Response to the European Parliament Position on FP10 (November 2026)

In brief:

1. EASSH strongly welcomes the European Parliament's proposed budget of €200bn for FP10, strengthening Pillar 1 and improving attention to societal aspects in research and innovation, for example by introducing a pilot initiative for an SSHA sectoral plan.
2. The focus on societal research in Pillar 2 is highly appreciated; in addition to the pilot initiative for an SSHA sectoral plan, EASSH welcomes the proposal for Society Windows dedicated to research on society, with SSHA researchers leading the research agenda.
3. The European Parliament's proposal regarding Society Windows provides the necessary research funding architecture to address European societal challenges and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals global agenda.

The European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASSH) welcomes the European Parliament proposal on the upcoming Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10), voted on by the ITRE committee on 10 November, and we congratulate the rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs for their work.[1]

In line with the Research, Development & Innovation community's recent campaign,[2] EASSH stresses that the €200 billion budget for FP10 must be seen as an investment in higher returns; the more Europe invests in research, the greater the benefits, and by investing collectively at European level rather than through fragmented national efforts, Europe can generate returns that no country could achieve alone. [3]

EASSH also welcomes the proposal for Society Windows to address the complex and multiple challenges ahead. Since 2015, many countries, including all the EU Member

[1] See the report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe and the report on the proposal for a Council decision on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe.

[2] Fund the Future

[3] Repeated analyses of H2020 and Horizon Europe have shown a great utilisation of the funding, with a long-term impact of the advancement of the EU's research, innovation, and society, Ex-post evaluation of Horizon 2020 and Interim Evaluation of Horizon Europe (2021 - 2024). However, excellent research within pillar I of Horizon Europe (HEU) had to go underfunded, with the latest success rates (2025) ranging under 10% for both ERC grants (9.6% in total, thereof 9.8% for Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) research) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (9.6% in total, 23.4% thereof for SSH research).

States, have pledged a commitment to address the Sustainable Development Goals and Societal Challenges. Yet no research funding architecture was designed to reward research addressing these commitments. The European Parliament's proposal on Society Windows provides just such an architecture and focuses on research which addresses the need to strengthen our societies. In times of rapid change, turmoil, and major socio-economic shocks, it is of great importance to have research that prepares our society not just to adapt to change but to drive and protect ourselves from vulnerabilities to current threats. EASSH recommends Member States take the opportunity to fund not only research based on classical Science and Technology Indicators (e.g. spin-offs and patents), but also research that delivers robust solutions for stronger societies and communities.

EASSH also welcomes a proposed preparatory initiative in the form of a CSA, to analyse if a sectoral plan to advance social sciences, humanities and arts (SSHA) research is feasible and can foster collaboration within the sector, encouraging more robust interdisciplinary and interinstitutional cooperation.[4]

In implementing the future programme, however, care must be taken to ensure that the separation of the Competitiveness and Society Windows does not lead to artificial separation within the broader challenges: societal aspects cannot be completely disconnected from technology-focused research within the Competitiveness Windows as the development, uptake and impacts of technologies much depend on economic, cultural, legal, psychological, design, and other factors. In this regard, EASSH strongly welcomes the proposed rewording of Article 5(a).[5]

Therefore, it is important that all Windows be similarly resourced, and the question arises as to why there is a significant gap in the funding allocation between the Competitiveness and Society Windows (which are only about 12% of the total budget of pillar 2). In fact, evidence shows that European funding is supporting the costs of researchers in particular, and they are all performing largely similar research tasks regardless of their disciplinary or topic areas.[6]

EASSH calls on the co-legislators to: (1) retain the €200 billion budget; (2) ensure that the Society Windows are for research on society; and (3) secure SSHA expertise in FP10, welcoming Parliament's support for expert-led governance and priority setting.

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[4] Report on the proposal for a Council decision on establishing the Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe, Article 11k.
[5] Report on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Horizon Europe, notably Article 5.
[6] For further elaboration, also see the EASSH position on equal funding (2020): All FP9 Global Challenges must be more equally resourced and the position on resources for clusters in Horizon Europe (2020): Resources for clusters in Horizon Europe