

Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE)  
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### **ISE Statement: EU Council's President proposal on MFF and Horizon Europe**

Initiative for Science in Europe is perplexed by the downward spiral of the Horizon Europe Research & Innovation budget for 2021-2027 as an additional cut of 5Bn€ has been proposed by the President of the EU Council.

Although the current COVID-19 crisis has shown beyond any doubt the importance of research and innovation, the funding of the EU flagship research programmes (ERC, boosting frontier research and MSCA, focusing on training of young scientists and entrepreneurs) together with the total investment in Horizon Europe has been declining quickly since the Commission's initial proposal.

While the EU Parliament had set 120Bn€ as the minimum budget requirement to assure EU competitiveness, the Commission's June 2018 proposal had a total budget of 94.1Bn€; in February of 2020, the Council discussed an allocation of approx. 85Bn€; this went down to 81Bn€ in May and then to 75.9Bn€ last week. The current proposal is significantly below this ambition and that of a geopolitical Europe set by the EU Commission.

We acknowledge and approve of the additional investment from the "Next generation EU" recovery package to fund innovation actions (approximately 14Bn€). We notice, though, that since frontier research and training of young scientists are not funded through this instrument, **a cut in the programme signifies a substantial depletion from the investment in Pillar I of Horizon Europe.**

This is going in the wrong direction; research addresses fundamental questions and equips societies to face complex challenges. In these difficult times, the **leaders of Member States would show a greater vision for the future of Europe** by deciding for a more ambitious investment in Horizon Europe as a whole, to boost the growth of the research and innovation system, and therefore the benefits for European economy and society.

Now it's critical to invest in frontier research to tackle the huge challenges posed by the current and future crisis. Therefore, **we ask European leaders for an increase of the Horizon Europe budget in general and a specific allocation of additional 5Bn€ to Pillar I.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Andler', is positioned above a vertical line.

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### **About ISE**

*ISE represents major European Learned Societies and Research Organizations in Europe operating within different disciplines and across sectors. Active in the policy debate at the European level, ISE has been instrumental in promoting disruptive excellence-based funding programmes for scientific research such as the ERC.*

Website: <https://initiative-se.eu>; Twitter: [@ISE\\_news](https://twitter.com/ISE_news)