



Foreword by Katarzyna Walczyk-Matuszyk

Dear friends and partners,

We at the NCP_WIDE.NET project are very pleased to present you with this issue of our e-bulletin. The moment of a new release is a very important one. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation last month proved to be very demanding for research and innovation eco-systems, including the community of NCPs. We had to make changes in our services every day, moving from face to face contacts with our clients to the online world of e-consultations and webinars. By now, lessons have been learnt, and new experiences are sure to contribute to the new approach and extended impact of our activities. Within the network we are using the moment as an opportunity to learn new skills and deepen important knowledge before we enter the 9th Framework Programme, i.e. Horizon Europe.



The everyday job of Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation NCPs has been acknowledged by the European Commission as well as by our partners and stakeholders.

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As a result, the new NCP initiative has been mentioned as vital part of the Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence Package under Horizon Europe. The framework is going to include new activities. Of these, the most important one will be dedicated to the pre-proposals check – a skill we already developed to some degree under Horizon 2020. The exchange of best practices as well as experience allows us to build a new universal capacity, which will be an integral part of our daily agenda while working with applicants.

Therefore, the year 2021 will be a transition period for our community, from Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe, from NCP_WIDE.NET to a new framework – **NCP_WIDE.NET+**. During the first half of the year, the network will deliver relevant outputs related to the success stories of projects under the Widening package. You will have the opportunity to get to know the flagships of COST initiatives, Teaming for Excellence, Twinning and ERA Chair projects.

Moreover, we will provide you with news on developments and aspects that are important for the applicants. Our ambition is to enhance communication within the network. Our aim is to better meet the expectations of NCPs and provide them with all the relevant information, and make sure our community knows what our role is. As a result, our communication channels will be updated and become more engaging. Join us today at LinkedIn and Twitter and do not forget about the final issue of the e-bulletin planned for 2021!

The intense experience of 2020, rich in turbulence and change, created not only new circumstances but also a foundation on which we will build our future activities. On behalf of the NCP_WIDE.NET project consortium, I would like to wish you a happy holiday season and a prosperous new year!

Katarzyna Walczyk-Matuszyk
NCP_WIDE.NET Coordinator

Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

Over the course of the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020 in the past seven years (2014–2020), the three core instruments using CSA grants—**TEAMING**, **TWINNING** and **ERA Chairs**—have undergone certain changes to become more effective and efficient and have as much impact as possible. The European Commission (Directorate General for Research and Innovation, DG RTD) closely monitored the applicants' reactions as well as the NCPs' comments and took steps to adapt these instruments to the needs of the end users. Such a set of measures supporting the less-performing countries in R&I (the so-called Widening countries) was introduced for the first time. It was a learning process both for DG RTD and the relevant communities. As a result, the three core instruments have evolved over time in line with the lessons learned.

TEAMING means institution building as the projects create new or substantially upgrade existing centres of excellence (CoE) in the Widening countries through a



coupling process with at least one leading scientific institution. **TEAMING** has two phases. To succeed in Phase 1, applicants had to describe a long-term vision (business plan) of a new/upgraded CoE based on a SWOT analysis and an annual plan of activities aligned with the regional/national Smart Specialisation Strategy (S3).

Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

Only the projects successful in Phase 1 could participate in Phase 2. They had to demonstrate growth potential, the expected socio-economic impact and the long-term sustainability of the CoE as well as its autonomy in decision-making. Non-eligible costs (see below) had to be supported by other types of funding (national grants, ESI Funds or private sources) and a letter of commitment had to be included. There were two Phase 1 calls (2014, 2016) and two Phase 2 calls (2016, 2018).

The duration of the project remained unchanged during H2020: one year for Phase 1 and five to seven years for Phase 2. **The overall budget for calls** varied over the years. While in the 2014 Phase 1 call, the budget was 14.22 million euros, in the 2016 Phase 1 call it dropped to 12 million euros. The budget for the 2016 Phase 2 call amounted to 140 million euros and there was a substantial increase in the 2018 Phase 2 call budget – 241 million euros.

The budget per project has not changed for Phase 2 projects: up to 15 million euros matched by at least the same amount from other sources. The situation was different for Phase 1 – in the 2014 call the maximum amount was 0.5 million euros and it decreased to 0.4 million euros in the 2016 call.

Ineligible costs were related to infrastructure. An exception was made for Phase 2 projects: equipment and consumables costs were accepted in a sum that made up less than or was equal to 1% of the H2020 funding requested, but only if they were necessary to fulfil the specific scope and objective of the action.

Just a **few new elements** were introduced, and none of them touched the proposal content (the call text became more detailed and explanatory). In the 2018 Phase 2 call, the length was limited to 75 pages.



Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

Regarding the contractual aspects, successful consortia in the 1st cycle of TEAMING (Phase 1 in 2014 and Phase 2 in 2016) had to sign a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) for Phase 1 (and received an CSA grant). In Phase 2 they had to sign a Specific Grant Agreement within the FPA (and also received an CSA grant). This contractual procedure was found quite complicated and was replaced in the 2nd cycle (2016 Phase 1 and 2018 Phase 2) by a simple CSA Grant Agreement.

As a part of the **evaluation process** of the proposals submitted to Phase 2, hearings of all proposals that passed all individual evaluation thresholds took place in Brussels.

In some cases, this resulted in slight score changes. For Phase 1 proposals in the 2016 call, the evaluators considered an additional sub-criterion under Excellence – broad alignment with S3.

For proposals with the same score in the 2018 Phase 2 call aiming at better geographical coverage across the Widening countries, scores for Excellence were taken into account in the first place, followed by proposals from the Widening countries not otherwise covered by more highly-ranked proposals.

TWINNING supports a partnership between a less-performing research institution from a Widening country and at least two internationally leading research-intensive counterparts established in at least two different Member States or Countries associated with H2020. It uses Institutional networking to enable a transfer of knowledge and skills and an exchange of best practices. It aims at enhancing the quality of research capacities, the research profile of the institution and of its staff.

Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

Projects had to focus on a clearly defined specific field of research that was a priority for the Widening institution and had to be aligned with the national and/or regional S3. There were four TWINNING calls: 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020.

The duration of the project – a maximum of three years – remained unchanged during H2020. **The overall call budget** has varied significantly. While in 2015 it was 66.24 million euros, we saw a big drop in the next two calls – 30 million euros in 2017 and 2018. The budget of the last 2020 call was the largest ever, amounting to 69 million euros.

The budget per project did not change in the first two calls (2015 and 2017) and was 1 million euros. In 2018, it dropped to 0.8 million euros and in the 2020 call it went up to 0.9 million euros. Regarding the **ineligible costs** in the calls for 2015, 2017 and 2018, the infrastructure and research costs were not eligible, as well as the costs of hiring new permanent research staff and purchasing equipment.

On the other hand, consumables directly linked to training activities (maximum of 1%) and subscription fees to online services were eligible. We have seen a positive move in the 2020 call as equipment and research costs could have been accepted if they constituted only a minor part (up to 10%) of the total funding requested and were deemed necessary to fulfil the action.

New elements in the proposal content were introduced in the 2018 and 2020 calls. In the 2018 call, a dedicated Work Package targeting early stage researchers (ESR) from the coordinating institution had to be included. In the 2020 call, specific activities targeting ESR could take the form of either a dedicated WP or a task. Another novelty in the 2020 call was that a dedicated WP or a task for improving research management and administration skills had to be included and setting up or upgrading a grant/project office would have been beneficial.

Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

This was expected to be a concrete deliverable. On top of that, the applicants had to describe previous/current TWINNING grants (if any) and clearly demonstrate any added value and impact compared to project/s that had already received funding.

There have also been changes in the **evaluation rules**. Only in the 2017 call was the size of the budget allocated to SMEs not applied as a sub-criterion to establish a priority order for proposals with the same score. In the 2018 call, there was a move towards a more balanced geographical coverage of grants across the Widening countries: for proposals with the same score, scores on Excellence were considered in the first place, followed by proposals from the Widening countries not otherwise covered by more highly-ranked proposals. And finally, in the 2020 call, the sub-criterion on geographical coverage was the first aspect for ranking proposals with the same score, followed by Excellence etc.

ERA Chairs are mono-beneficiary actions and bring outstanding academics with proven research excellence and management skills to universities and research institutions in the Widening countries. They aim to attract (in an open and transparent recruitment process) and maintain high quality human resources under the direction of an ERA Chair holder, while at the same time implementing the structural changes necessary to achieve excellence of the Widening institution on a sustainable basis. An ERA Chair holder should be an outstanding European or non-European researcher and research manager in the given field of research with a proven record of effective leadership. There were four ERA Chairs calls (2014, 2017, 2019, 2020).

The duration of the project of maximum of five years was extended to six years in the last 2020 call.

Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

The overall call budget remained quite stable with the exception of the last one. In 2014, the amount was 33.6 million euros and in 2017 it was 33.91 million euros. It dropped in 2019 to 30 million euros, but increased significantly in the last 2020 call, where a budget of 50 million euros was available.

The budget per project has not changed and was 2.5 million euros in all four calls, although a specific eligibility condition was linked to the budget in the 2014 call. It stated that the requested EU contribution could not exceed a maximum of 2.5 million euros and 90% of the total estimated budget for each proposal (this meant co-financing of 10% by the applicants).

Ineligible costs were not mentioned specifically in the 2014 call. There was a change in the 2017 call as the following costs were defined as ineligible: infrastructure and research costs (including consumables).

Costs for equipment could have been accepted if they constituted only a minor part (1%) of the total funding requested. In the 2019 call, only infrastructure costs were mentioned as ineligible while the costs for equipment and consumables could have been accepted under the same conditions as in 2017. Similarly, in the 2020 call, infrastructure costs remained ineligible but the level of acceptance of the equipment and research costs was raised up to 10% of the total funding requested.

A number of **new elements** were introduced gradually. While the text of the 2014 call did not mention the length of commitment for an ERA Chair holder, it was expected in 2017 and in all the following calls that they would commit themselves for the full duration and had to be appointed to a full-time position (permanent or non-permanent).



Evolution of SEWP Instruments in H2020

In the 2019 and 2020 calls, a letter was required from the head of the institution describing the remuneration package of an ERA Chair holder and their role, responsibility and obligations. An ERA Chair had to match the profile of an Established Researcher, R3) or Leading Researcher, R4 (European Framework for Research Careers). Internal mobility was excluded. The 2020 call introduced more new elements, e.g. provisions ensuring sustainability (the continuation of an ERA Chair and their team within the institution or transitional arrangements), a dedicated WP or task for improving research management and administration skills (setting up or upgrading a special management/administrative unit using the ERA Chair's experience would be beneficial and was expected to be a deliverable). The applicants also had to describe the previous/current ERA Chair grants and the added value and impact that the new one would bring.

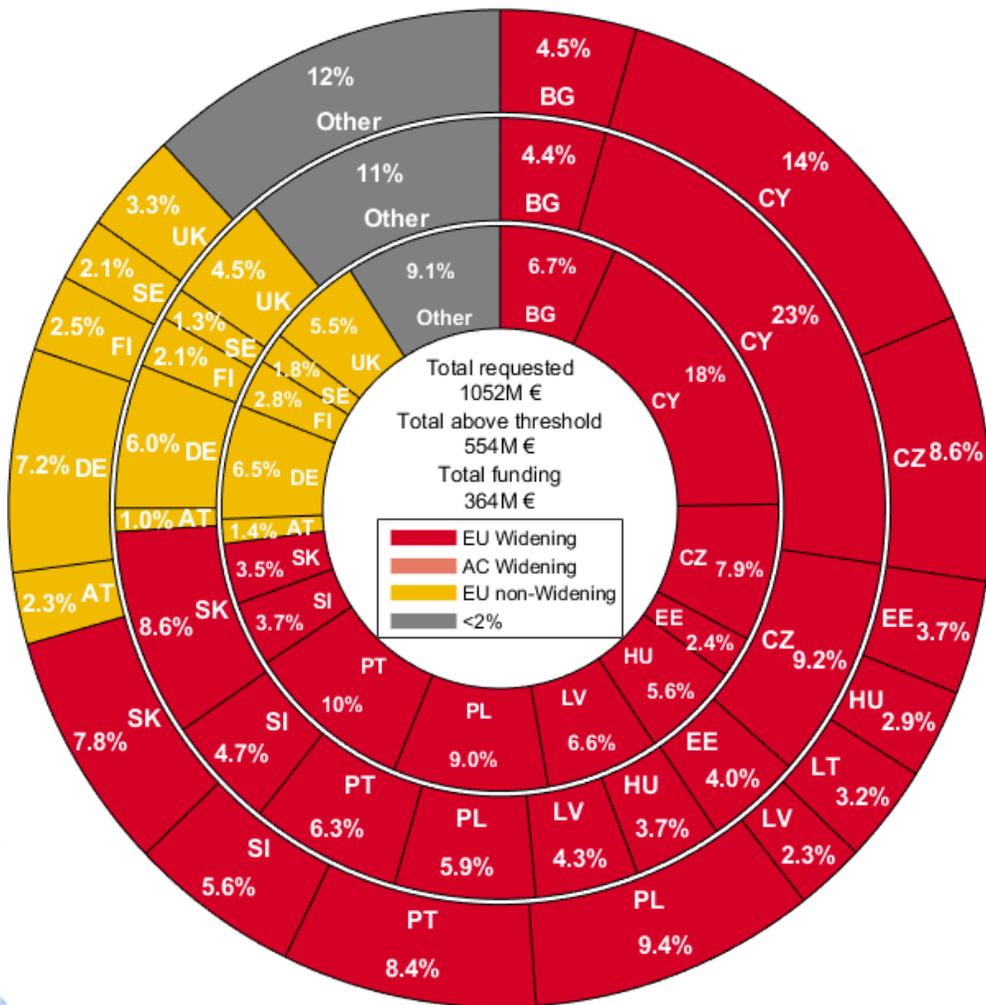
Finally, better or full use of the installed research capacity (in particular RIs and facilities co-funded by the EU) was considered an asset.

Regarding the **evaluation rules**, we have seen the same evolution as in the last two TWINNING calls. There was a move towards a more balanced geographical coverage of the grants across the Widening countries in the 2019 call: for proposals with the same score, scores on Excellence were considered in the first place, followed by proposals from the Widening countries not otherwise covered by more highly-ranked proposals. And finally, in the 2020 call, the sub-criterion on geographical coverage was the first aspect for ranking proposals with the same score, followed by Excellence etc.

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Cumulative Widening Statistics

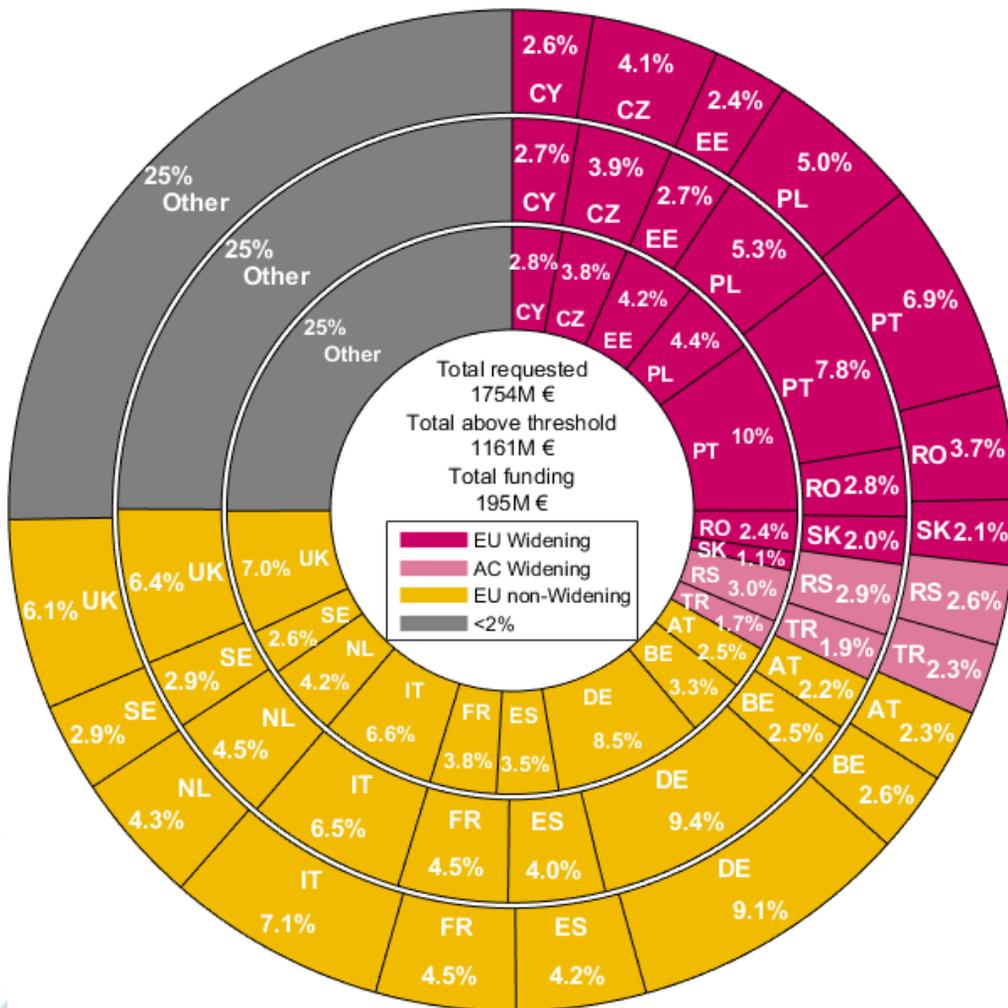
TEAMING phase 2. This was a very competitive instrument with 73 proposals submitted and an overall success rate of 34.2%. That means the competition's ratio was almost 1 : 3. Only ten out of the fifteen widening countries have received funding. Cyprus with its focused national funding policy has secured an impressive 18%, which proves that the national policies for TEAMING within Horizon 2020 are critical for success.





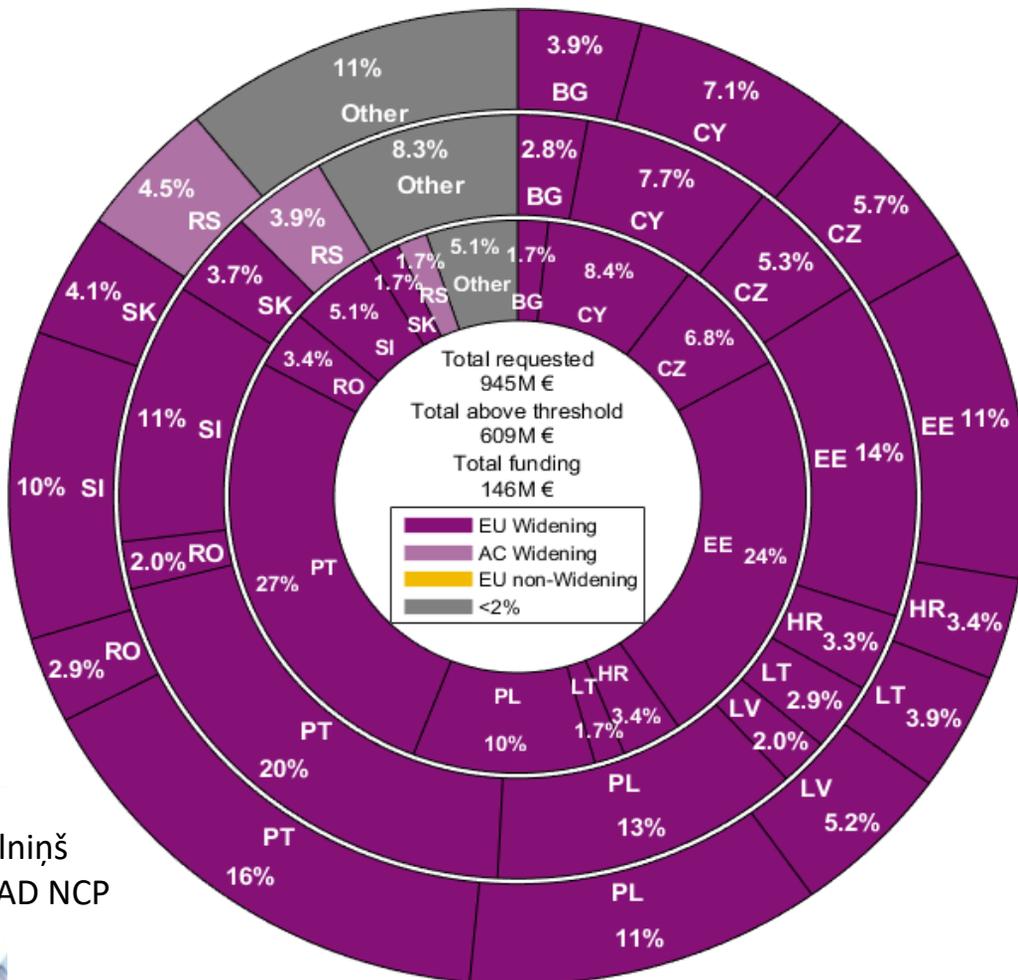
Cumulative Widening Statistics

TWINNING. The most competitive instrument among all Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation calls. It had an overall success rate of only 11% amongst 1,916 submitted proposals, which made the competition ratio nearly 1 : 9. Each of the fifteen widening countries received funding. This shows a true open science policy in action and promotes EC policies.



Cumulative Widening Statistics

ERA Chair. The only mono-beneficiary scheme in the Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation calls. All ERA Chair call projects are designed to be mono-beneficiary and thus eligible for ESIF refinancing according to the national legislation in various widening countries. The success rate was 15% among 392 submitted proposals (1 : 7). Twelve out of the fifteen widening countries received funding. Both Portugal and Estonia secured more than half of the total budget for institutional changes.



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Widening projects take part in the global combat against Covid-19

As a response to our common challenge in the current COVID-19 pandemic, a number of initiatives are on-going Worldwide. Among the EU coordinated efforts in terms of research and innovation actions, the **Research Executive Agency (REA)** has activated its network of projects that contribute to addressing COVID-19 from various perspectives such as biomedical research, social, environmental sciences, engineering or informatics. Already last April, R&I Director General Mr Jean-Eric Paquet in his letter to project beneficiaries emphasised the importance of projects to contribute to the fight against the ongoing pandemic and its devastating effects. He encouraged these specific projects to include their exploitable results in the Horizon Results Platform under the COVID-19 section in this portal. Currently, the EU Research and Innovation Family has identified 655 projects linked to COVID-19 activities and 338 exploitable results have already been captured in this context.

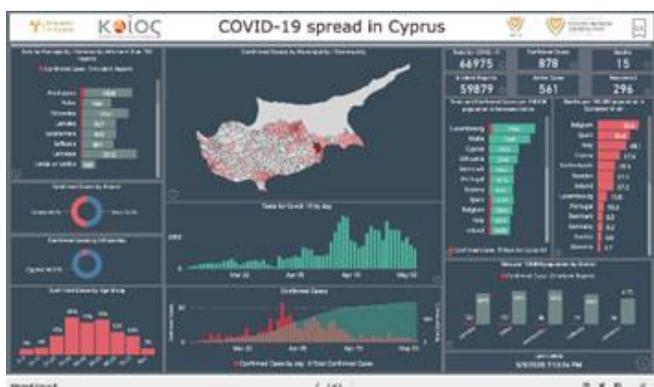
The contribution of 427 M EUR from EU to address in this COVID-19 challenge covers such major categories as 1- critical management and treatment, 2- preparedness and crisis management, and 3- basic science, including biology of SARS-Cov-2 virus. Additionally, to fight the COVID-19 crisis the EU projects support health system resilience, diagnosis, public health measures and research on vaccines.

In the **Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation (SEWP)** programme, there are 13 projects carry out activities in relation to COVID-19 (see the list at the end of this article). Interestingly, five coordinating institutions from this list of projects are based in the Czech Republic, and others are in Portugal, Hungary and Cyprus. Three projects and their contributions in fighting the COVID-19 crisis will be presented below. **Other projects will be featured in the social media channels of the NCP_WIDE.NET project:** [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

Widening projects take part in the global combat against Covid-19

Within the Teaming Actions focused on development of Centres of Excellence there are several projects that were identified having activities linked to COVID-19. One of them is **KIOS CoE** project that focuses on technological challenges of critical infrastructures coordinated by the University of Cyprus has produced an important contribution. The KIOS CoE team of volunteers in collaboration with the Cyprus Ministry of Health and the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy, set up an ‘Emergency Management System for Handling COVID-19 Cases’. The developed system is a vital tool for the Ministry of Health in managing the spread of COVID-19 and is used for recording, analyzing and managing all suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases in Cyprus. The KIOS CoE team has also developed an interactive “Web Portal for Information on the Spread of Covid-19 in Cyprus”. This portal is used on the official site of the Government of Cyprus to display statistics on the spread of the virus.

This initiative provides additional motivation for the KIOS Center of Excellence to further translate its research and innovation outcomes conducted at the Center into practical tools that can be used for the safety and well-being of citizens.



Several Twinning projects have also managed to make important contributions in terms of Covid-19 battle. The Twinning project **MiCoBion** coordinated by Charles University in Prague deals with biomedical research on complex microbial communities including the new pathogens, such as viruses and looks at impact on health and environment.

Widening projects take part in the global combat against Covid-19

Project partner Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) with lead virologist prof. Marc van Ranst is actively involved [in helping to manage](#) the pandemics as part of the emergency committee on COVID-19 in Belgium. Virologists and cell biologists involved in Twinning MiCoBion project already established RT-PCR based test in [Biocev](#) and Biocev was granted the licence to the Covid-19 diagnostics. In parallel, project is developing new test strategies to avoid time-consuming PCR amplification and shorten the test. Project coordinator is in close contact with their Micobion partner (KUL, Belgium) to exchange experience, particularly with new antigen test such as 15 minutes test developed by Cordis BioConcept and LHUB-ULB. Moreover, as serologic tests for the SARS-CoV-2 are not yet widely available, although processing them is simpler and technically less complicated than molecular tests, MiCoBion team directs their research also to this line. Serologic tests could help identify essential healthcare workers who are immune to

the disease and could work safely without protective equipment, or to return to their jobs.

Finally, for the project **EXCELLtoINNOV** in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the **ERA Chair** holder has led two successful proposals in two 'RESEARCH4COVID-19' calls from the national Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia that have found immediate translation to practical solutions, namely: i) to setup a large-scale assay accurately detecting and monitoring the population for SARS-CoV2 immunity—provided better idea of the seroprevalence in Portuguese population that was of extreme importance for evidence-based decision-making in the first months of the pandemic; ii) to deliver a high-throughput assay that is able to identify donors with high levels of neutralising anti-SARS-CoV-2 antibodies, in collaboration with the Instituto Português do Sangue e da Transplantação to develop a National Programme for Convalescent Plasma Therapy.

Widening projects take part in the global combat against Covid-19

The setup of the COVID-19 work (serology and neutralisation assays) was done in the ERA Chair's lab where team members were granted special permission to work during the lockdown (published in *Euro-pean Journal of Immunology*). These successful grants leveraged IMM's scientific position within the immunity and infection field, through the ERA Chair holder directly addressing this enormous societal challenge.

At the national level, the ERA Chair is a key element of various task forces that iMM is currently driving together with health authorities, governmental bodies, and civil organizations: scale-up of diagnostic capacity (iMM-COVID-19 News) and the large nation-wide serological study (Painel Serologico Nacional Covid-19). In addition, the ERA Chair is participating in the recently approved INNO4COV-19 (GA 101016203, topic H2020-SC1-PHE-CORONAVIRUS-2020-2) that aims at delivering innovative solutions at the higher Technology Readiness Levels.

The ERA Chair is also representing Portugal at the WHO Solidarity 2 meetings. COVID-19 puts EXCELLtoINNOV at the forefront in Portugal and has reinforced iMM's ties with private, social and scientific stake-holders in order to fight the pandemic together.

The REA SEWP team will closely follow COVID-19 related results in these projects and their latest developments in the Horizon Results Platform. In the context of the current sanitary crisis all the activities aimed to tackle the COVID-19 crisis are very important and are very welcome in this challenging period. Unfortunately, health related and socio-economic effects of COVID-19 could be felt for a long time in our society. Therefore, the continuation of joint efforts, solidarity, new ideas, positive developments and collaborations among our projects will be of key importance in the fight of COVID-19, our common enemy.

Widening projects take part in the global combat against Covid-19

Projects under the SEWP Actions that contribute in fighting the COVID-19 crisis:

1. [CETOCOEN Excellence](#), Masaryk University, Czech Republic
2. [RICAIP](#), Czech Technical University, Czech Republic
3. [EPIC](#), the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA SZTAKI), Hungary
4. [BIOPOLIS](#), the University of Porto, Portugal
5. [HCEMM](#), HCEMM Nonprofit Korlatolt Felelossegu Tarsasag, Hungary
6. [RISE](#), Cyprus Municipality, Cyprus
7. [KIOS CoE](#), University of Cyprus, Cyprus
8. [MiCoBion](#), Charles University, Czech Republic
9. [URBAN X](#), Masarykova University, Czech Republic
10. [Clim4Vitis](#), University of Tras-OS-Montes and Alto Douro, Portugal
11. [EpiViral](#), the University of Aveiro, Portugal
12. [R-EXPOSOME](#), Masaryk University, Czech Republic
13. [EXCELLtoINNOV](#), Instituto de Medicina Molecular João Lobo Antunes, Portugal

Author: Agne Dobranskyte-Niskota and the REA SEWP Team

New ERA: Council Conclusions

The renewal of the European Research Area (ERA) is a focus of the German Council Presidency.

[The Commission Communication](#) *A new ERA for Research and Innovation* of 30 September and [the Council Conclusions](#) adopted on 1 December set out the framework and define **concrete actions for implementation**. It is emphasized that the new ERA should continue to strengthen the quality of R&I systems and their linkages across Europe.

Brain circulation will be addressed through actions to foster the mobility of researchers — both geographical and intersectoral. These are topics that also play an important role in the widening context. A Framework for researchers' careers will be a subject of the Portuguese Council Presidency in the first half of 2021.

Freedom of research and academic freedom are the cornerstones of ERA. At the ERA Ministerial Conference in Bonn on 20 October 2020, the [Bonn declaration](#) on freedom of scientific research was presented. The nine EU Member States that were able to attend the meeting in person have signed the declaration. Member States who could attend only virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic are now in the process of signing it via written procedure. Together with the recent [Rome Ministerial Communiqué](#) of the European Higher Education Area and its statement on academic freedom, the Bonn Declaration will foster the monitoring of these fundamental freedoms in the future.

Author: DLR project management agency

Strengthening the European Research Area

In the new framework programme, Widening participation will have a joint work programme with Strengthening the European Research Area – ***Reforming and enhancing the EU research and innovation system*** (often also referred to as the ERA part of the respective WP structure). Building on the SwafS area of Horizon 2020, this part addresses ERA policy priorities in a broad manner, contributing to the objectives of the entire framework programme.

The activities aim at encouraging more investment, improving access to excellence, translating R&I results into the economy, improving research management capabilities, as well as deepening the ERA by various means. It is foreseen to support national research and policy reforms, reinforce the interaction between education and research (to further the dissemination and exploitation of research results). This programme part would also strengthen collaboration across Europe and open up European R&I networks, as well as seek to use the full potential of the researchers' talent pool.

The activities are designed according to the four strategic objectives of the European Commission's communication *A New ERA for Research and Innovation* ((COM(2020) 628 final), published on September 30.

These strategic objectives of the *ERA Communication*, together with the planned activities for the first two years in the *ERA part* of this WP are:

1. **Prioritising investments and reforms**, with activities foreseen to provide support for national policymakers, including implementing the Policy Support Facility.
2. **Improving access to excellence** by providing networking possibilities for research managers as well as supporting R&I policymaking in the Western Balkans.
3. **Translating R&I results into the economy** by addressing standardisation and intellectual property rights management, especially in the context of new and emerging technologies. The aim would be to strengthen the innovation ecosystems for knowledge circulation and valorisation (with a plan to test *ERA Hubs*).



Strengthening the European Research Area

4. **Deepening the ERA.** Under this objective, many areas that have been covered by the SwafS (Science with and for Society) part in Horizon 2020 are to be addressed and further enhanced. The aim is, for example, to empower research activities in higher education institutions, tackle the gaps related to academic freedom, and diversify the options researchers have on their career paths. The focus is also on open science-related issues, on ethics and integrity, as well as gender equality. It is especially important to provide such support to the institutions, also in the context of Gender Equality Plans becoming an obligatory requirement for public institutions who wish to apply for the Horizon Europe budget. Additionally, activities related to citizen science, science education and communication are foreseen to increase the trust of society in science, research and innovation.

For the first two years, it is foreseen that the *ERA part* of the work programme will consist of around 40 topics with calls for proposals, the vast majority of which would be coordination and support actions, and around 40 other actions that include grants to identified beneficiaries, procurements, prizes, and engaging experts.

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Past Event: European Digital Innovation Hubs & Widening Participation

NCP_WIDE.NET organised the event *European Digital Innovation Hubs & Widening Participation* on September 7. The purpose of the event was to highlight the widening aspect of two essential drivers for transition and future recovery in Europe: digital transition and inclusiveness. Esteemed speakers focused on the way forward to digitisation, where no one is left behind. We had the pleasure of hosting Anna Puig Centelles, Policy Officer from DG CONNECT, who shared with the audience the growing importance of digital transition through Digital Innovation Hubs (DiHs).

Then, Mr Sander Van Der Molen, coordinator of the project for the network of Digital Innovation Hubs in the Widening countries BOWI, explained how newcomer DiHs from the Widening countries can benefit from the exchange of knowledge with experienced DiHs. Mr Diofantos Hadjimitsis, coordinator of Excelsior2020 that aims to create the Centre of Excellence ERATOSTHENES for Earth observation with space-based technologies, shared his ambition for the CoE to become a DiH in Cyprus and streamline sustainable and inclusive growth for the country.

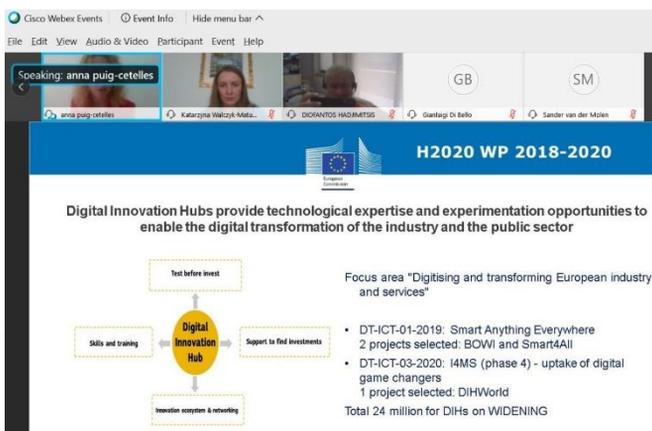


Photo credit: Luca Marsili, APRE

You can access the programme, speaker presentations as well as recording of the event [here](#).

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“READ ME” – Recommended Publications

Horizon Europe : Council presidency reaches political agreement with the European Parliament

The EU has come closer to adopting its next multiannual framework programme for research and innovation. The German presidency of the Council has reached a provisional political agreement with the European Parliament's negotiators on the proposed regulation establishing Horizon Europe, the EU framework programme for research and innovation for the years 2021 to 2027. The main elements contained in the provisionally agreed text include: budgetary issues, synergies with other EU programmes, and international cooperation and association of third countries.

[More information](#)

Multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027 adopted

The Council has adopted the regulation laying down the EU's multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027. The regulation provides for a long-term budget of €1 074.3 billion for the EU27 in 2018 prices, including the integration of the European Development Fund. Together with the Next Generation EU recovery instrument of €750 billion, it will allow the EU to provide an unprecedented €1.8 trillion of funding over the coming years to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the EU's long-term priorities across different policy areas.

[More information](#)