



Swiss participation in EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020 / Horizon Europe)

Information update: 20 May 2020

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) provides regular updates on the state of Swiss participation in EU Research Framework Programmes (FPs; Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe):

- Switzerland has had full association in FP8 (Horizon 2020; 2014–2020) since early 2017.
- FP9 (Horizon Europe; 2021–2027) is currently in the preparatory phase. The EU institutions concerned are currently engaged in discussions to determine the budget, the legal basis and the concrete form of the programme. As a non-EU member state, Switzerland is not involved in these consultations.
- Switzerland and the EU share long-standing and successful cooperation ties in research and innovation. Switzerland's participation in EU research framework programmes forms part of the first series of bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU that came into effect in 2002, and which also includes the free movement of persons. Participation does *not* constitute a market access dossier and therefore does not form part of any institutional agreement. Switzerland thus expects also to be able to participate in 'Horizon Europe' and is committed to this objective.

A. Horizon 2020 (2014–2020)

General information

The 8th generation of the EU framework programmes for research and innovation (Horizon 2020) lasts from 2014 to the end of 2020.

Switzerland has been fully associated to Horizon 2020 since early 2017. A corresponding agreement covers the entire duration of the programme. This agreement also covers Switzerland's full association to the Euratom research and training programme and Swiss participation in ITER.

Swiss participation in Horizon 2020 projects that were directly funded by SERI during the period of partial Swiss association (2014–2016) will continue to receive national funding until the end of their term.

Further information

- [Switzerland's status](#)
- [Facts and Figures: Report on Swiss participation in EU research framework programmes; SERI, 2018](#)
- [Impact of Swiss participation in the EU research framework programmes; SERI 2019](#)

B. Horizon Europe (FP9) and further European R&I initiatives (2021–2027)

Developments at EU level

On 7 June 2018, the European Commission published its proposal for the next EU research framework programme Horizon Europe and for further European research and innovation initiatives (Digital Europe programme, Euratom programme, ITER).

It is on this basis that the EU institutions concerned (European Commission, EU Council, European Parliament) are currently discussing the programmes' legal basis and the actual shape that they will take. At the same time, negotiations are underway on the EU's multi-year financial framework, which also affects the budgets of the research and innovation initiatives.

As a non-EU member state, Switzerland does not take part in these consultations, but closely monitors their progress.

The rules on the participation of associated states are not yet part of these discussions and will only be addressed at a later date. The exact conditions of Swiss participation will be the subject of negotiations between Switzerland and the EU.

Switzerland's participation

Switzerland and the EU share long-standing and successful cooperation ties in the area of research and innovation. Dating back to 1978, they are of interest to both parties. Switzerland is an active and reliable partner for the EU.

Swiss participation in the EU research framework programmes is part of the first series of bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU that came into effect in 2002, and which also includes the free movement of persons. Participation does *not* constitute a market access dossier and therefore does not form part of any institutional agreement. Switzerland thus expects to be able to participate Horizon Europe and is committed to this objective.

There has so far been initial contact of a technical nature, but no official negotiations. The EU must first agree the financial framework and the legal basis for the programme.

Official negotiations with the European Union on the conditions of Switzerland's participation in Horizon Europe are due to be held in the second half of 2020. SERI will provide information on future developments nearer the time.

On 20 May 2020 the Federal Council approved the funding dispatch involving the funds necessary to assure Switzerland's participation in the 2021–2027 Horizon package. Provided this funding is approved by Parliament, the Federal Council can negotiate a renewal of the bilateral agreement between Switzerland and the EU on participation in the Horizon package and thus ensure that Switzerland's association continues uninterrupted. As no official negotiations have as yet been held between Switzerland and the EU, all three possible scenarios were presented in the funding dispatch (full association, partial association or participation as a third country) so that researchers in Switzerland can count on funding (either EU or Swiss government funding) in all cases.

Information for researchers in Switzerland

As soon as negotiations with the EU over Horizon Europe are concluded and Parliament has approved the required funding, researchers in Switzerland will be able to see the actual scope of opportunities to take part in the programme (full association, partial association or participation as a third country). This is due to be the case at the end of 2020 or the beginning of 2021. It is hoped that researchers in Switzerland will be able to take part in the first call for proposals in Horizon Europe.

The information network Euresearch, which is commissioned and funded by the Confederation, will continue to inform and advise researchers in Switzerland on submitting research applications in the 2021–2027 period.

Further information

- Latest version of the EC's [Strategic Plan for Horizon Europe](#)

C. Impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU on research and innovation cooperation

The EU research framework programmes will remain one of the world's most important research programmes even after the United Kingdom's possible withdrawal from the EU. Switzerland is therefore primarily committed to maintaining its participation in Horizon Europe.

At the same time, Switzerland will monitor how the United Kingdom will position itself in the future and explore the possibility of more intensive cooperation in due course.

The UK will pay its compulsory contributions until the Horizon 2020 programme ends. Its withdrawal from the EU therefore has no impact on the ongoing Horizon 2020 projects in which UK researchers are involved. British project partners and coordinators in Horizon 2020 projects can remain in the projects without incurring any restriction or financial problems. Furthermore, researchers and companies from the UK can continue to apply for Horizon 2020 projects in the current year, and, if the evaluation is successful, can continue to participate or coordinate the project as before. This also applies in cases where the projects run beyond 2020.

Like Switzerland, the UK will also have to negotiate its association to Horizon Europe with the EU. Negotiations between the EU and the UK regarding participation in Horizon Europe have not yet begun.

D. Contact

For questions about direct federal funding of Swiss participation in EU projects:
State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI,
EU Framework Programmes Section, Tel. +41 58 463 50 50, europrogram@sbfi.admin.ch

Media enquiries:
State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI
Communications, Tel. +41 58 462 45 60, medien@sbfi.admin.ch

For questions about submission of research applications:
Euresearch, Tel. +41 31 380 60 00 (9.00 am to 12.00 pm and 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm), info@euresearch.ch