

## **Proposals of the Conference of University Presidents for the HORIZON 2020 programme 13 January 2012**

The Conference of University Presidents (known by the French initials “CPU”), the French body that represents 77 public universities, 18 Research and Higher Education Clusters (known by the French acronym “PRES”) and 21 higher education institutions, takes due note of the proposals for targets for Horizon 2020 (H2020). Keen on the development of European research and delighted with the introduction of H2020 instruments to promote cooperative research, the CPU would like to see certain changes to the proposal of the EC for Horizon 2020, presented to the Competitiveness Council on 5 and 6 December 2011.

For the global budget of the Horizon 2020 programme, the CPU considers that the EC proposal, i.e. a budget of €90 billion, must not be revised downward.

If Horizon 2020 is to have the form of a single programme, it is important for the European Commission to specify further the instruments in legislative texts and not in work programmes, and that the budget allocation among the different pillars be fixed upstream so as to respect the current balances in time. For instance, insofar as cooperative research has to be promoted, we deem it necessary to avoid any excessive Joint Technological Initiatives (JTIs) for the reasons explained in the paragraph devoted to intellectual property.

### **I/ Pillar 1, Science based on excellence**

#### **Marie Curie actions, ERC and EIT**

For the CPU, the budget for the Marie Curie Actions is still too modest compared with the repercussions of this programme, in particular as regards occupational integration and the expectations of the scientific community for this programme, which have never been called into question. The level of funding for 2012 will be attained only in 2018, with an increase half of the overall budget of Horizon 2020. Thus:

- The CPU asks that the Marie Curie programme has, as of the first year of H2020, funding at the same level as that of the last year of the FP7, and that its budget be increased throughout H2020 to reach an additional €800 million: the outline solutions are presented below;
- The CPU does not want any increase planned for the Cofund projects before the dissemination of the EC assessment of this procedure. The CPU is not convinced, at this stage, that this procedure should be generalised.

Moreover, it is necessary, for the CPU, to maintain a real balance between the increase allocated to the ERC (+100%) and that to the Marie Curie actions. Whereas the ERC is a body that recognises excellence, so are Marie Curie Actions, which moreover do so in a broader field. Many ERC winners have previously been Marie Curie recipients.

- In order to increase the budget package for the Marie Curie Actions, the CPU would like the EIT – provided with a fixed amount of €1.5 billion and an additional budget package of €1.6 billion likely to be revised and allocated in accordance with the developments and progress

of the EIT – to have this package of €1.6 billion reviewed downward in exchange for the increase of the budget for Marie Curie Actions (50% of the second EIT package).

### **FET and FET Open**

A budget of €100 million is earmarked for Future Emerging Technologies (FET), cooperative research projects to explore new foundations for radically new future technologies, in accordance with a bottom-up and interdisciplinary rationale. 6 FET flagships have already been (pre-)selected.

As to the FET Open, the NEST and FET actions (on the ICT and energy front) have continued to be successful among academic researchers throughout the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> PCRD. FET-Open projects, which are fully in line with a bottom-up approach, relatively modest in size in exploratory fields with extensive freedom to set up consortia, constitute an efficient way to call on the scientific community to come up with topics that are bound to mature in 10-15 years.

- This approach should be generalised to all topics and be allocated a sizeable budget in this Pillar 1 to projects which must remain open to all topics, including those relating to societal challenges, throughout the H2020 programme. Mature projects could then be reclassified in societal challenges, if appropriate.

### **Infrastructure and facilities**

- The CPU attaches great importance to the design, use and common availability of research infrastructure and facilities;
- It considers that calls for proposals on this front must be more open and transparent, and that the infrastructure and facilities should enhance the mobility of researchers.

### **II/ Pillar 2, industrial leadership**

The CPU wants to see the distinction between SMEs and large companies maintained. The aim of the project bringing together academics and SMEs on the one hand, and large companies on the other, is not the same. Furthermore, maintaining a differentiation can help develop further cooperation between universities and SMEs at local level.

### **III/ Pillar 3, societal challenges**

As regards this pillar, the CPU reiterates that it wants:

- A balance between “top down” and “bottom up” strategies in all societal challenges as well as between market and non-market projects throughout H2020;
- Blank calls for proposals in each of the societal challenges;
- Intra- and inter-networking;
- Targeted cooperation.

### **A/ A cross-sectional section**

- Some instruments of a broader and general scope, proposed in the current challenge 6, must be integrated in Pillar 3 as a whole: this is the case of activities relating to all the societal challenges such as COST, INCOM, European space research chairs, knowledge regions, questions of smart specialisations, SIS etc.

**- The CPU is in favour of integrating socio-economic sciences and the humanities in each societal challenge of the 3<sup>rd</sup> pillar of Horizon 2020.**

- The CPU wants a proportion of projects among all the projects financed by the societal challenge (excluding challenge 6) to include necessarily a predominant or secondary dimension of socio-economic sciences and the humanities.

**- Joint programming initiatives**

The joint programming objectives consequently correspond to inter-governmental coordination for funding the societal challenges. The CPU considers that when the societal challenges of joint programmes are advanced and mature, they should be integrated in Horizon 2020 and benefit from the EU rules for this programme. The EC should contribute financially to the joint programming initiatives if the governance and participation rules are transparent and harmonised between the programmes.

**- Towards an “enhancement” of an open-ended tool box**

The CPU calls for the development of an interdisciplinary information exchange platform on all the challenges of Pillar 3 which should include in particular all the European calls. The platform would allow a vertical, transversal and horizontal reading for the three pillars of the Horizon 2020, thereby giving greater visibility to the different disciplines and making it possible to coordinate the research efforts better.

**B/ A change of the 6<sup>th</sup> societal challenge: “inclusive, innovative and safe societies”**

**1) The CPU wants a new definition of the objectives for the societal challenge: “inclusive, innovative and safe societies.”**

This challenge raises numerous questions and criticisms: It does not lead to satisfactory multidisciplinary synergies, either for the social sciences and the humanities or for ICT... thereby restricting the possibilities for cooperative research in the different fields.

- **That is why the CPU calls for a separation of the objectives of “Inclusive and innovative societies” on the one hand and the objectives of “safe societies” on the other, by asking for the creation of a 7<sup>th</sup> societal challenge.**
- **The CPU proposes that the 6<sup>th</sup> societal challenge pertain to “inclusive and innovative societies” and the 7<sup>th</sup> societal challenge to “safe societies.”**

**2) Proposal for the establishment of a societal challenge: “Inclusive and innovative societies”**

As social sciences and the humanities play a specific role for understanding, gauging and anticipating changes in our society, this societal challenge could, in the CPU’s view, gear its works to:

*- Inclusive societies:*

- ✓ Culture, cultures, interculturality, art;
- ✓ Citizenship; building society; democracy; social bond; solidarity;
- ✓ Education; training; social groups; equality; employment;
- ✓ International Europe;...

*- Innovative societies:* prospective activities, quantitative and qualitative comprehension; non-technological innovation, innovation economy and social innovation, co-creation; interdisciplinary co-creation (e.g. ICT and art, ICT and cognition, ICT and learning); development of economies and practices; human networks; ethics and society; innovative research methodologies; public

policies; organisations and systems; support and risk study (particularly technical and technological).

#### **IV/ Structural Fund Synergy, Horizon 2020 programme**

The CPU wants more concrete measures to strengthen synergies between these two programmes. It will develop its approach on this subject after the announcement of the EC's proposal on 27 January. It is clearly important already that projects such as the *Knowledge Regions* should be analysed before considering doing away with them.

#### **V/ Participation rules:**

- The CPU reiterates its interest to save real costs at least as a possible option. It would be surprising, to say the least, that this approach is abandoned just like that, where the EC's Research DG has throughout the 7<sup>th</sup> PCRDT pursued a policy of encouraging research stakeholders insistently to convert to cost accounting for funding based on actual costs (as a modernisation instrument);
- Whereas the CE proposes reimbursements with flat-rate indirect costs, the CPU prefers the following funding method: a calculation of the indirect costs at 75% of the direct costs, and a 75% co-funding of projects.  
This method was for that matter that selected during a large part of the negotiation process. As it reflects better the actual situation of indirect costs for institutions, it would make project management easier, would simplify the justification of expenses, and would be more encouraging for coordinated projects.
- In the event that an option of 100% funding for projects with 20% for indirect costs were selected, the CPU proposes the following distribution:
  - A single funding rate for all projects of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pillar at 100/20. To propose a 70% rate, as the EC does now, when the project is close to the market, or even less, would prevent certain universities from participating on cooperative projects;
  - Funding for Pillar 2 projects at 70/20 insofar as they pertain more to companies and must remain compliant with the legislation on competition.

#### **VI/Intellectual property**

Given a greater orientation for European projects to marketing and the possibility of companies to participate in nearly all the instruments of the H2020 programme, works are underway for the Development of a Simplified Consortium Agreement (DESCA) for intellectual property. There are those in European work groups who underscore that they want to see the exploitation of intellectual property transferred easier to companies.

- We consider it of fundamental importance for consortium agreements to provide balanced intellectual property conditions;
- The quality of the relationship between industrialists and the universities imposes that public financiers should set simple obligations in terms of intellectual properties. It does not fall under the remit of universities to exploit results directly. Consequently, in the event of joint ownership of results with an industrial partner it is difficult, if not altogether impossible, to negotiate a financial return with the latter for the direct exploitation of the results. Furthermore, in most cases, exclusive exploitation is not sought by industrialists, and results



are exploited under cross licensing with other industrialists that do not entail remuneration. Consequently, for tasks carried out jointly with industrial partners that can lead to common results, researchers have no objective interest to cooperate in optimal manner by giving their best ideas. The recommended solution would be to provide for a **systematic financial return** to the universities **in the event of direct or indirect exploitation** by an industrial partner, in particular for jointly owned results.

To this end, the approach of the Bay Dohle Act in the US is recommended. By way of reminder, this system puts the universities at the heart of the innovation process by giving them real encouragement to develop their results and by guaranteeing financial return systematically on intellectual property for the universities. It is a matter of avoiding drifts from Joint Technological Initiatives (JTIs) and of encouraging researchers to give their best ideas – which is no longer always the case – under a system that guarantees a fair treatment.