EN

Horizon Europe

Work Programme 2026-2027

1. General Introduction

(European Commission Decision C(2025) 8493 of 11 December 2025)

About this work programme

Horizon Europe funds research and innovation (R&I), especially through *work programmes*, which set out funding opportunities for R&I activities[1].

This introduction covers the following parts of Horizon Europe for 2026-2027:

- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions,
- Research Infrastructures,
- Health,
- Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society,
- Civil Security for Society,
- Digital, Industry and Space,
- Climate, Energy and Mobility,
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment,
- European Innovation Ecosystems,
- Widening participation and spreading excellence, and reforming and enhancing the European R&I system,
- EU Missions,
- New European Bauhaus Facility
- Horizontal activities: calls for the Clean Industrial Deal and on artificial intelligence (AI).

In addition to the work programme parts listed above, the *general annexes* to this work programme set out the general conditions applicable to calls for proposals under this work programme, such as eligibility rules, details on how to apply and how the Commission evaluates applications.

Getting started

If you are interested in applying for funding through Horizon Europe, you can find all topics that are currently open for applications on the Funding and Tenders Portal, now also accessible via mobile app. To help you navigate the application process, the network of National Contact Points is available to answer your questions and provide support in your own language.

You can also find out more about the Horizon Europe programme on the Horizon Europe web page.

[1] See Council Decision (EU) 2021/764.

Key novelties

Simplification measures

The Commission is committed to making the Horizon Europe work programme even simpler, shorter and more impactful. This work programme introduces several measures aimed at simplifying processes, enhancing transparency and inclusiveness. The key simplification measures in this work programme are set out below.

- **Less prescriptive topic descriptions.** The average length of topic descriptions has been reduced, making these less prescriptive and thereby allowing applicants more flexibility in how they approach the topics. This includes more open topics[2] introduced across clusters in Pillar II. This also means that the overall **length of the Work Programme 2026-2027 has been reduced** by 33% compared with the Work Programme 2023-2024.

- **Fewer topics.** The number of topics has been reduced by 35% compared with the Work Programme 2023-2024. This streamlining is intended to focus resources on fewer but larger topics, thereby increasing the potential impact. Moreover, the number of topics funding only one project has been decreased by 50%.

- **Increased use of lump-sum funding.** 50% of the call budget of this work programme will be implemented through lump sums. This particularly concerns topics intended to result in grants below EUR 10 million. The use of lump sums simplifies financial management and reduces administrative burden for participants.

- **'Newcomer-friendly' and SME-friendly topics.** This work programme includes topics that are specifically designed to be newcomer-friendly, encouraging participation by SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups, civil society organisations and small public administrations. These topics can, for instance, use the Fast Track to Research and Innovation Scheme. Similarly, there are more topics that allow for financial support to third parties than in previous work programmes.

- **Use of two-stage calls.** The programme includes 41 call topics with two-stage evaluation. These will allow applicants to submit a shorter summary proposal and only submit a full proposal if successful at the stage of the short proposal evaluation. Many of these short proposals will be evaluated blindly, thanks to anonymised applications, as a way to avoid potential risk of bias. By reducing the submission period for first-stage proposals and simplifying evaluation processes, the time to grant is shortened.

- **Reduced complexity of proposal template.** Standard templates for the most common type of actions have been updated, simplifying the requirements for the impact and implementation sections and reducing the overall page limits.

[2] Open topics are topics for which the expected outcomes or impacts are clearly defined, but the pathways and methods to achieve them remain open-ended. This flexibility allows for diverse approaches and outputs. Open topics are subject to the same evaluation criteria as the other topics.

These measures collectively aim to make the work programme more efficient, accessible and impactful by reducing administrative burdens and promoting inclusivity and innovation.

Horizontal calls

A key novelty in this work programme is the introduction of horizontal calls, which are designed to connect different parts of Horizon Europe in support of key strategic areas. These calls ensure that Horizon Europe is more in tune with the EU's evolving policies by tackling them in a consistent, cross-cluster, multidisciplinary way. By combining efforts and pooling resources, they aim to create critical mass and deliver greater impact. The horizontal calls are built around open, broadly defined topics guided by a shared strategic direction. The topics are intentionally non-prescriptive, giving applicants the flexibility to propose different approaches for achieving the expected outcomes.

R&I in Support of the Clean Industrial Deal

The horizontal call 'R&I in Support of the Clean Industrial Deal', set out in the 'Horizontal Activities' part of this work programme, is designed to implement the EU's commitments under the Clean Industrial Deal through targeted research and innovation. With an indicative budget of EUR 540 million, this call aims to accelerate the market deployment of cutting-edge clean technologies and decarbonised industry solutions, with a focus on both technological excellence and market readiness.

The call takes a bottom-up, industry-led approach, facilitating cross-sectoral integration and market-driven R&I responses. It consists of two large, open topics focusing on: (1) **decarbonisation of energy-intensive industries**; and (2) **clean technologies for climate action**. The focus is on creating 'fit-for-deployment' projects that not only are technologically feasible but also have robust business and market readiness strategies.

As announced in the Clean Industrial Deal Communication, this call will foster synergies between Horizon Europe and the Innovation Fund by ensuring a continuous pipeline of R&I solutions ready for market deployment. Ultimately, the call seeks to accelerate the roll-out of clean tech solutions, boost European competitiveness, mobilise investments and reduce energy prices, thereby contributing significantly to the EU's industrial decarbonisation and clean energy objectives.

AI in Science

The horizontal call 'AI in Science', set out in the 'Horizontal Activities' part of this work programme, is aimed at fostering trustworthy AI solutions to tackle significant societal and industrial challenges. It contributes to the implementation of the 'Resource for AI Science in Europe' (RAISE) pilot, as announced in the European Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Science. This call supports safe, responsible, ethical and transparent AI applications across key sectors, such as advanced materials, agriculture, environment and food, and is in line with Europe's broader digital transition goals. By embedding these innovations, this work programme seeks to enhance Europe's R&I leadership, thereby having a substantial impact on sustainability, digital innovation and inclusive growth.

With an indicative budget of around EUR 90 million, this call includes open topics on **thematic networks of excellence for AI in science**, **automated scientific discovery** and **RAISE doctoral networks for AI in science**. These topics are designed to apply across different R&I areas within the work

programme, ensuring a cohesive and comprehensive approach to advancing AI science in Europe. Through these initiatives, the call not only supports safe, secure and trustworthy technological advancement but also strengthens Europe's strategic position in the global AI landscape.

In parallel to this horizontal call, at least EUR 775 million will be invested in AI in science through the rest of this work programme.

Choose Europe for Science

The Choose Europe for Science initiative is an important element of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026-2027 and is designed to make Europe a premier destination for scientific careers. The Choose Europe for Science initiative aligns closely with broader EU goals, emphasising the need to foster innovation by creating an environment where researchers can thrive. By offering stable funding opportunities and access to cutting-edge facilities, the EU enables researchers to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges. On top of the EUR 500 million announced in May 2025 for this initiative, this work programme brings in additional resources.

Building on the 2025 pilot aiming to promote research careers in Europe by funding postdoctoral programmes that go beyond project-based work, the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions** (MSCAs) part of this work programme allocates about EUR 50 million to improve long-term fellowships, ensure postdoctoral career stability and offer relocation incentives. By linking MSCA grants to competitions for long-term positions in universities and research organisations, this initiative underscores the EU's commitment to providing excellent research opportunities, working conditions and long-term professional prospects, thereby ensuring that Europe remains a hub for top talent and groundbreaking scientific advancements.

In addition to the dedicated 'Choose Europe for Science' initiative under the MSCA, this work programme also supports these objectives through other actions across its various components. For instance, by strengthening Europe's world-class **research infrastructures** – including through improving transnational access to their facilities and services, supporting training and upskilling, and reinforcing their international dimensions – the programme contributes to stimulate researchers and innovators to 'Choose Europe for Science'. Such contributions represent nearly EUR 50 million in the Research Infrastructures part of this work programme. In addition, the **ERA** Chairs call, aiming to attract high-level researchers to a widening university or research centre, also supports the initiative with a budget of EUR 240 million. Moreover, in light of the adopted EU Startup and Scaleup strategy, the **European Innovation Ecosystem** supports the 'Choose Europe for Science' initiative by creating conditions favourable for the growth of global, technology-driven companies.

Delivering on EU policy priorities

Europe has made its choice. We are choosing to start a new age of invention and ingenuity. We are choosing to put research and innovation, science and technology at the heart of our economy. We are choosing to be the continent where science is a pillar of our society and our way of life.

Europe's global competitiveness and leadership in the clean and digital transitions remain central to the future. These transitions hinge on a bold, coordinated approach to R&I which fuels scientific

breakthroughs, accelerates the development of critical technologies and addresses pressing societal challenges.

With this work programme, the EU and the countries associated to Horizon Europe will invest over EUR 14 billion in research and innovation to enhance Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness. Building on the previous Horizon Europe work programmes, it introduces significant new initiatives designed to tackle the most pressing EU challenges and priorities, including the Clean Industrial Deal and advancements in AI. The EU's shift to a circular economy is also integral to the work programme for 2026-2027, with a focus on systemic changes across sectors such as construction and textiles and promoting innovative, market-ready solutions through high-impact, cross-cluster actions. Alongside initiatives under the Clean Industrial Deal to help increase circularity in energy-intensive industries and clean tech, the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative will focus on local and regional authorities, fostering place-based innovation and experimentation. A further example of a key EU strategy supported by this work programme is the Strategy for European Life Sciences.

Amid ongoing geopolitical uncertainties, including conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, this work programme will focus on initiatives that strengthen Europe's security, reduce strategic dependencies and reinforce supply chain resilience. For instance, EUR 634 million is allocated to topics related to critical raw materials, and the programme also supports research on advanced materials and alternatives to rare earth. By investing in critical technologies – such as energy technologies, quantum and advanced manufacturing – the EU aims to safeguard its strategic autonomy while fostering economic growth and social cohesion. This work programme is a key step towards achieving the priorities outlined in the second Horizon Europe strategic plan (2025-2027). The actions set out in this work programme are expected to substantially contribute to the three overarching, interlinked key strategic orientations: *the green transition, the digital transition* and *a more resilient, competitive, inclusive and democratic Europe*. These orientations are fully aligned with the EU's main policy priorities, as set out in the Commission's Political Guidelines for 2024-2029 and expanded on in the Competitiveness Compass for the EU, all of which require significant contributions from R&I to meet their objectives.

Knowledge valorisation is also a key priority of this work programme. Over EUR 870 million is allocated to valorisation topics on market, societal and policy uptake of research results. Other topics across the work programme also include valorisation elements.

To support the European strategy on research and technology infrastructures, the **Research Infrastructures** part of this work programme aims to strengthen research infrastructures so that they can support all stages of the innovation process – from basic research to real-world use in the market. This approach aims to ensure that Europe remains competitive on the global stage.

In particular, the Research Infrastructures part will contribute to enriching the **European Open Science Cloud Federation** with high-quality, FAIR[3] research data and scientific tools and services that support cross-disciplinary science cases.

R&I activities under **Cluster 1 'Health'** will support healthcare resilience, leverage biotechnology and AI and address key public health needs – including mental health, disease prevention, pollution- and climate-related health impacts and the development of critical medicines and medical countermeasures. These efforts will help improve health outcomes, ease the burden of disease and

[3] Findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.

contribute to Europe's sustainable prosperity and global competitiveness, supporting the goal of making the EU the most attractive place for life sciences by 2030, in line with the Strategy for European Life Sciences. This cluster will also develop innovative interventions to prevent the harmful effects of digital technologies on the mental health of children and young adults, in line with the Commission's objective to protect their mental health in an increasingly digitalised world.

The mobilisation of social sciences and humanities and interdisciplinary R&I under the actions in **Cluster 2 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society'** will help foster a democratic culture of participation and inclusivity and promote the values of equality, freedom, respect for human dignity and human rights and respect for cultural pluralism. Research will ensure that these EU values remain relevant in addressing contemporary challenges and in balancing technological progress with its societal impact. This will contribute to a more inclusive and equitable Europe, where innovation benefits all, particularly those at risk of being excluded or discriminated against by technological changes.

A new **European partnership on social transformations and resilience**, focusing on social sciences and humanities, will be launched under Cluster 2 of the work programme. The partnership will fund R&I activities in the following areas: the future of work, modernisation of social protection and essential services, education and skills development, and a fair transition towards climate neutrality. This is the last of the nine new European partnerships announced in the second Horizon Europe strategic plan (2025-2027) and it is aimed at combining national R&I efforts and increasing industry participation in Horizon Europe in key strategic areas.

Actions in **Cluster 3 'Civil Security for Society'** will contribute to a safer and more secure Europe, a 'Preparedness Union' and stronger common borders, thereby protecting democracy and putting R&I at the heart of a resilient economy. This cluster will equip security practitioners, such as law enforcement and critical infrastructure operators, with modern tools consistent with EU values, while boosting European competitiveness and promoting innovation procurement. This cluster supports the ProtectEU strategy in addressing threats such as terrorism and cybercrime and will facilitate secure border crossings for people and goods. It also contributes to the European Preparedness Union Strategy for better managing risks, developing a European Civil Defence Mechanism for crisis management, and strengthening the EU's cyber resilience through advanced protective measures and international collaboration. Overall, this cluster focuses on ensuring people's right to safety.

This work programme continues to support the digital transition to clean industry and autonomous access to space in a competitive, strategically autonomous Europe. In line with this, as key priorities, actions in **Cluster 4 'Digital, Industry and Space'** will focus on ensuring a substantial and coordinated contribution by R&I to the Clean Industrial Deal, promoting emerging enabling technologies, such as AI in science, and achieving open strategic autonomy[4] in space-based infrastructure, services, applications and data. In doing so, this cluster operates in alignment with the previously mentioned horizontal calls focused on the Clean Industrial Deal and AI in Science. This cluster will also help build synergies and joint activities between partnerships.

Cluster 5 'Climate, Energy and Mobility' will support R&I on decarbonising our economy and society, promoting a more sustainable approach to production and consumption, and advancing our

[4] Open strategic autonomy' refers to the term 'strategic autonomy, while preserving an open economy', as reflected in the Conclusions of the European Council of 1/2 October 2020.

knowledge on climate science. These actions will help identify effective and efficient pathways, cross-cutting technologies, and solutions to address climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy needs and mobility challenges. Efforts will focus on ensuring affordable, sustainable and secure energy supplies, the shift to more sustainable mobility options and transport modes, the decarbonisation of industry, and circularity in manufacturing and process industries. R&I will also leverage digital technologies to improve productivity and help to close the skills gap, thereby improving Europe's competitiveness.

The Industrial Action Plan for the European automotive sector is supported through multiple actions in Cluster 5, including a flagship topic on large-scale demonstration of connected, cooperative and automated mobility. Further aligning with this action plan, the European Commission has launched a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with the European co-programmed partnerships linked to the automotive sector[5] to accelerate R&I in sustainable and smart mobility.

Cluster 6 'Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment' is pivotal for sustaining our quality of life, from food security to water and nature. Actions in this cluster are expected to support the implementation of the common agricultural policy and the vision for agriculture and food, among others. To protect our natural world, Cluster 6 is aimed at developing innovations to facilitate the effective implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation, including by addressing the main drivers of biodiversity loss. This cluster also addresses pollution and various water-related challenges in support of the European Water Resilience Strategy and helps protect and restore ocean health to deliver on the European Ocean Pact. It pursues climate adaptation and mitigation by helping land- and water-based sectors to transition towards climate neutrality by 2050, as required by the European Climate Law.

Actions in Cluster 6 are expected to accelerate the transition towards a more circular, nature-positive and resilient economy and bioeconomy and to foster bio-based products and value chains in support of the Competitiveness Compass, the Clean Industrial Deal, the Strategy for European Life Sciences and the bioeconomy strategy.

The **European Innovation Ecosystems (EIE)** programme enhances interconnected innovation ecosystems across the EU. It contributes to boosting Europe's innovation capabilities, notably in the deep tech sector, and improving the commercialisation of research. By fostering synergies among diverse innovation actors, the EIE programme contributes to the EU's goals of achieving a green and digital transition, enhancing competitiveness and fostering social cohesion. It also aims to support startups and scaleups within the EU to strengthen economic resilience and strategic autonomy.

To help European deep tech startups to scale into global champions, the **European Startup and Scaleup Hubs** initiative under the EIE programme aims to create a network connecting Europe's leading and emerging startups. This pilot action, which is part of the Startup and Scaleup Strategy, will promote a transnational network of hubs rooted in strong research and higher education systems, bringing together research facilities, companies, entrepreneurs and investors and providing dedicated support to deep tech spin offs, startups and scaleups.

[5] These partnerships are: 2Zero (Towards zero-emission road transport), CCAM (Connected, Cooperative and Automated Driving), and BATT4EU (European Partnership for an Industrial Battery Value Chain).

As outlined in the European Research Area (ERA) Policy Agenda 2025-2027, the ERA is envisaged as an integrated and competitive environment for research and innovation across the EU, driven by excellence and openness. The **'Widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area'** work programme part supports the ERA's goals by addressing fragmentation of R&I, reducing geographical disparities between countries and enhancing R&I capacity[6], thus helping to achieve the target of spending 3% of GDP on research and development in the EU. Notable initiatives include ERA Chairs, which attract top scientists and innovators to countries with a lower R&I performance to foster excellence and institutional reforms, thereby enhancing competitiveness and talent retention. Given the increased budget for this work programme, these actions now also include recruiting leading research managers to boost research management capacities, thereby supporting effective resource allocation and strategic planning. Additionally, under this work programme part, the 'Talent ecosystems for attractive early research careers' topic promotes the new European framework for research careers, contributing to better working conditions and stability for researchers, aligning with the **'Choose Europe for Science'** initiative and enhancing the EU's appeal to both European and international talent.

EU Missions address by definition major global challenges through ambitious, time-bound objectives rooted in transdisciplinary research and innovation. They encompass various disciplines and policies, supporting key EU priorities such as the European Clean Industrial Deal, Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, the EU industrial strategy and the digital transition. The EU Missions work programme part fosters synergies with other Horizon Europe funding instruments and includes actions for all five EU Missions:

- **Adaptation to Climate Change:** helping at least 150 European regions and communities to become climate resilient by 2030;
- **Cancer:** improving the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030 through prevention and cure, and helping those affected by cancer, including their families, to live longer and better;
- **Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030:** protecting and restoring aquatic ecosystems, eliminating pollution, and making the blue economy circular and carbon-neutral;
- **Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities:** delivering 100 climate-neutral and smart cities by 2030;
- **A Soil Deal for Europe:** setting up 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030.

In particular, this work programme aims to enhance local and regional climate risk preparedness, provide solutions to restore EU waters, establish Climate City Contracts with 100 cities, create a unified framework for soil-health monitoring and innovative tools for land managers, and support cancer prevention through clinical trials for treatments and biomarker-guided medicines. The Commission is further launching a Mission integration award and a Mission engagement award to encourage and recognise national and regional authorities in their efforts to implement and engage with EU Missions.

[6] Notably, Outermost Regions as well as Overseas Countries and Territories are particularly encouraged to take part in Pillar II dedicated actions to boost researcher participation, focusing on their R&I expertise in areas such as climate change, energy transition, biodiversity and ecosystems restoration, agriculture and life sciences, marine sciences, metabolic and emerging diseases, earth and space sciences, social sciences and innovation. Since 2021, the nine Outermost Regions have access to the "Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence" instrument, which supports high-quality European funding proposals through free of charge tools like pre-proposal checks. This work programme thereby aligns with the objectives of the future strategy for Outermost Regions, announced in the 2025 State of the European Union address.

As a cross-cluster issue, the **New European Bauhaus** Facility leverages the power of inclusion, sustainability, and arts and culture in R&I to advance the Green Deal and clean transition in neighbourhoods and their communities. More specifically, it fosters R&I solutions aimed at connecting the green transformation, social inclusion and local democracy and advancing circular and regenerative approaches to the built environment, while also developing innovative funding and new business models for the transformation of neighbourhoods.

This work programme emphasises the crucial role of **international cooperation** in addressing global challenges and advancing EU policy priorities, including those under the Global Gateway, particularly in the areas of climate, health and digital transition. In line with the political guidelines prioritising a global Europe that leverages its power and partnerships, this programme underscores the EU's commitment to leading the green and digital transitions and tackling health and environmental challenges at the right level, in accordance with agreements such as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. By working together with international partners, the EU can more effectively address its strategic dependencies in critical sectors. The second Horizon Europe strategic plan (2025-2027) further emphasises that international cooperation remains the foundation of the EU's efforts to make Europe more resilient and stronger in the world. All sections of this work programme actively encourage international collaboration, with a particular focus on initiatives involving Africa, the Mediterranean, Latin America and the Caribbean countries, and increased collaboration with India and South-East Asian nations.

The **association of third countries** to Horizon Europe is a significant component of this approach. Currently, 22 countries are associated to the programme. Ongoing discussions with other nations highlight the political, economic and scientific importance of association to Horizon Europe. For example, association is strategic for strengthening our partnerships in the EU's neighbouring regions and, in the case of candidate countries, paves the way for accession by helping to align R&I efforts. Several topics in this work programme contribute directly or indirectly to the reconstruction and recovery of Ukraine's R&I sector, Ukraine's integration into the European Research Area or the reconstruction and recovery of another R&I related sector. More generally, association provides a robust framework for deepening science and technology cooperation with external partners, in line with the European Economic Security Strategy.

Investing in climate action, biodiversity and the digital transition

To achieve the aim of making the EU the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050, this Horizon Europe work programme will continue to allocate at least 35% of its funding to **climate objectives**. Complementing this, to ensure that Horizon Europe's actions do not harm environmental policy objectives, a 'do no harm' assessment will continue to be carried out. In addition, in line with increased efforts on **biodiversity** under the second Horizon Europe strategic plan (2025-2027), Horizon Europe aims to dedicate at least 10% of its 2025-2027 budget to biodiversity-related topics.

The parts of this work programme dedicated to the six clusters falling under Pillar II 'Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness', together with the research infrastructures, widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area, European Innovation Ecosystems, EU Missions, New European Bauhaus Facility and Horizontal Activities parts, contribute over

EUR 4 903 million[7] to climate action, which corresponds to 46.3% of the budget for these parts of the work programme. Furthermore, these parts will contribute EUR 1 661 million to biodiversity, which corresponds to 15.7% of their budget.

Contributions to climate action are made by 16.6% of resources spent under Cluster 1 'Health' (EUR 176 million), 10.0% spent under Cluster 2 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society' (EUR 64 million), 28.6% spent under Cluster 3 'Civil Security for Society' (EUR 96 million), 22.6% spent under Cluster 4[8] 'Digital, Industry and Space' (EUR 437 million), 89.7% spent under Cluster 5 'Climate, Energy and Transport' (EUR 1 644 million) and 66.1% spent under Cluster 6 'Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment' (EUR 778 million). The EU Missions, New European Bauhaus and Horizontal Activities parts, including actions relating to the Clean Industrial Deal, contribute EUR 1 395 million, which corresponds to 68.7%.

Horizon Europe will also continue promoting R&I with the aim of making this decade Europe's **digital decade**. This will help empower society, including enterprises, to navigate technology-human interactions responsibly, upholding human rights and ecological limits. Therefore, at least EUR 13 billion from the Horizon Europe budget is to be allocated to developing core digital technologies over the lifetime of the framework programme. Furthermore, in line with the **AI** Continent Action Plan's commitment to accelerating AI development and deployment across strategic sectors, the EU is taking a leading role by funding projects focused on developing safe and ethical AI applications. These efforts promote AI 'made in Europe', driving innovation from research labs to the marketplace. An estimated 35.8% of funds allocated under the six clusters, the research infrastructures, widening participation and strengthening the European Research Area, European Innovation Ecosystems, EU Missions, New European Bauhaus Facility and Horizontal Activities parts of the work programme, corresponding to EUR 3 780 million, and 33% of funds across all parts of Horizon Europe, contribute to the digital transition. The overall investment in topics that encourage the development of AI in 2026 and 2027 is estimated at EUR 2 023 million, augmented by projects leveraging AI-based approaches.

Investment in climate action, biodiversity and the digital transition will contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. By fostering research and innovation in these areas, Horizon Europe helps to create a more sustainable, digital and resilient Europe for the benefit of all.

What you will find in this work programme

Each part of this work programme, except for this general introduction and the general annexes, is designed around a series of coherent packages of impact-driven destinations, calls for proposals and topics.

[7] This calculation takes into account only the 'EU-voted budget' and does not include contributions by associated countries. The EU-voted budget makes up 89.7% on average, varying between 79% in Cluster 1 and 91.5% in Cluster 2, as a result of earlier effective participation of UK entities in the domains of clusters that shall guide the use of UK provided funds.
[8] Clusters 4 and 5 also finance the clean industrial deal call under the Horizontal actions.

Each **destination** describes the socio-economic challenges to be addressed and the expected impact of the R&I activities. In many cases, destinations correspond directly to an expected impact identified in the second Horizon Europe strategic plan (2025-2027). Together, the destinations set out in this work programme cover the 32 expected impacts identified in this strategic plan.

Each destination comprises one or more topics. Each **topic** describes the expected outcomes and the scope of the R&I activities to be funded. The **expected outcomes** are the desired effects of the project in the medium term, such as the uptake, diffusion, use and/or deployment of the project's results by direct target groups. The **scope** describes the area of research/innovation that needs to be tackled if the expected outcomes are to be successfully achieved, without prescribing how this should be done. It is therefore left to the creativity and skill of the applicants to design a project that will generate results and substantially contribute to the expected outcomes and impacts.

Each topic also sets out the general conditions, deadlines, budget and any specific conditions that may apply. The topics are grouped under calls for proposals, which is a technical term for a number of topics that open for submission of applications on the same date.