovation Activities

12 December 2025

EARTO and its members welcome the European Commission (EC)'s proposal for the **European Competitiveness Fund (ECF)**, including the Specific Programme for Defence Research & Innovation Activities, starting in 2028 onwards. To strengthen such a proposal even further, EARTO has hereby made a detailed analysis of the EC's proposal for the ECF regulation.

Such analysis is organised in the following distinctive parts:

- Explanatory Memorandum
- Preamble
- Chapter I – General Provisions
- Chapter II – ECF Toolbox
- Chapter III – Project Advisory, SME Collaboration & Access to Funding
- Chapter IV – Support for Clean Transition & Industrial Decarbonisation
- Chapter V – Support for Health, Biotech & Bioeconomy
- Chapter VI – Support for Digital Leadership
- Chapter VII – Support for Resilience, Defence Industry
- Chapter VIII – Final Provisions & Space

Please also note that EARTO has made a detailed analysis of all **Horizon Europe** and **ECF's** Basic Acts as proposed by the European Commission. For more information, please see the following documents:

- EARTO Key Recommendations on Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe
- EARTO Analysis of EC Proposal – Establishing Horizon Europe
- EARTO Analysis of EC Proposal – Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe
- EC Proposal – Establishing the ECF
- EC Proposal – Establishing Horizon Europe
- EC Proposal – Council Decision on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe

Topic	EC Proposal	EARTO Proposed Amendments	Council Compromised Text	EP Compromised Text
<b>Regulation on ECF – Preamble</b>				
<b>Investments in Strategic Technologies</b>	(7) Therefore, the purpose of the ECF is to establish an investment capacity to support European competitiveness in strategic technologies, infrastructures, products and services and sectors providing for a more seamless investment journey.	Add the following text: Therefore, the purpose of the ECF is to establish an investment capacity to support European competitiveness in strategic technologies, infrastructures, products and services and sectors providing for a more seamless investment journey.	Not amended.	

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### EARTO Analysis of EC Regulation Proposal: Establishing Horizon Europe

19 December 2025

EARTO and its members welcome the European Commission (EC)'s proposal for the **European Competitiveness Fund (ECF)**, including the Specific Programme for Defence Research & Innovation Activities, as well as the EC's proposal for **Horizon Europe** and its dedicated **Specific Programme** starting in 2028 onwards. To strengthen such a proposal even further, EARTO has hereby made a detailed analysis of the EC's proposal for Horizon Europe's Regulation.

Such analysis is organised in the following distinctive parts:

- Explanatory Memorandum
- Preamble
- Chapter I – General Provisions
- Chapter II – Excellence Science
- Chapter III – Competitiveness & Society
- Chapter IV – Innovation
- Chapter V – ERA
- Rules for Participation & Dissemination

Please also note that EARTO has made a detailed analysis of all **Horizon Europe** and **ECF's** Basic Acts as proposed by the European Commission. For more information, please see the following documents:

- EARTO Key Recommendations on Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe
- EARTO Analysis of EC Proposal – Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund
- EARTO Analysis of EC Proposal – Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe
- EC Proposal – Establishing the ECF
- EC Proposal – Establishing Horizon Europe
- EC Proposal – Council Decision on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe

Topic	EC Proposal	EARTO Proposed Amendments	Council Compromised Text	EP Compromised Text
<b>Introduction</b>	More specifically, Horizon Europe aims to increase Europe's excellent knowledge base by focusing on EU added value.	Add text: Increase Europe's excellent knowledge and technology base, cross-border collaborative research and innovation, and valorisation by focusing on EU added value.	Add the following text: (1) should strengthen scientific and technological leadership and excellence, competitiveness, resilience and technological sovereignty, sustainability and social cohesion. (2) The Programme should support the creation, better diffusion and transfer of excellent knowledge and innovation.	

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### EARTO Analysis of EC Regulation Proposal: Establishing the Specific Programme of Horizon Europe

19 December 2025

EARTO and its members welcome the European Commission (EC)'s proposal for the **European Competitiveness Fund (ECF)**, including the Specific Programme for Defence Research & Innovation Activities, as well as the EC's proposal for **Horizon Europe** and its dedicated **Specific Programme** starting in 2028 onwards. To strengthen such a proposal even further, EARTO has hereby made a detailed analysis of the EC's proposal for Horizon Europe's Regulation.

Such analysis is organised in the following distinctive parts:

- Chapter I – General Provisions
- Chapter II – Excellence Science
- Chapter III – Competitiveness & Society
- Chapter IV – Innovation
- Chapter V – ERA
- Chapter VI – Transitional & Final Provision

Please also note that EARTO has made a detailed analysis of all **Horizon Europe** and **ECF's** Basic Acts as proposed by the European Commission. For more information, please see the following documents:

- EARTO Key Recommendations on Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe
- EARTO Analysis of EC Proposal – Establishing the European Competitiveness Fund
- EC Proposal – Establishing the ECF
- EC Proposal – Establishing Horizon Europe
- EC Proposal – Council Decision on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe

Topic	EC Proposal	EARTO Proposed Amendments	Council Compromised Text	EP Compromised Text
<b>Regulation on SP of HE Chapter 1 – General Provisions</b>				
<b>Subject Matter</b>		Not commented.	Add the following text: Art. 1 2a. The Specific Programme shall also implement the collaborative research and innovation activities under the policy window of the European Competitiveness Fund.	
<b>Operational Objectives</b>	Art. 2 Objectives 2. The Specific Programme has the following operational objectives: (a) Foster technology uptake and innovation; (b) Foster technology uptake and demonstration of disruptive innovation.	Add the following text: (a) Foster technology uptake and demonstration of disruptive innovation supported by excellent collaborative R&DI and Research and Technology Infrastructures.	Add the following text: (a) Foster the production of high-quality scientific research and world-leading research institutions; (b) support the mobility and training and career development of researchers; (c) attract and retain excellent researchers in Europe.	

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# ECF Council's Position so far: EARTO Analysis

Area	Council's Position
<b>Main amendments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. HE rules to apply applied RD&amp;I activities to be financed under ECF within HE</li> <li>2. RD&amp;I activities will be within a dedicated part of the ECF Work Programmes</li> <li>3. Only one comitology for both HE &amp; ECF: ECF comitology with a new ECF General Committee which will review draft WPs</li> <li>4. Defence with its own ECF rules, including RD&amp;I activities</li> <li>5. Quality &amp; impact of ECF proposal to be evaluated vs ECF objectives</li> <li>6. Complementarity ECF &amp; EIC added: via EUInvest, links ECF advisory Board &amp; EIC Board</li> <li>7. ECF Strategic Stakeholders Board: added sectoral balance to be linked to priority sectors</li> <li>8. Corrected rules of the Competitiveness Seal</li> <li>9. Added much text on the protection of classified information</li> </ol>
<b>Part bracketed: linked to MFF negotiations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indicative budget per policy windows: to be set to allow stability while maintaining some flexibility to adapt PARTS of the budget according to new priorities</li> <li>2. 100% of eligible costs</li> </ol>
<b>Not picked of importance for us</b>	Technology infrastructures' definition

# HE Council's Position so far: EARTO Analysis

Area	Council's Position
Main amendments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added focus &amp; specific objective on technological leadership &amp; sovereignty for the FP with links to scaling up issue &amp; further foresight efforts/policy-advise role of the FP</li> <li>2. RD&amp;I semester: added pressure on EU global positioning</li> <li>3. Synergies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link with ECF inserted: for the uptake &amp; deployment of R&amp;I results</li> <li>• Synergies between HE Pillars noted as an objective</li> <li>• Links with national programmes</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. EIC: include ARPA-DARPA like elements to include dual-use projects</li> <li>5. TIs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added under Infrastructures definition: with a NEW strategic forum for technology infrastructures</li> <li>• Added text to TIs definition</li> <li>• Fixed 20% of the CAPEX (EARTO advocated for 50%)</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Corrected rules for participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of LS now only 'where relevant'</li> <li>• 'Optionality' of Personal Unit Costs added: reinserted actual eligible cost reimbursement as a possibility</li> <li>• Added target to reduce reporting requirements for beneficiaries</li> <li>• Adapted text to definition open access (free of charge)</li> <li>• Adapted text to definition Background (access with written agreement)</li> <li>• Added definition on fair &amp; reasonable conditions</li> <li>• Added definition of R&amp;I action: not asked but positive, integrates techno development</li> <li>• Added research security as requirement</li> <li>• Corrected functioning competitiveness seal: can be given to HE projects' results</li> <li>• Termination at will: corrected with added procedure</li> <li>• Added article on evaluation</li> <li>• Re-inserted that all calls need to be in WPs</li> <li>• Financial capacity checks now only for coordinator and above 1Me</li> <li>• MIM article corrected</li> </ul> </li> <li>7. Third countries: added review by PC of current participation</li> <li>8. EU Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request coherent portfolio of a limited number</li> <li>• MoU or JUs are 2 options as set up</li> <li>• In-kind contributions/ co-financing re-inserted</li> <li>• One single set of rules</li> <li>• One single standard governance</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Not picked of importance for us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPEX for TIs at 50%</li> <li>• Article on Redress procedure</li> <li>• Access to background</li> </ul>

# HE Specific Programme Council's Position so far: EARTO Analysis

Area	Council's Position
Main amendments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Objective added on implemented applied RD&amp;I actions under ECF policy windows</li> <li>2. Precise the WP dedicated to RTIs</li> <li>3. EU Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added MS in the identification process</li> <li>• Added engagement of all SHOs</li> <li>• Added transparency demonstration</li> <li>• Added EC reporting on evaluation &amp; results</li> <li>• Added data strategy per partnership + common indicators to be developed</li> <li>• Added transition strategies (vs lifecycle approach of the EC)</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. TIs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% CAPEX added in article on TIs</li> <li>• Clear objective: supporting the development of EU TIs policy</li> <li>• Criteria for EU financing specified</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Part bracketed: linked to MFF negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MS oversight: added brackets to have an article on overall strategic priority setting process with MS</li> </ul>
Not picked of importance for us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAPEX for TIs at 50%</li> </ul>

# EP BUDG Committee Draft Interim Report on the MFF - Update

EP BUDG Committee Draft Interim Report on the proposal for a Council regulation laying down the MFF for the years 2028 to 2034 (*including amendments and budget proposal*)

**Timeline:**

- 29/01/2026: Deadline for tabling amendments
- Opinion to be sent by other EP committees (ITRE, ENVI, Security & Defence, etc.):
  - **REGI draft opinion voted on 25-26 February 2026, available here**
  - **ITRE committee discussed opinion on 25-26 February 2026**
  - **CONT committee to vote on draft opinion on 5 March 2026, available here**
- 18/05/2026: Indicative plenary sitting date

8. **Annex II: Breakdown per programme (constant prices)**

Commitment appropriations (2025 constant prices, billion)			MFF proposal	EP Position (1.27% GNI, excluding NGEU repayment)	Nominal change
<b>Multiannual Financial Framework</b>			<b>1.613,71</b>	<b>1.782,50</b>	<b>168,79</b>
<b>Heading 1: Europe's Social model and quality of life, excluding NGEU</b>			<b>797,11</b>	<b>886,25</b>	<b>89,14</b>
02	02	National and Regional Partnership Plans and Interreg Plan - Operational Expenditure	771,32	860,41	89,09
		Support to the Turkish-Cypriot Community	0,39	0,43	0,04
		Others	20,24	20,24	0,00
		Margins	5,16	5,16	0,00
<b>Heading 2: Competitiveness, Prosperity, and Security</b>			<b>522,21</b>	<b>580,60</b>	<b>58,40</b>
04	02	European Competitiveness Fund	207,40	231,42	24,02
04	03	Horizon Europe	154,88	172,82	17,94
04	04	EURATOM/ITER	8,71	9,71	1,01
04	05	INSC-D (Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation - Decommissioning)	0,85	0,95	0,10
04	06	Ignalina Programme	0,60	0,67	0,07
05	02	CEF (Transport, Energy, Military Mobility)	72,25	80,62	8,37
05	03	Single Market and Customs Programme	5,54	6,18	0,64

**ECF: +€24,02bn**  
**HE: +€17,94bn**

4. Welcomes the substantial increase proposed responding to Parliament’s long-standing calls for greater investment in research, strategic autonomy, the clean transition, defence, technological sovereignty and economic resilience; stresses, however, that the consolidation of programmes in the Competitiveness Fund reduces transparency and limits Parliament’s ability to ensure appropriate funding for specific policy objectives; insists that, even where programme mergers occur, budget lines must remain sufficiently detailed to enable meaningful parliamentary oversight and maintain the visibility of funding for individual priorities;

*Heading 2*

20. Welcomes the significant reinforcement of Heading 2 on ‘Competitiveness, prosperity and security’, which is allocated EUR 522.2 billion in 2025 prices in the 2028-2034 MFF, representing 30 % of the total MFF compared to EUR 224.8 billion or 17 % in the current period; notes that this more than doubling of resources reflects the Union’s commitment to research, strategic autonomy, the clean transition, defence, technological sovereignty and economic resilience; acknowledges that this substantial increase responds to Parliament’s long-standing calls for greater investment in these areas; stresses, however, that the consolidation of programmes must not reduce transparency or limit Parliament’s ability to ensure appropriate funding for specific policy objectives; insists that despite programme mergers, budget lines must remain sufficiently detailed to enable meaningful parliamentary oversight and maintain visibility of funding for individual priorities; recalls its position that competitiveness must foster economic growth, as well as promote quality, stable and well-paid jobs as underlined in both the Draghi and Letta reports;

# EARTO Current Efforts Towards European Parliament - Update

- **MEP Ehler at EARTO Annual Conference: Participation confirmed**
- **Latest & Upcoming meetings on ECF & FP10:**
  - **Renew Group: MEP Verougstraete (BE) and MEP Friis (DK) on 27/01, MEP Ijabs (LV) on 25/02**
  - **S&D: MEP Repasi (DE) on 5/02, MEP Ecke (DE) on 24/02 and MEP Galvez (ES) on 25/03**
  - **S&D hearing on FP10 upcoming with Lina Galves & Dan Nica & Repasi**
- **Reaction/inputs to be provided to [MFF Draft report](#), expected to be discussed in plenary on 18/06**

EP Committee	Portfolio	Rapporteur(s)	Shadow rapporteur(s)
<b>BUDG Committee</b>	<b>MFF Draft Report</b>	<b>Siegfried Muresan</b> (EPP, RO) <b>Carla Tavares</b> (S&D, PT)	<b>Fabienne Keller</b> (Renew, FR) <b>Rasmus Nordqvist</b> (Greens, DK) <b>João Oliveira</b> (The Left, PT)
<b>ITRE Committee</b>	<b>European Competitiveness Fund</b>	<b>Christian Ehler</b> (EPP, DE) <b>Dan Nica</b> (S&D, RO)	<b>Marc Botenga</b> (The Left, BE) <b>Rihards Kols</b> (ECR, LV) <b>Benedetta Scuderi</b> (Greens, IT) <b>Yvan Verougstraete</b> (Renew, BE)
	<b>Horizon Europe</b>	<b>Christian Ehler</b> (EPP, DE)	<b>Lina Gálvez</b> (S&D, ES) <b>Ivars Ijabs</b> (Renew, LV) <b>Ville Niinistö</b> (Greens, FI) <b>Nikos Pappas</b> (The Left, GR) <b>Anna Zalewska</b> (ECR, PL)
	<b>HE Specific Programme</b>	<b>René Repasi</b> (S&D, DE)	<b>Eszter Lakos</b> (EPP, HU) <b>Katri Kulmuni</b> (Renew, FI) <b>Ville Niinistö</b> (Greens, FI) <b>Nikos Pappas</b> (The Left, GR) <b>Anna Zalewska</b> (ECR, PL)

# Latest & Upcoming EP Meetings

## European Parliament:

- **ITRE Committee meeting on 25-26 February 2026**, including public hearings on the ECF and HE. [Full agenda of the meeting here](#), and [more information on the public hearings here and here](#)
- **Plenary meeting on 9-12 March 2026** to discuss, among other topics, barriers to the single market for defence, flagship European defence projects of common interest and the Council [guidelines](#) for the 2027 budget. Full agenda [here](#)

 	
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy	
<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b> <b>EUROPEAN COMPETITIVENESS FUND</b> <b>Wednesday, 25 February 2026</b> <b>14.30 - 17.00</b> <b>Room: ANTALL 2Q2</b> <b>Brussels</b>	
	Welcome and opening remarks by Borys BUDKA, ITRE Chair
Presentations by the experts:	
	Mr Fredrik ERIXON - Swedish economist, the Founding Director of the European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE)
	Mr Laurian LUNGU - Co-founder of the think-tank Consilium Policy Advisors Group
	Mr Johannes JARLEBRING - Senior Researcher in Political Science at SIEPS
	Mrs Philippine LÉVY - Research fellow, New Industrial Policies programme - IDDRI
	Mr Philippe AGHION - 2025 Nobel laureate in Economic Sciences – Professor at the Collège de France at INSEAD and at the London School of Economics (remote participation)
Questions and answers with Members	
	Conclusions and closing remarks by Borys BUDKA, ITRE Chair

 	
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy	
<b>PUBLIC HEARING</b> <b>Horizon Europe 2028-2034: Expert views and consideration</b> <b>Thursday, 26 February 2026</b> <b>09.30 - 11.30</b> <b>Room: ANTALL 2Q2</b> <b>Brussels</b>	
	Welcome and opening remarks by Borys BUDKA, ITRE Chair
Presentations by the experts:	
	Professor Maria LEPTIN - President of the European Research Council
	Dr Mirjam STORIM - Head of Strategy & Technology Relations, Foundational Technologies, Siemens
	Dr Maira INDRIKOVA - Vice-Rector for Research, Riga Technical University
	Professor Manuel HEITOR - former Chair and lead author of Commission Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of Horizon Europe
Questions and answers with Members	
	Conclusions and closing remarks by Borys BUDKA, ITRE Chair

# Latest & Upcoming EP Meetings Council Meetings

## European Council:

- **Ad Hoc Working Party on the Multiannual Financial Framework (AHWP European Competitiveness Fund) meeting on 26 February** to examine the revised Presidency text of the ECF proposal. Full agenda [here](#)
- **Competitiveness Council meeting on 26-27 February 2026** to discuss, among other topics, the ECF and HE proposals, as well as the 2026 Annual Single Market and Competitiveness Report. Full agenda [here](#). Two background documents were shared ahead of the meeting:
  - Presidency background note on “Regulation on establishing the European Competitiveness Fund: A strategic resilience tool for SMEs and European value chains”, available [here](#)
  - Presidency background note on “Horizon Europe Package Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2028-2034”, available [here](#)
- **Council meeting on 19-20 March 2026** to discuss the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), Competitiveness, and the Single Market. Full agenda [here](#)

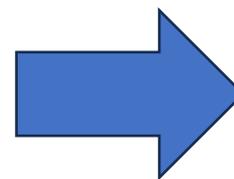
# Key Issues in Trialogue to Still Keep Track Of

## 1. Budgets for both FP10 & ECF:

- RD&I grants: 60% for applied RD&I in FP10 Pillar 2
- + grants for RD&I infrastructures

## 2. Governance between FP10 & new ECF

- Work Programming & attached Tech Foresight
- Member States: oversight + orchestration via a possible EU RD&I semester + future demands on co-funding
- SHOs' involvement: in the ECF Board & in Platforms
- EC's own administrative capacity: roles of DGs vs agencies linked to MS pressure on costs' reduction



**EC Competitiveness Coordination Tool (CCT) expected, delayed since Nov, college seminar held on Competitiveness Package on 4/02 before Council retreat on 12/02. Main results of the retreat [here](#).**

## 3. Instruments & Rules for Participation:

- RD&I Partnerships
- Single rule book: specificities of non-profit as RTOs
- Dual-use implementation

# Upcoming EU Initiatives followed by EARTO

1. **European Innovation Act, includes the new 28th regime - EU INC:** EU-wide company status
  - **EARTO paper already published, and reaction to be prepared after the EC's adoption on 18/03**
2. **European Research Area (ERA) Act: EC proposal to induce the following topics**
  - minimum requirements for the career development of researchers
  - free movement of researchers and knowledge
  - incentives for industry and public authorities to reach the long-standing target of investing 3% of GDP in R&D
  - Council and the Parliament will then start negotiations, and the EC aims to have the act adopted by the end of its current mandate in 2029
  - **EARTO paper already published, and answered the call for evidence on 22/01, and a reaction to be prepared after the EC's adoption in September 2026**
3. **EU Public Procurement revision**
  - **EARTO response to EC consultation published on 26/01**
4. **Single Basic Act for the Joint Undertakings**
  - **EARTO answer to be evaluated with WG RD&I when published**
5. **GBER revision**
  - **EARTO answer to be evaluated with WG Legal by 23/04**
6. **Future of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**
  - **EARTO answer to be evaluated with WG RD&I when published**
7. **Quantum Act: TF QT following**
  - **EARTO answer to be evaluated with TF Quantum when published: TF already in discussion on topic industrialisation with EC at the moment (Chips JU event on 22/01)**

# EARTO Collaboration with Others SHOs

## 1. Discussion with OECD:

- Possible new joint project 2<sup>nd</sup> half 2026 on RTOs' governance
- Invited to take part in new projects being launched:
  - EARTO participation in last OECD workshop on Missions,
  - EARTO members as potential testers to OECD Interactive Report on RIs' Ecosystems

## 2. New MoU with EPO

- Signature soon
- New projects defined: TTOs' Study 2026 collaboration, RTOs' spinouts support, tailored training (Unitary Patent/UPC, licensing, analytics), joint webinars & communication actions, etc.

## 3. Further discussion with our Industry Group:

- Last meeting held on 25/02: European Parliament work on ECF and HE proposals, etc.
- Specific discussion with ORGALIM: agreement to further collaborate to push HE Pillar 2 budget
- BusinessEurope: Last meeting held on 27/01
- Digital Europe: own WG RDI planned on 11/02, discussion planned afterwards

# EARTO Annual Conference 2026

EARTO Annual Conference 2026 at IMEC and VITO in Brussels, Belgium on 8-10 June 2026

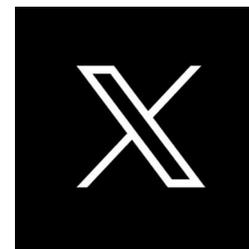
- **8 June 2026**
  - **VITO – G-STIC event**
- **9 June 2026**
  - **IMEC Cleanroom Visit: 10.00 – 12.00**
- **10 June 2026**
  - **EARTO Annual Conference & 2026 Innovation Awards at Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium: 9.00 – 15.30**

**- REGISTRATION OPEN & HOTEL BOOKING ASAP -**



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**EARTO Website**  
[www.ear.to.eu](http://www.ear.to.eu)

