EN

Horizon Europe

Work Programme 2025

5. Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society

(European Commission Decision C(2025) 2779 of 14 May 2025)

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Introduction

Cluster 2, 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society' aims to meet EU goals and priorities on enhancing democratic governance and citizens participation, on the safeguarding and promotion of cultural heritage, and to respond to and shape multifaceted social, economic, technological and cultural transformations. Cluster 2 mobilises multidisciplinary expertise of European social sciences and humanities (SSH) for understanding fundamental contemporary transformations of society, economy, politics and culture. It aims to provide evidence-based policy options for a socially just and inclusive European green and digital transition and recovery.

The EU is strongly committed to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), many of which have an important impact on culture, creativity, and inclusive society, notably: SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), with their specific targets to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

Proposals are invited against the following three (3) destinations:

Activities contributing to the **destination "Innovative Research on Democracy and Governance"**, will provide knowledge, data and scientifically robust recommendations to reinvigorate and defend democratic governance and improve trust in democratic institutions. In the long-term, this will contribute to help safeguard fundamental rights to empower active and inclusive citizenship. By doing so, they will also strengthen accountability, transparency, effectiveness and trustworthiness of rule of law-based institutions and policies. Activities will help address an increasing number of threats from both internal and external actors, notably those who use harming methods enabled by digital technologies and social media. They will focus on tackling increased hatred, disinformation, information manipulation, and foreign interference, as well as the polarisation of political debate. The fight against radicalisation and extremism will be a priority, alongside efforts to combat social isolation caused by online group dynamics and addressing algorithmic bias. Combating antisemitism and minority discrimination will be essential to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

Activities contributing to the **destination "Innovative Research on the European Cultural Heritage and the Cultural and Creative Industries"**, will support research and innovation to boost sustainable growth and job creation through the cultural and creative industries. R&I actions will promote artificial intelligence for creativity and innovation, better access and engagement with cultural heritage and improve its protection, enhancement and restoration. A new European partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage will be launched, and support for the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage will be continued.

At the same time, through the **destination "Innovative Research on Social and Economic Transformations"**, actions will help tackle social, economic and political inequalities,

support human capital development and contribute to a comprehensive European strategy for inclusive growth. Activities will improve the understanding of how technological, climate, economic and demographic changes impact society. They will inform the design of policies addressing existing and emerging challenges, harnessing new opportunities (particularly in the areas of employment, education, mental health and well-being) and contributing to reaching the objectives set out by the Action Plan of the European Pillar of Social Rights. A key focus of the activities will be to boost sustainability and inclusion, by supporting vulnerable groups and protecting individuals from discrimination (based on sex, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation).

Horizon Europe is the research and innovation programme in a system of European and national funding programmes which share policy objectives. Through the programme, special attention will be given to ensuring cooperation between universities, scientific communities and industry, including small and medium enterprises, and citizens and their representatives, to bridge gaps between territories, generations and regional cultures, especially caring for the needs of the young in shaping Europe's future. Funded projects could be EU Synergies grants, meaning that as such, they have the possibility to also receive funding under other EU programmes. To enable synergies by design in this context, project proposers should consider and actively seek strategic combinations with, and where appropriate possibilities for further funding from, other R&I-relevant EU, national or regional and cross-border programmes (such as ERDF including Interreg, ESF+, JTF, EMFF, EAFRD and InvestEU), as well as private funds or financial instruments.

The EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) aims at financing projects that directly tackle the economic and social impacts from the Coronavirus crisis and support the green and digital transition. For project ideas that directly contribute to these objectives and that have a strong focus in one Member State it is advisable to check access to the RRF for a fast and targeted support.

Synergies with relevant Union programmes will be sought, regarding the take-up of research results and innovative solutions developed under Horizon Europe, for example via the following programmes:

- Creative Europe: it improves the safeguarding and valorisation of cultural heritage and further supports the cultural and creative sector. Creative Europe can improve sectorial networking and cooperation of Member States and non-EU Participating Countries in the Creative Europe Programme[1] to apply the latest technologies, stimulate new scientific approaches and boost innovation potential stemming from Horizon Europe.

- Erasmus+: it supports efforts to efficiently use the potential of Europe's talent and social assets in a lifelong learning perspective throughout the education, training and youth fields. It promotes measures for the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities, including newly arrived migrants, and supports skills development and citizens' participation and engagement, encouraging young people to engage and learn to

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[1]   [list-3rd-country-participation_crea_en.pdf (europa.eu)](list-3rd-country-participation_crea_en.pdf)

participate in civic society and democratic life, raising awareness about EU values, including via online platforms and tools for virtual cooperation. As regards Cluster 2, Erasmus+ projects could benefit for instance from the use of innovative practices for migrant integration in education, up-take of innovative methods for citizen engagement and education for fostering EU values and democracy stemming from Horizon Europe.

- Global Europe, the EU's Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument: it supports and consolidates democracy, rule of law and human rights, supports civil society organisations outside the EU, furthers stability and peace and addresses other global challenges including migration and mobility. The actions can benefit from drawing on the findings of H2020 and Horizon Europe projects regarding trust in governance, tackling disinformation and citizens' participation and engagement.

- Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL): while Horizon Europe supports research and development of digital technologies, DIGITAL supports the wide uptake and deployment of innovative digital solutions in areas of public interest (including public administration, justice and education), by setting up and making accessible Europe-wide data spaces and platforms and providing SMEs and public administrations access to the latest digital technologies, for example via Digital Innovation Hubs. Priority actions for the first four years of DIGITAL include "Safer internet for kids", a "Platform for combating disinformation", supporting the EU language technology industry in developing and deploying latest AI-based technologies in all EU languages, contributing to the skills and employment of ICT professionals (including women and girls) and the EU digital platform for cultural heritage, Europeana, which supports the digital transformation of cultural heritage institutions.

- Technical Support Instrument (TSI): by supporting the efforts of the national authorities in improving their administrative capacity to design, develop and implement reforms, the TSI can benefit from the good practices, innovative processes and methodologies identified or developed in H2020 and Horizon Europe projects, and get access to the expertise in research bodies participating to such projects.

- Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme: the programme can draw on the results of H2020 and Horizon Europe projects in the field of citizens' engagement, to support civil society organisations in encouraging and facilitating active participation in the construction of a more democratic Union and awareness raising of EU rights and values.

- European Social Fund Plus (ESF+): The programme aims to promote social cohesion and equip people with the skills needed for the evolving demands of the labour market. Member States and regions can use the ESF+ to mainstream and upscale innovative technologies and solutions in the areas of employment, social inclusion, education and training, including successful models and practices developed under Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe. In addition, the ESF+ can support operations and researchers granted a Seal of Excellence under Horizon Europe.

- European Regional Development Fund: ERDF focuses, among others, on the development and strengthening of regional and local research and innovation ecosystems and smart economic transformation, in line with regional/national smart specialisation strategies. It can support investment in research infrastructures, activities for applied research and innovation (including industrial research), experimental development and feasibility studies, building research and innovation capacities and the uptake of advanced technologies and roll-out of innovative solutions from the Framework Programmes for research and innovation through the ERDF. It helps governments reap the benefits of digitisation and encourages investments in social and cultural infrastructure, the development of cultural services and the conservation of cultural heritage. Interreg is a main instrument of ERDF to support cooperation across regions and countries. Support to the protection and development of cultural heritage, to SMEs, to social innovation in culture and creative industries is central to Interreg. Interreg can also complement Horizon Europe's initiatives by supporting policy learning and regional cooperation.

- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD): relevant stakeholders can benefit from the dissemination and take-up of R&I results in the field of cultural heritage, in particular in rural and remote areas.

- The InvestEU Programme can fund the uptake of R&I results related to Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) and cultural heritage.

- The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) supports the EU migration policy to strengthen and develop all aspects of the common European asylum system, support legal migration to the Member States and effective integration policies. It contributes to countering irregular migration. Horizon Europe contributes to the implementation of the AMIF providing an evidence base for policies and projects, as regards asylum protection, legal and irregular migration management and migrant integration.

To increase the impact of EU investments under Horizon Europe, the European Commission encourages collaboration between EU-funded projects to build on complementarities through networking, joint workshops, knowledge exchange, best practices, and joint communication activities. Complementarities can be explored between projects funded under the same or different topics, Clusters or pillars of Horizon Europe. This includes collaborations between projects funded under Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 for complementary actions, such as promoting social inclusion, health equity (including gender equality and support for marginalised groups), and mental health initiatives in education, work, and daily life (including through culture and the arts). The cross-cluster complementarities are set out in detail in the Strategic Plan of Horizon Europe for 2025-2027.

In line with the EU's Global Approach to Research and Innovation, and as for the Work Programmes of 2021-2022 and 2023-2025, the Work Programme 2025 will remain almost completely open to the participation of non-associated third countries to all Research and Innovation Action (RIA) and Innovation Action (IA) topics. In support of the Global Gateway

Strategy [2], projects involving international partners should lead to increased scientific knowledge and transfer of technology among partner countries allowing to address global challenges across the world and create sustainable growth and jobs. Cooperation should take place in a value-based way, creating linkages, not dependencies

The topics in this cluster require the effective and extensive contribution of SSH disciplines and the involvement of SSH experts, institutions as well as the inclusion of relevant SSH expertise, to produce meaningful and significant effects enhancing the societal impact of the related research activities.

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[2] https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

CALL

Call - Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01

Overview of this call[3]

Proposals are invited against the following Destinations and topic(s):

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million) 2025	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)[4]	Indicative number of projects expected to be funded
Opening: 15 May 2025 Deadline(s): 16 Sep 2025				
Destination Innovative Research on Democracy and Governance				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-01: Advisory support and network to counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI)	CSA	3.50	3.00 to 3.50	1
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-02: Fostering the consolidation of European science diplomacy	CSA	3.00	2.50 to 3.00	1
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-03: Preparing the EU for future enlargement: challenges and opportunities	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-04: Open strategic autonomy, economic and research security in EU foreign policy	RIA	7.00	3.00 to 3.50	2

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[3] The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2025.

[4] Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-05: Countering and preventing radicalisation, extremism, hate speech and polarisation	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-06: Towards a European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and culture	CSA	3.50	3.00 to 3.50	1
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-07: The autocratic appeal: nature, drivers and strategies	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-08: Economic inequalities and their impact on democracy	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-09: Fighting against disinformation while ensuring the right to freedom of expression	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-10: The role of civic and citizenship education for strengthening civic and democratic participation and support for common European values	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-11: Independence of the judiciary as an aspect of rule of law compliance	RIA	10.50	3.00 to 3.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-12: Community of democracy practitioners and researchers	CSA	3.50	3.00 to 3.50	1
Destination Innovative Research on European Cultural Heritage and Cultural and Creative Industries				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-03: A European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage – Innovative use cases	IA	26.00	2.50 to 4.00	8
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-04: Leveraging artificial intelligence for creativity-driven innovation	RIA	15.00	4.00 to 5.00	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-05:	RIA	10.50	2.50 to 3.50	3

Evolution of culture in a virtualising world				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-06: Europe as a global powerhouse of design for sustainable competitiveness	RIA	13.50	3.50 to 4.50	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-07: Cultural Strategies for Peace: culture and creativity as catalysts for conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation	RIA	12.00	3.00 to 4.00	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-08: Bridging historical past and future potential through conservation, preservation, and adaptive use of Europe's contentious and dissonant heritage	CSA	3.50	2.50 to 3.50	1
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-09: Impacts of culture and the arts on health and well-being	CSA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
Destination Innovative Research on Social and Economic Transformations				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-01: Tackling gender-based violence in different social and economic spheres	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-02: Historical and regional analyses of industrial transitions and their lessons for ensuring a fair green transition	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-03: Working time reduction: barriers, challenges, benefits and policy implications	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-05: Improving fairness in the economy through a better understanding of undeclared and underdeclared work	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-06: Evaluation and use of evidence in education policy and practice	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-07: Impact of the learning environment and the use of digital tools in everyday life on key skills	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3

and competence development				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-08: Improving mental health outcomes for people in education, training and work	RIA	15.00	3.00 to 5.00	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-09: Good practices for increased autonomy of persons with disabilities, including physical, mental, intellectual and sensory disabilities	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-10: Intergenerational fairness in the context of demographic change in the EU	RIA	10.20	3.00 to 4.00	3
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-11: Migration and climate change: building resilience and enhancing sustainability	CSA	2.00	Around 2.00	1
Overall indicative budget		275.10		

General conditions relating to this call	
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
Award criteria	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
Documents	The documents are described in General Annex E.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Call - Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025 - Two-stage

HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TWO-STAGE

Overview of this call[5]

Proposals are invited against the following Destinations and topic(s):

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million) 2025	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)[6]	Indicative number of projects expected to be funded
Opening: 15 May 2025 Deadline(s): 16 Sep 2025 (First Stage), 17 Mar 2026 (Second Stage)				
Destination Innovative Research on European Cultural Heritage and Cultural and Creative Industries				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-HERITAGE-02-two-stage: Innovative approaches to intangible cultural heritage for societal resilience	RIA	12.00	3.00 to 4.00	3
Destination Innovative Research on Social and Economic Transformations				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TRANSFO-04-two-stage: Gender differences in career trajectories of parents and their implications for gender equality and family well-being	RIA	10.20	Around 3.40	3
Overall indicative budget		22.20		

General conditions relating to this call	
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
Financial and operational capacity and	The criteria are described in General Annex

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[5] The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.
The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.
All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2025.

[6] Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

exclusion	C.
Award criteria	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
Documents	The documents are described in General Annex E.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G.

Call - Cluster 2 Partnerships

HORIZON-CL2-2025-03

Overview of this call[7]

Proposals are invited against the following Destinations and topic(s):

Topics	Type of Action	Budgets (EUR million) 2025	Expected EU contribution per project (EUR million)[8]	Indicative number of projects expected to be funded
Opening: 15 May 2025 Deadline(s): 16 Sep 2025				
Destination Innovative Research on European Cultural Heritage and Cultural and Creative Industries				
HORIZON-CL2-2025-03-HERITAGE-01: Co-funded European partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage	COFUND	60.00	Around 60.00	1

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7   The Director-General responsible for the call may decide to open the call up to one month prior to or after the envisaged date(s) of opening.
     The Director-General responsible may delay the deadline(s) by up to two months.
     All deadlines are at 17.00.00 Brussels local time.
     The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2025.

8   Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

Overall indicative budget		60.00		

General conditions relating to this call	
Admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex A.
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B.
Financial and operational capacity and exclusion	The criteria are described in General Annex C.
Award criteria	The criteria are described in General Annex D.
Documents	The documents are described in General Annex E.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G.

DESTINATIONS

Destination Innovative Research on Democracy and Governance

Resilient and strengthened democratic systems, anchored in robust and inclusive political decision-making, will be fundamental in the context of complex and interconnected challenges and threats our citizens and societies are confronted with. As stated in the Political Guidelines for the European Commission 2024-2029, "Europe's future in a fractured world will depend on having a strong democracy and on defending the values that give us the freedoms and rights that we cherish."[9]

The Strategic Foresight Report 2023[10] already recalled how "disenfranchisement, growing discontent, and the lack of a positive agenda combine into an erosion of trust in public institutions, polarisation, and an enhanced appeal of extremist, autocratic, or populist movements" and how "democracy is increasingly challenged as the governance model best suited to deal with growing socio-economic issues." The report acknowledged that even "in the EU, some of the core requirements for a functioning democracy are impaired." A democratic impairment manifested in several phenomena like "challenges to the rule of law, and an increasing silent citizenship, e.g. a consistent decrease of electoral turnout in many Member States in both national and European elections, or the growing lack of interest in general democratic life [...] the personalisation of politics, with political leaders considered more important than political parties, […] polarisation of the political debate and the sense of isolation […] amplified by mis- and disinformation, group dynamics in social media, or algorithmic bias."

Social sciences and humanities research is critical for effectively addressing those challenges. While science will provide knowledge, insights and theoretical frameworks, the involvement of stakeholders on the ground (community organisations, policymakers, civil society representatives, among others) is determinant for facilitating the uptake and impact of research results and therefore encouraged in this destination. This collaborative approach ensures that research is based on real-world experiences and needs, leading to more effective and relevant outcomes.

By addressing key societal challenges through this inclusive methodology, the impact of research on citizens' lives will be enhanced. For instance, promoting gender equality and protecting minority rights are not only academic endeavours but necessities that reinforce social cohesion and justice. Research findings can shape legislation, drive social innovations, and support the development of initiatives that directly benefit communities. Research contributes to the development of democratic systems that are more inclusive, flexible and adaptable to change. By considering a wide range of views and experiences, policies and institutions are better able to address the needs of all citizens, increasing social fairness.

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[9]   Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029, https://europa.eu/!wywg4P. p. 23
[10]   https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/SFR-23_en.pdf

Expected impact:

Proposals for topics under this destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impact of the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan:

- Reinvigorating democratic governance by improving the accountability, transparency, effectiveness and trustworthiness of institutions and policies based on rule of law, and through the expansion of active and inclusive citizens' participation and engagement empowered by the safeguarding of fundamental rights.

The aim of the research investment supporting this impact is to develop a robust evidence base on which to build effective, relevant and sensitive policies that bolster the resilience of democratic systems and protect them from threats.

The expected impact will be achieved by generating new knowledge and understanding, and developing strategies, methods and innovative solutions, as well as policy recommendations, under the following three areas:

1. **GLOBAL CHALLENGES - Fostering democracy and promoting EU values in times of geopolitical shifts and global poly-crisis**, including: effectiveness of science diplomacy as a way to strengthen multilateral cooperation; balancing ethical foreign policy with economic and security interests in foreign countries; disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), as a tool of warfare; EU enlargement and neighbourhood policies to better understand the mechanisms to promote democratisation and the attainment of the EU *acquis,* fundamental values and the rule of law.

2. **RESILIENT DEMOCRACIES – Increasing the resilience of democracy in the face of external and internal threats**, including: nature of extremism and drivers of radicalisation, polarisation and hate speech, (such as xenophobia, racism or misogyny); autocratic and anti-democratic tendencies in the EU; violence and conflict in society with a focus on politically motivated violence (incl. antisemitism); balance between protecting free speech and implementing necessary regulation of it; public misconceptions towards EU enlargement.

3. **AGILE INSTITUTIONS & INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES – Modernise democratic institutions and public sector processes for the 21st century**, including: innovative public administration and new ways to guarantee quality and incisiveness of public administration (through an indirectly managed action); trust in governance and the Rule of Law, including independence and efficiency of the judiciary; ecosystem-based approach to public decision- and policymaking, combined with foresight and anticipatory governance.

The destination will seek synergies with other relevant EU programmes, in particular for the uptake of research results and innovative solutions developed under Horizon Europe. Interaction – among others – with the following programmes is encouraged: Digital Europe (DIGITAL), Technical Support Instrument, CERV (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values),

Erasmus+, ESF+ and Global Europe: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.

Applicants are encouraged to consider, where relevant, the services offered by the current and future EU-funded European Research Infrastructures, particularly those in the social sciences and humanities domain[11]. Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this destination is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

To maximise the impacts of R&I under this Destination in line with EU priorities, international cooperation will be encouraged whenever relevant in the proposed topics.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-01: Advisory support and network to counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI)

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.50 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: The following exceptions apply: subject to restrictions for the protection of European communication networks. If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:

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[11]   For a full list see https://ri-portfolio.esfri.eu/ri-portfolio/table. In the social sciences domain, see for example: CESSDA - Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (https://www.cessda.eu/), ESS – European Social Survey (https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/), SHARE - Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (https://www.share-eric.eu/) or the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (https://ehri-project.eu/)

	The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [12].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU institutions and national decision-makers, practitioners in relevant sectors, civil society organisations and other societal actors have an increased understanding of the validity of theoretical models, the possibilities to implement recommendations, toolkits, methodologies and other solutions to prevent and counter FIMI and related disinformation actions.

- Practitioners in relevant sectors, civil society organisations and other societal actors involved in the design and implementation of measures to prevent and counter FIMI, including disinformation in different sectors have access to a network and tailor-made advisory support.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers are equipped with science-based tools and evidence-based policy recommendations to proactively conceive, implement, and innovate measures to prevent and counter FIMI and related disinformation actions, and other actions instigated by third countries.

In addition, projects should contribute to at least one of the following expected outcomes:

- Frameworks and approaches that advance common understanding and facilitate collaboration to address and counter disinformation and FIMI, such as D-RAIL[13] or the DISARM framework [14], are enhanced, improved or complemented, to foster their adoption by a wider audience of professionals.

- Practitioners in relevant sectors (such as education, security, defence, transport, foreign relations, ICT, media, etc.), civil society organisations and other societal actors have better knowledge and increased awareness of the challenges posed by disinformation and FIMI and of their pervasiveness in their respective sectors.

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[12]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[13]   https://www.disinfo.eu/publications/directing-responses-against-illicit-influence-operations-d-rail

[14]   https://www.disarm.foundation/framework

- EU institutions and national decision-makers, practitioners in relevant sectors, civil society organisations and other societal actors have evidence of the ways of working and impact of new technologies (AI, Big Data, etc.) in the creation and dissemination of disinformation content and FIMI activities and have new tools and methods to design and implement appropriate initiatives to address these phenomena.

Citizens, civil society organisations and other societal actors have increased capacities to identify and counter disinformation content and FIMI and related disinformation actions.

Scope: Hybrid threats, and more specifically the phenomena of disinformation and FIMI[15] are a growing danger for democracy, human rights, social cohesion, and European security. In recent years, the EU has developed and started to implement several strategies and numerous projects to counter disinformation and FIMI.

The aim of this action is to bring to society the benefits from previously EU-funded research (including SSH research) dealing with disinformation and FIMI in the field of democracy and governance be it in Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe or other relevant programmes (such as Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values, Digital Europe, and Global Europe). For this, proposals should build on the rich stock of actionable recommendations, knowledge, toolkits, educational material, and scientific methods etc. developed in particular by the several Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects on disinformation and FIMI and make them accessible to a wider audience (i.e., professionals in various sectors, including media, education, security, defence, transport, foreign relations, ICT, etc.).

Several projects [16] funded under Horizon 2020 have aimed to conceive and implement solutions that help professionals spot and debunk mis- and disinformation and information manipulation or address hybrid threats. Proposals should indicate which Horizon 2020 projects are considered sources of research results relevant to the activities to be carried out and are encouraged to seek collaboration with these research teams. Recent projects funded under Horizon Europe investigate specifically the FIMI phenomenon. Proposals should build on, and seek cooperation with, past and on-going EU-funded projects,[17] as well as EU-led initiatives, such as the One-Stop-Shop for Tackling R&I Foreign Interference. Proposals should indicate which additional Horizon Europe projects they would build on, should there be more than those funded under the mentioned topics.

Proposals should further develop frameworks already in use by FIMI and disinformation practitioners (such as the DISARM Framework). Proposals should also consider the work

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[15]　See:https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/tackling-disinformation-foreign-information-manipulation-interference_en

[16]　Such as EU-HYBNET (https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/883054).

[17]　In particular, projects funded under HORIZON-CL2-2023-DEMOCRACY-01-01: Detecting, analysing and countering foreign information manipulation and interference; HORIZON-CL2-2023-DEMOCRACY-01-02: Developing a better understanding of information suppression by state authorities as an example of foreign information manipulation and interference; HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-03: Disinformation and fake news are combated and trust in the digital world is raised.

done by the EDMO Hubs[18] and find ways to integrate these results into the advisory support and design actions to disseminate Hubs.

The capacity-building activities and advisory support should be addressed to a wide range of stakeholders and potential end-users, including non-scientific and non-academic actors, such as public bodies, NGOs, fact-checkers, civil society organisations, policymakers, educational bodies, law practitioners, or other potential end-users of the research results. The involvement of one or more of these categories of stakeholders is required to test and take up the research results and to explore their readiness to be implemented and replicated. Those activities and support could also involve signatories of the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, media companies, public and private broadcasters, online news platforms, and digital services object of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), and other private entities, such as providers of intermediaries' services under the Digital Services Act (DSA). The involvement of these categories of stakeholders is required to provide researchers with access to data necessary to undertake research and access to platform data on the spread and behaviour of disinformation online.

With the emergence of new technologies (especially those based on [generative] Artificial Intelligence and the use of Big Data), the actors promoting disinformation and FIMI activities have significantly increased their capacity to act, they are able to develop more targeted content across a broader spectrum of sectors, and they are more effective than disinformation approaches based for instance on bot farms[19]. AI could also be used to develop new disinformation detection technologies, while addressing the ethical and legal challenges implied.

Proposals should identify gaps in research, in particular with regards to access to data, as well as other obstacles to large-scale scientific inquiry of disinformation and FIMI threats. They should identify challenges and opportunities based on an analysis of ongoing and past research and innovation projects, particularly those offered by generative Artificial Intelligence in the context of generation, dissemination, detection and debunking of disinformation and FIMI activities more broadly. The proposals should make concrete recommendations on how the gaps in research could be filled.

Proposals are encouraged to also address the issue of identity-based disinformation and FIMI targeting LGBTIQ people.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

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[18]   https://edmo.eu/about-us/edmo-hubs/
[19]   See:https://edmo.eu/edmo-news/new-white-paper-on-generative-ai-and-disinformation-recent-advances-challenges-and-opportunities/

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-02: Fostering the consolidation of European science diplomacy

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.50 and 3.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.00 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [20].

Expected Outcome: Building on the recommendations of the EU Science Diplomacy Working Groups[21], the project should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU and national policymakers as well as researchers obtain a taxonomy of European science diplomacy which maps the relevant players, including from academia, policymaking, diplomacy, civil society, and business, and have an overview of the science diplomacy ecosystems in the EU and the existing capacities, infrastructures,

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[20]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[21]   https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4b319f3d-e9ff-11ef-b5e9-01aa75ed71a1

networks (including diaspora and alumni networks), training activities, strategies, and publications at EU and national level. This should also include a mapping of science diplomacy strategies of third countries to inform EU responses.

- Design and launch a European Science Diplomacy Platform as a community of research and practice providing an impartial space for interaction and resources for institutional capacity building, knowledge sharing and scaling up of best practices, involving the key players in European science diplomacy, from both the EU and national levels, liaising also with European scientists in the diaspora and alumni of European mobility schemes, and creating links with existing platforms.

- Building on the activities of existing mechanisms such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), ERC, COST, EURAXESS, the European Universities initiative, the European Diplomatic Academy, and relevant programmes at national level, schemes, competence frameworks and curricula for training, capacity-building, and mutual learning in European science diplomacy, are developed, paying particular attention to the needs of science counsellors and other diplomats dealing with matters that rely heavily on scientific expertise.

Scope: Not least thanks to the Horizon 2020 cluster on science diplomacy, which funded three projects in 2016-2022[22], a vibrant community of European science diplomacy scholars and practitioners has emerged, leading to the development of the EU Science Diplomacy Alliance[23]. Further input was delivered by the former Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC)[24], which suggested the development of an EU Science Diplomacy Platform and Roadmap. In addition, a growing number of Member States have adopted national science diplomacy strategies or agendas, or are currently exploring their development, and have strengthened scientific-technological capacities in their Ministries of Foreign Affairs (e.g., establishment of an informal Network of Science Advisors and Science Diplomacy Coordinators in EU Ministries of Foreign Affairs). An increasing number of recent EU policy documents have made explicit or implicit reference to science diplomacy and the need for foreign policy to be based on the best possible evidence. Against the background of a rapidly changing geopolitical and scientific-technological environment, with global competitors using science diplomacy in a much more strategic manner, there is a need to consolidate European science diplomacy efforts and explore synergies to tackle existing vulnerabilities.

Science diplomacy forms an integral part of the Global Approach to Research and Innovation[25], the EU's strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation, which prominently advocates that a stronger focus on science and technology in the EU's

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[22] Using Science for/in Diplomacy for Addressing Global Challenges (S4D4C), Inventing a Shared Science Diplomacy for Europe (InsSciDE), European Leadership in Cultural, Science and Innovation Diplomacy (EL-CSID)
[23] https://www.science-diplomacy.eu
[24] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation/science-diplomacy/sfic_en
[25] https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-05/ec_rtd_com2021-252.pdf

foreign and security policies in terms of science diplomacy would help the EU to project soft power and pursue our economic interests and fundamental values more effectively. In its Conclusions on the Global Approach[26], the Council called on the Commission and the European External Action Service to develop a European Science Diplomacy Agenda. At the informal Competitiveness Council meeting in July 2023, EU Research Ministers underlined the importance of European science diplomacy action. Consequently, the European Commission organised together with the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU the first European Science Diplomacy Conference in Madrid in December 2023 and the launch of EU Science Diplomacy Working Groups to develop recommendations for a potential future European framework for science diplomacy.

Against this background, the Coordination and Support Action will contribute to consolidating the European science diplomacy landscape both in research and in practice. In particular, it should provide, once operational, a mapping of all relevant players, which is still lacking at this point, and establish a European Science Diplomacy Platform[27]. The added value of such a platform is that it can serve as a "do tank", bringing together scientists (including from SSH disciplines) and diplomats alike and delivering concrete support for policy needs, such as:

- advising on the use of science diplomacy to help achieving the EU's foreign and security policy goals (e.g., in the context of Global Gateway[28]),

- identifying research needs and providing expert knowledge to policymakers and diplomatic services through science advice and science communication, thereby strengthening multilateralism and democratic governance,

- designing methods for assessing the impact of relevant actions,

- exploring synergies with other fields of diplomacy, most notably tech / innovation / digital diplomacy, as well as public diplomacy and culture diplomacy, including the use of arts to communicate science related to global challenges,

- assisting policy dialogues with audiences and stakeholders in third countries as well as international organizations and other multilateral settings, and

- supporting the EU's science diplomacy outreach to partners world-wide, including to relevant international organizations, such as UNESCO.

In addition, this Coordination and Support Action should explore and develop mechanisms for training, capacity-building, and mutual learning in science diplomacy in a consistent manner, including by exploring the feasibility of science diplomacy fellowship schemes in European and Member State/Associated Countries' institutions at home and in diplomatic representations abroad.

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[26]   https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12301-2021-INIT/en/pdf
[27]   Creating links with existing platforms such as the EU's Cultural Relations Platform and the EU Alumni Platform.
[28]   Global Gateway - European Commission (europa.eu)

Engagement with partners outside the EU is particularly encouraged for this project.

Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-03: Preparing the EU for future enlargement: challenges and opportunities

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:
	The consortium must include at least one entity, as a beneficiary, established in one of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo [29], Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine, or Türkiye.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [30].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers and public administrations in each Member State, candidate country, potential candidate country, and at EU institutional level, are provided with thematic

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[29]   This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

[30]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

insights on lessons learned from previous enlargement processes for the development of future policies with particular attention to democracy, rule of law and governance related topics.

- Societal awareness of the enlargement process is increased both within the Union and in the candidate country(ies), or potential candidate country(ies), through a deeper understanding of the political, social and economic consequences of enlargement versus non-enlargement of the EU.

- EU authorities and public authorities in Member States benefit from better use of existing interactive tools to better inform and promote educational opportunities on enlargement process for citizens in the Union and in the enlargement countries.

- Public's at large involvement in enlargement is enhanced through transparent and participatory processes, leveraging digital tools for broader engagement.

Scope: As stressed in several Commission's communications[31] and following the granting of the candidate country status to Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, there is a need to invest more in understanding enlargement priorities, opportunities, and challenges based on the perspective of a EU counting more than 30 Member States. This also means that EU Member States need to be better prepared, while citizens and civil society must gain a better understanding of what enlargement entails.

The proposed research should improve on the one hand, the EU Member States' understanding of the history, political and economic situation of the candidate countries and potential candidates, through socio-historical research, combined with a legal and economic approach (including expertise from relevant SSH disciplines). And, on the other hand, it should support EU citizens and civil society to gain a better understanding on challenges and opportunities related to potential future enlargements of the EU.

Reflecting on previous enlargements, the proposals should provide thematic insights on lessons learned and identify potential similarities with the candidate countries, focusing particularly on democracy, rule of law and governance-related topics.

Adopting a flexible and adaptive approach to enlargement, responsive to geopolitical dynamics and regional challenges, might be necessary. Utilizing foresight and scenario planning can help the EU and the Member States to anticipate future changes and strategically manage the enlargement process. This approach can also consider differentiation within EU governance to build resilient, inclusive, and participatory societies.

A comparative analysis of the detailed terms and conditions of membership in the accession treaties, both regarding terms and conditions issued by Member States and acceding countries

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[31] COM(2024) 146 final https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2024:146:FIN on "pre-enlargement reforms and policy reviews"; COM(2020) 57 final https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0057 on "Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans"; COM(2023) 691 final https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2023:691:FIN on " New growth plan for the Western Balkans".

upon joining the Union, such as transition periods for the freedom of movement of workers and persons, or the acquisition of real estate, could serve as an interesting case study for candidate countries and other stakeholders involved in this process. Public support and engagement for EU enlargement are crucial but fluctuate largely between Member States and candidate countries. To foster a more inclusive process, it is essential for the proposals to involve citizens early in the enlargement discussions, ensuring transparency and addressing political, economic and social concerns aiming at improving the credibility and acceptance of the enlargement process. The proposals should also address the EU's readiness to enlarge, considering the "enlargement fatigue" and the rise of euroscepticism within the Union and in the candidate countries.

Building concrete knowledge through comparative analysis of the motives of candidate countries to join the EU would be beneficial to observe any similarities and whether these motivations are still present, strengthened or declining in the Member States. Efforts should also be directed towards effective and inclusive communication on the EU integration process and the benefits of enlargement.

Additionally, the proposals should collect evidence on the role of societal dialogues and education in proposing learning approaches to EU integration and enlargement prospect within the Union. This research could combine mutual, social and intercultural learning to support the development of local or regional initiatives by the civil society. These learning approaches could also be based on evidence from formal learning in education institutions or informal learning through civil society initiatives. Proposals should consider citizens' engagement and dialogue, for seeking wider input and encourage youth participation.

To support this goal, the proposals should identify the most effective tools for public administration and policymakers to improve citizens' understanding of the enlargement process, seizing educational opportunities and societal awareness. Utilising emerging digital technologies such as artificial intelligence and social media could be beneficial in meeting the crucial needs to use digital communication.

Pilots should be carried out in at least four EU Member States to assess the effectiveness of these tools, which may also have synergies with people-to-people programmes such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, Interreg, or the Civil Society Facility, fostering a common European spirit between EU Member States and candidate countries.

Based on the research, policy recommendations should be developed to promote inclusive strategic communication and citizen engagement on EU integration and values within the Union and in the Member States. These policy recommendations should also explore how to support the reform process of candidate countries and/or learn from their existing reforms regarding Chapters of the Acquis, such as of Chapter 10 (Information Society and Media), Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights), Chapter 24 (Justice Freedom and Security), and Chapter 34 (Institutions).

Proposals are encouraged to network with and build on previously funded projects under Horizon Europe calls[32], Horizon 2020 or other EU programmes, e.g. Global Europe[33] or the Instrument for Pre-accession[34]. Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

Applicants to this topic are also encouraged to consider the data offered by European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences and humanities domain[35].

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-04: Open strategic autonomy, economic and research security in EU foreign policy

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 7.00 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [36].

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[32] In particular HORIZON-CL2-2023-DEMOCRACY-01-08: Political perspectives for the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans, HORIZON-CL2-2021-DEMOCRACY-01-04: Democratic politics in the EU's neighbourhood, as well as other relevant projects funded under other clusters and pillars of Horizon Europe.

[33] https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/global-europe-programming_en

[34] https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance_en

[35] For example, CESSDA, the European Social Survey or SHARE.

[36] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link:

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU institutions, national decision-makers, and practitioners in various relevant fields dispose of consolidated concepts, workable definitions and a robust evidence base for policymaking, regarding open strategic autonomy and economic security - including research security.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers gain a better understanding of how the open strategic autonomy and economic security – including research security – can benefit the EU and its Member States, associated countries, Neighbourhood, and developing countries, and of the impacts of potentially divergent EU and Member States' related policies.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers are provided with policy recommendations on how to enhance open strategic autonomy and economic security – including research security – without harming economic and societal actors in the EU, associated countries, Neighbourhood and developing countries or the geopolitical influence of the EU.

- EU institutions, national decision-makers and researchers (including from SSH disciplines) have a deeper understanding of the drivers of open strategic autonomy and economic security – including research security – in key policy fields and what its historical evolution has been.

Scope: The EU's open strategic autonomy refers to the EU's ability to act autonomously (i.e., without depending on other countries) in strategically important policy areas, linked to both the economic and non-economic spheres. These areas may include energy, research, health, media, technology, defence, food, industry, as well as development cooperation, promotion of democracy and defence and promotion of human rights.

The concept of open strategic autonomy is not new, and its interpretation has changed, producing various legislative and non-legislative initiatives in several areas of key importance for the EU and its Member States. Since 2021, the scope of the EU's open strategic autonomy has been expanded to practically all EU policy areas, including that of democracy and governance, but other similar concepts also emerged. In recent years and since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 in particular, progress has been made towards achieving (open) strategic autonomy, although the concept remains clouded by changing terminology.

The European Economic Security Strategy was launched in June 2023[37], setting out a framework for robust assessment and management of economic security risks at EU, national and corporate levels. In December 2023, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) published a report assessing open strategic autonomy in the innovation and production domains[38]. It observes that, in addition to pure economic dependencies, the changing

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https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[37]   See: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_23_3358
[38]   See: https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC136359

geopolitical landscape has increased potential vulnerabilities stemming from international collaboration in research and innovation. In May 2024, the Council adopted a Recommendation on Enhancing Research Security, which aims to keep international cooperation in research and innovation both open and safe by managing risks and building resilience in the R&I sector across Europe.

Against this background, proposals should contribute to conceptual clarity, definition of key concepts and the theoretical framework underpinning these concepts as well as gather evidence for policymaking, including through analysis of the threat landscape. Proposals should analyse the drivers for open strategic autonomy and economic security in various sectors of the European economy, notably the research, innovation and production domains, and map the relevant actors, trends, and risks.

Proposals are encouraged to analyse the correlation between the concepts of open strategic autonomy and economic security, including research security, considering the three pillars of the European Economic Security Strategy: promoting the EU's competitiveness, protecting it from risks to economic security and collaborating with the widest range of countries that share the EU's concerns or interests. Hence, proposals should develop recommendations on how to strike the right balance between being "as open as possible" and "as closed as necessary", taking into consideration also what the implications of greater autonomy / technological sovereignty of the EU and its Member States would mean for economies and populations outside the EU, especially in developing countries.

Proposals are encouraged to assess the proportionality and effectiveness as well as the costs and benefits of policies and measures aiming at open strategic autonomy/technological sovereignty and economic security, including research security, and their implications for the research and innovation sector. This includes analysing interlinkages and tensions with concepts such as open science, academic freedom, research integrity and science diplomacy. Proposals should also analyse the risks and implications of individual Member States not adhering to EU strategic autonomy policies and explore the legal tools available to prevent and address such divergences.

There is a risk that open strategic autonomy ambitions do not consider negative impacts on developing countries, and might weaken multilateralism, cross-border trade, and foreign investment. Moreover, the open strategic autonomy policies could encourage the spread of protectionist policies globally, impacting particularly on developing countries. They could also unintentionally undermine Europe's position as a trade and development partner in developing countries. The latter could build ties with other global players, potentially increasing their dependence on them for resource extraction, trade, infrastructure development, and other key areas. Therefore, proposals should also consider what the implications of greater autonomy or sovereignty of the EU and its Member States would be for populations outside the EU, and how this could influence the engagement of professionals and organizations active in areas such as development cooperation, promotion of democracy and defence and promotion of human rights.

Proposals are encouraged also to investigate and gather evidence on what policies other international key partners develop in the areas of open strategic autonomy and economic security, including research security, and how these may impact the EU and is Member States. Ideas should be developed indicating how a level playing field in the cooperation with these key partners/geopolitical players could be guaranteed, ensuring that safeguarding measures do not hinder cooperation between partners.

In recent years, many Member States have developed foreign policy guidelines and strategies that incorporate feminist principles and the promotion of respect for minorities. These political developments, alongside academic debates, indicate a growing trend of integrating ethical and feminist principles into diplomatic strategies. Proposals are encouraged to consider such ethical and gender-responsive approaches to foreign policy and the design of open strategic autonomy. Research activities should involve a wide range of stakeholders and societal actors, including non-scientific and non-academic actors, such as public bodies, policymakers, private corporates, industry federations, media organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, educational research bodies. Proposals under this call are encouraged to make use of participative methodologies and experimental methods.

Proposals should build on past EU-funded projects, and seek cooperation with on-going ones, addressing issues relating to strategic autonomy. Proposals should indicate which Horizon 2020 projects are considered sources of research results relevant to the activities to be carried out. Research activities could involve the analysis of Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEI). Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-05: Countering and preventing radicalisation, extremism, hate speech and polarisation

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions

Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [39].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU and national decision makers, researchers (including from SSH disciplines), practitioners, educators, and media organisations are equipped to deliver effective prevention and counter measures on radicalisation, extremism, hate speech, and polarisation, by gaining a comprehensive understanding of the linkages between social and economic inequality, polarisation, radicalisation, and hatred, and by implementing effective recommendations, tools, narratives, methodologies, and other innovative solutions.

- EU institutions and national policymakers gain insights into radicalisation, extremism, and hate speech, including their impact on young people and how youth perceive and engage with information on these phenomena, whether online or offline.

- EU institutions, national decision-makers, and civil society organisations acquire a thorough understanding of the mechanisms driving successful extremist, radical, and hate campaigns, as well as the diverse political environments and their modes of interaction and communication, extending beyond social media and online platforms.

In addition, projects should contribute to at least one of the following expected outcomes:

- Improved understanding of methodologies to effectively map hate ecosystems online through qualitative and quantitative tools, also with a view to supporting the enforcement of existing laws prohibiting racist, xenophobic and misogynistic hate speech, and to protect potential victims.

- Increased understanding of the link between disinformation (including foreign information manipulation and interference FIMI) and hate speech, and radicalisation and extremism, in particular how disinformation and hate campaigns deepen social divisions and create the conditions for radicalisation and extremism.

- Increased understanding of patterns of media consumption by individuals and their use of traditional media vs social media to form their own opinion, the effects of a polarised

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[39]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

public sphere on the media landscape, including the role of journalists; and the possible developments in the area of citizens'-led media content.

- Increased understanding of the role of traditional media, online media, social media, and artificial intelligence in countering mis- and disinformation and information manipulation, hatred, and the spread of narratives that drive radicalisation, polarisation, and extremism in societies.

- Improved tools and methods to assess the reliability of sources and related meta-tagging systems to map different points of view, as well as other actionable journalistic practices (e.g. forums, citizens' engagement and outreach, communication channels with editorial teams) which have proven effective in improving the quality of debate in the media.

- Increased availability of training tools, materials, and methods for educators and educational organisations to engage with students, enhancing their capacity to provide opportunities to raise awareness and counter hate, extremism and polarisation.

Scope: The phenomena of radicalisation, extremism, incitement to hatred and polarisation are a growing threat to democracy and social cohesion. In recent years, the EU has adopted several strategies to combat racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, as well as to counter hate speech and hate crimes. The EU also has policy tools to respond to all forms of extremism and radicalisation. As recalled by the Joint Communication "No Place for Hate"[40] of 6 December 2023, these initiatives are even more urgent considering the growth in hate speech and crimes against women and people belonging to vulnerable groups in recent years.

Social media amplifies radicalisation, extremism, hate speech, information manipulation and polarisation. Algorithm-driven personalisation restricts the public sphere and creates "echo chambers" where users primarily engage with like-minded views. This confirmation bias intensifies polarisation, fuels radicalisation, aids in recruiting extremists, and promotes hate speech and crime. Confirmation bias influences both social and traditional media users, as individuals seek information aligning with their beliefs. This trend impacts public discourse, fostering mis- and disinformation and information manipulation including conspiracy theories by limiting exposure to diverse perspectives and distorting perception of reality.

These phenomena arise from distortions in online interactions and media outlet characteristics, especially those that are mostly if not solely disseminated online. In certain member states, online media have become a primary information source alongside, or in the place of, traditional media channels (TV, radio, press), while lacking transparency regarding affiliations with interest groups or foreign influences. Moreover, radicalization and polarisation spread through social networks beyond social media. Therefore, proposals should also consider offline social networks, which include relationships like friendships, kinships, and shared interests, not solely reliant on online platforms.

Research activities should involve a wide range of stakeholders and potential end-users, including non-scientific and non-academic actors, such as, but not limited to, public bodies,

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[40]   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023JC0051

media organisations and outlets, journalists, social media platforms, and representatives from other social networks, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, policymakers, educational bodies, other potential end-users of the research results. The involvement of one or more of these categories of stakeholders is required to test and uptake the research results and to explore their readiness to be implemented and replicated. More specifically, research activities are encouraged to involve private entities, such as providers of intermediaries' services under the Digital Services Act (DSA), as their involvement is required to provide researchers with access to data necessary to undertake research and access to platform data on the spread and behaviour of disinformation online.

Proposals are encouraged to explore the following themes (among others): radicalisation and polarisation driven by stereotypes related to gender, religion, or ethnic minorities; the impact of new technologies on the production and dissemination of radicalisation and extremist content; the role of social cohesion, as both radicalisation and democratic participation are significantly influenced by the level of social cohesion within society; linkages between social and economic inequality and radicalisation, extremism, hatred and polarisation[41].

Proposals are encouraged to include historical and comparative analysis, which is crucial for understanding the past uses of hate speech as well as contemporary efforts by radical and extremist organisations to shape narratives. By contextualising these dynamics, proposals can explore the evolution and impacts of these phenomena over time, providing insights into effective strategies for combating them.

Proposals should collaborate with the EU Knowledge Hub on radicalisation prevention (RAN – Radicalisation Awareness Network) to align priorities and share outcomes and should develop advisory services to its members.

Proposals are encouraged to seek collaboration whenever possible with relevant projects selected under previous EU-funded calls, such as HORIZON-CL3-2022-FCT-01-03 - Enhanced fight against the abuse of online gaming culture by extremists. Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-06: Towards a European research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and culture

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Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025

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[41] Research in this field was recommended also by EU citizens in the context of the European Citizens Panel on tackling hatred in society, held in April and May 2024.

Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.50 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [42].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- A network of practitioners, including researchers in the field of contemporary antisemitism and research on Jewish life, is established and developed, providing a dynamic space for academic conversations, as well as training and career opportunities.

- Research gaps and relevant research centres to further develop research on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life in Europe are identified, with a particular focus on regions previously underrepresented in the study of contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life

- Discussion and formulation of methodological standards in the field are facilitated, fostering high quality empirical work.

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[42] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Strategic planning for the field on a Europe-wide level, including a concrete and credible action plan to grow this network into a sustainable research institution, is provided.

- Links between research and policymaking within and for Jewish communities as part of the wider process of nurturing Jewish life in Europe are deepened.

Scope: The first-ever EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life (2021-2030)[43] is an ambitious and comprehensive strategy adopted by the European Commission on 5 October 2021. Generations after the end of the Shoah, antisemitism is worryingly on the rise, in Europe and beyond, especially since the turn of the 21st century [44] [45], the Commission calls "for action, for all Europeans, to ensure that Europe is a place where our founding values are enjoyed by everyone, on an equal basis." Antisemitism is incompatible with Europe's core values. It represents a threat not only to Jewish communities and to Jewish life, but to an open and diverse society, to democracy and the European way of life. The European Union is determined to put an end to it.

The third pillar of the Strategy covers "Education, research and Holocaust remembrance" for a Europe that remembers its past and looks into the future through research and education. In this context, an independent expert report was commissioned in 2022 to assess the need to create a research hub on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life and deliver recommendations[46].

The goal of this action is to establish a research hub in the shape of a network of researchers on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life in Europe, bringing together a critical mass of such actors in Europe, from Member States and Associated Countries representing the different parts of Europe. Such a hub should foster the research field's identity and support training and career opportunities for researchers in the field, with a focus on early career researchers. Indeed, the hub's primary objectives should be to help recruit, train and retain expert capacity in research on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life, and to help ensure that research generated by the field can be used to help formulate policy, at national and European levels.

One of the key expected outcomes is to prepare the sustainability of the hub. That includes exploring and eventually securing further regional, national and European funding, including (but not restricted to) a possible development into a permanent research infrastructure or European partnership. Proposals should demonstrate the capacity of the consortium to secure funding beyond the project's lifetime.

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[43] Text of the strategy available here: https://op.europa.eu/s/zXwi. The first progress report on its implementation can be retrieved here: https://op.europa.eu/s/zXwh
[44] See, for instance, the third survey of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on discrimination and hate crime against Jews, available at: https://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2023/third-fra-survey-discrimination-and-hate-crime-against-jews
[45] https://commission.europa.eu/document/c60c451c-ccd2-406a-be3a-ef65123f2bb6_en
[46] Independent Expert Report "The field of research on contemporary antisemitism and Jewish life - Working towards a European research hub" (2023)

In practical terms, the hub should be embedded within an appropriate existing research community– to help manage the practicalities of the work and to ensure optimal synergy with the field as it is currently constructed. It should provide opportunities for members to meet in person (in the shape of conferences, seminars, events etc) across geographical Europe. It should have a governance structure that includes an executive board comprised of leading research and policy specialists in the field, a permanent professional secretariat, and be supported by professionals in the areas of social research and policy, training, event management and communications. The hub should have a strong online presence to support its objectives, which should be focused on promoting the field and drawing in students, researchers and policymakers who have an interest in it.

In the long term (5 to 10 years), the hub is expected to contribute to stimulating interest in the field and attracting talents at all career stages. Among possible actions, it could oversee an internship programme for postgraduate researchers and/or start a summer school program. It is also encouraged that it builds a programme to help establish and distribute research grants for PhDs in contemporary antisemitism and in Jewish life, as well as smaller training grants for researchers at all levels to develop methodological, policy development and knowledge transfer expertise.

For more senior scholars, the hub is expected, also in the long term, to help create new academic positions focused exclusively on contemporary antisemitism and on specific aspects of European Jewish life (history, sociology, education, literary/media studies, demography, culture, heritage, etc.) and to provide the space for these position-holders to network together, in order to increase the impact of the research. In order to improve retention and growth in the field, the hub should establish (in the long term) at least one annual prize for an outstanding established scholar in the field and for an early career researcher, to help give prominence to the field and encourage new and existing research specialists. In addition, the hub could for instance, in the long term, work with major foundations operating in countering antisemitism and in fostering European Jewish life, promote initiatives that help make existing field research accessible to researchers and policymakers, and offer grants to Jewish community organisations in Europe to fund specific research projects.

The hub should act as an interface between research (including SSH disciplines) and policy. Consequently, it should organise at least one international conference gathering researchers, community leaders and policymakers. It is strongly encouraged to set up an annual conference that should continue running beyond the end of this action. In addition, it should publish annual reports summarizing the new research and research trends in the field in a format accessible and useful to policymakers.

Given the global dimension of antisemitism, international cooperation is encouraged.

Applicants to this topic are encouraged to consider the data offered by European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences and humanities domain, in particular EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure)[47].

Given the level of ambition of the goals to be achieved, the project should have a minimum duration of 36 months.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-07: The autocratic appeal: nature, drivers and strategies

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [48].

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers, public authorities and citizens at large are equipped with updated and exploitable scientific knowledge (including through SSH disciplines and fields) and understanding of the increasing autocratic tendencies, also in established democracies, including digital authoritarianism and erosion of human rights, as well as of the factors contributing to the rise of these tendencies (including the spread of disinformation in the public sphere, public disparagement of the rule of law, excessive use of police force, demonization of political opposition...).

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[47] https://www.ehri-project.eu/

[48] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Public authorities, journalists and publics alike are provided with methods and tools capable of a) early warning and characterisation of autocratic tendencies, their drivers and strategies; and b) identifying tactics for resisting and combating them.

- Relevant actors (democratic governments, media, civil society organisations) are enabled to take more informed decisions when engaging and dealing with autocracies.

Scope: In many parts of the world, democracies are under attack. Reports and indicators[49] confirm that we are in an ongoing wave of autocratisation, with the number of autocracies increasing steadily since around the turn of the century. Instead of the announced "end of history" through the triumph of the liberal democratic order, authoritarianism seems to have gained appeal while the democratisation wave rolls back. The ongoing invasion of a democratic European country by an authoritarian regime is just one token, and consequence, of the current autocratisation wave.

How does autocracy work in the twenty-first century? Why does authoritarianism continue to spread, not only as an alternative to, but also within liberal democracy, where populist leaders frequently deploy authoritarian tactics and practices, weakening and eroding the rule of law from the inside, while continuing to gain strength and popularity? The growing acceptance of autocratic approaches in well-functioning established democracies is an under-researched phenomenon, and therefore scientific knowledge and understanding of those tendencies could contribute to the development of tools to counteract them. Social and psychological aspects, as well as philosophical and historical dimensions, will need to be considered for such an analysis. Historical experiences with autocratic regimes can shed light on commonalities and differences, so that the lessons from the past underpin current analysis and responses.

Resistance against autocratisation requires also further investigation. While not overlooking structural pre-conditions, patterns of autocratisation, as well as the motivations and strategies used by authoritarian actors, the research to be funded should also look at the actors resisting autocratisation and their strategies, investigating the modalities, actors and patterns of resistance against processes of autocratisation, so as to generate updated and exploitable scientific knowledge on this field. Could media literacy, culture, creativity and arts, for instance, play a role in stemming autocratic tendencies[50]? What role is left to LGBTIQ people and religious, migrant or ethnic minorities, usually targeted by autocrats and populist leaders, in the resistance playbook against autocracies? Could the heteronormative and whitewashing activities of autocracies, visible in different domains such as culture and arts, entertainment industry, tourism or sports, be also resisted and counteracted?

Particularly striking, among those strategies to distract from persistent authoritarian practices, is the adoption of gender-equality reforms by some autocracies to boost their international

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[49]   For instance, those from the annual Democracy Reports published by the Varieties of Democracy Institute.

[50]   The Annex to the Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (2022/C 466/01) states for instance that "cultural co-creation can authentically underpin and credibly communicate our European values, including artistic liberties and cultural rights, in large parts of the world, and thus help contain the reach of authoritarian systems."

image. While increased autocracy and anti-democratic tendencies go hand in hand with the global setback on gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights, proposals should not overlook the causes and consequences of autocracies' pursuit of gender equality. This will shed light on the overall patterns and drivers of autocracies in the twenty-first century.

The resistance against autocratisation tendencies has also moved into the digital realm, in order to counteract the "digital authoritarianism"[51] to which authoritarian and authoritarian-leaning leaders have resorted to. In the digital age, authoritarian power is built and sustained in transnational and globalized configurations that involve state and non-state actors, cutting across regime types. Via online censorship, internet shutdowns, digital surveillance and online disinformation and information manipulation, aspiring autocrats try to silence and disable access to information. Proposals should aim at disentangling the actor configurations engaged in digital authoritarian practices and investigate how these practices fit within the larger authoritarian playbook. In parallel, they should also focus on the challenges brought by resistance to digital authoritarianism, such as protests and investigative research and advocacy, enriching the analysis of the resistance playbook.

Proposals should investigate how to effectively protect democracies from autocratic tendencies and narratives. What means and strategies for protection are at the disposal of different stakeholders (public authorities, civil society organisations, media, citizens)? How can autocratic reforms be reversed and overcome without resorting to anti-democratic means (e.g. party bans, presidential executive orders, censoring) nor inducing large protests leading to increased polarisation?

Proposals could also look into the interrelations between the phenomena of science scepticism and science-denial, distrust in democracies and the autocratic appeal. Proposals should adopt a multidisciplinary, and actor-based, approach, integrating fields such as political science, law, sociology, philosophy, psychology, media and digital studies, gender studies, and history. Proposals should engage citizens, civil society organisations etc. in the development of their activities to ensure calibration and uptake.

The rise of autocracies and populisms in Europe is not an isolated phenomenon and needs to be looked at within a global context. Therefore, international cooperation is encouraged.

Proposals are encouraged to seek collaboration whenever possible with relevant projects selected under previous EU-funded calls, such as HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-05, under Horizon Europe, or GOVERNANCE-03-2018, SU-GOVERNANCE-09-2020 and SU-GOVERNANCE-11-2018, under Horizon 2020. Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

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[51] Understood as the practices that rely on digital technologies to prevent critical debate and accountability demands to powerholders by disrupting information flows and free expression and/or by using digital technologies to surveil citizens, activists, civil society organisations.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-08: Economic inequalities and their impact on democracy

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [52].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Enhanced understanding of the interplay between economic inequalities and attitudes towards democracies, achieved by adopting an intersectional perspective across local, national, and transnational levels and acknowledging varying territorial contexts.

- Deeper insights into economic inequalities, including citizens' own perceptions of such inequalities, across diverse demographic groups, and their impact on public participation, the shaping of attitudes for instance towards women's and minorities' rights, as well as trust in democratic processes.

- Enhanced policymakers' awareness through evidence-based policy recommendations on the relationship between economic inequalities and attitudes towards democracy, bridging research and policy by presenting data and potential solutions to foster informed discussion and adoption of targeted measures.

- Existing data are used effectively, and new data avenues are explored to better understand and address the impacts of economic inequalities across diverse demographic

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[52]   This <u>decision</u> is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

groups, as well as citizen's own perceptions of these inequalities, on democratic participation and trust in democratic institutions.

- Novel and intersectional approaches to enhance understanding of and participation in democratic processes among economically vulnerable populations, including low- or no-income individuals, and those (at risk of) experiencing downward mobility from the middle class, integrating factors associated with social mobility and individual characteristics such as age, sex, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion, or belief, and disability.

Scope: Economic inequalities, encompassing wealth and income inequalities (e.g., in the form of money, financial assets, or real estate), pose a significant challenge to democratic societies. Over the past decades, while between-country inequality has generally decreased, within-country inequality has risen in numerous countries as global economic growth has not been evenly distributed. This widening gap in wealth has exacerbated political polarisation and fuelled distrust in democratic institutions worldwide. These trends not only suggest correlations between these phenomena but also threaten core democratic principles such as social justice, inclusion, and equal participation and representation. For instance, extremist parties often gain traction when governments fail to protect those disadvantaged by economic changes. Research indicates that governmental shortcomings in protecting those marginalised by structural economic shifts (e.g., cuts to social security entitlements, public investment and/or tax increase) fuel the roots of populism. Understanding this cycle and the complex relationship between economic inequality and democracy is key for a functioning democratic society. Proposals are encouraged to look at the efficiency and effectiveness of public policies in addressing inequalities. For instance, examining the gap between the design and implementation phases of policies aimed at reducing economic inequalities can help better understand their impact on democracy.

Historically, economic disparities have sometimes revitalised public participation and political engagement in various forms, such as trade unions, civic involvement, and political parties. This contrasts with contemporary trends where economic inequalities often correlate with disinterest or even rejection of democracy. Hence, there is a pressing need for SSH research to delve into why, how, and to what extent economic inequalities can undermine trust in democracy and broader societal structures, and how to counteract these trends. Proposals should consider diverse territorial contexts, moving beyond urban/rural dichotomies, and explore strategies to bolster democracies in these different contexts.

Moreover, research has shown that economic inequalities, when assessed solely through economic indicators, fail to provide a comprehensive understanding of their impact on democracy. Citizens' perceptions of economic inequalities appear to play a central role in shaping attitudes towards democratic processes and institutions. These perceptions are often exacerbated by dichotomies such as rich/poor, rural/urban, employed/unemployed, educated/uneducated, and native/immigrant. There is a lack of comparative work including citizens' perceptions, particularly through an intersectional and intergenerational lens.

Therefore, research proposals should consider perceived inequalities as an integral part of the research framework.

Key research questions revolve around the intersection and impact of income and wealth inequalities on democratic practices. This involves exploring, for instance:

- How do income and wealth inequalities across different geographic and territorial areas influence policy preferences of different social and age groups, notably political polarisation, voter turnout, and trust in democratic institutions and processes.

- How perceived economic inequalities (in contrast to economic inequalities measured by quantitative indicators) influence trust and participation in democratic processes.

- How do economic inequalities intersect with social class, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sex, gender, age, disability, and citizenship/nationality in different geographic areas, and what is the cumulative impact on democratic practices.

- What role do local media and community networks play in shaping perceptions of economic inequality across different regions, and how do these perceptions impact democratic engagement.

- How does geographic mobility (e.g., inter-city, rural-to-urban or vice-versa, national, international, temporary, permanent) influence the transmission of economic inequalities, and how do these processes affect participation and trust in democratic institutions.

- What strategies could address varying levels of civic engagement among people and communities from different income brackets and levels of wealth.

The funded research should also generate knowledge on intergenerational transfers, that is, inheritances and inter-vivos gifts, (perceived) inequalities, and their impact on democracy: how do these intergenerational transfers influence wealth inequality, and thus, in line with the main subject of this call, how do they impact democracy, for instance in terms of participation or trust in institutions?

When exploring economic inequalities, proposals should consider at least three additional intersecting dimensions of inequalities alongside economic ones, such as sex, gender, disability, social class, religion or belief, age, and racial or ethnic origins. For example, recent research across all EU Member States reveals that young men residing in regions marked by rising unemployment and perceived inequities in public institutions are inclined to view democratic principles like gender equality as challenges to their interests. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing how economic inequalities intersect with democratic values and social attitudes.

Proposals are encouraged to involve diverse disciplinary perspectives, including but not limited to economics, political economy, political science, public administration, history, (political) sociology, (social) psychology, gender studies, and public policy. Approaches that

combine social science theories with data science techniques or incorporate novel mixed methodologies are encouraged.

Proposals should involve a diverse array of stakeholders across diverse demographic groups - encompassing different age groups, genders, minority communities, persons with disabilities, and socio-economically disadvantaged populations, including representatives from trade unions, civil society organisations, social welfare bodies, and (local) government representatives.

Applicants to this topic are encouraged to make use of the data provided by European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences and humanities domain, particularly CESSDA, the European Social Survey or SHARE.[53] Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

Cooperation should be sought with the Community of democracy practitioners and researchers funded under HORIZON-CL2-2024-DEMOCRACY-01-12. Moreover, proposals should build on the results of other EU projects, including the one funded under H2020-SC6-REV-INEQUAL-05-2016 - Inequalities in the EU and their consequences for democracy, social cohesion, and inclusion.

It is encouraged that proposals also exploit potential complementarities with projects funded under the following H2020 topics: REV-INEQUAL-07-2016: Spatial justice, social cohesion, and territorial inequalities; GOVERNANCE-04-2019 – Enhancing social rights and EU citizenship, and, under the following Horizon Europe topics: TRANSFORMATIONS-03-2018-2019: Innovative solutions for inclusive and sustainable urban environments; and TRANSFORMATIONS-22-2020: Enhancing access and uptake of education to reverse inequalities, as well as with Horizon Europe projects funded under HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-03: The impact of inequalities on democracy and HORIZON-CL2-2023-DEMOCRACY-01-07: Intersectionality and equality in deliberative and participatory democratic spaces.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-09: Fighting against disinformation while ensuring the right to freedom of expression

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and

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[53]   https://www.cessda.eu/, https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/ and https://share-eric.eu/

	selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [54].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU institutions, national decision-makers, practitioners in relevant sectors, civil society organisations and other societal actors are better equipped to confront and prevent different forms of mis- and disinformation and information manipulation, while protecting and respecting the freedom of expression and academic freedom.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers have a better understanding of the categories of stakeholders opposing policies and initiatives aimed at combating disinformation and information manipulation, including understanding the drivers behind their narratives, and are better equipped to engage with them.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers understand how digital media shapes public opinion and regulate it without compromising citizens' rights to information, media freedom, privacy and data protection, and protection from harm.

In addition, projects should contribute to at least one of the following expected outcomes:

- Media, education and security practitioners are increasingly knowledgeable about tools and legal remedies to counteract the narratives of those opposing policies and initiatives designed to combat disinformation, and to recognise and counter their drivers.

- EU institutions and national decision-makers have a better understanding of the role of independent media and the role and importance of "media dissemination hubs" and professional "mediators" who facilitate citizens' access to professionally produced content and analyse the crucial aspect of access to information (such as availability, accessibility, affordability, comprehensibility, transparency, inclusivity, privacy and data protection, and security).

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[54] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- EU institutions, national decision-makers, and practitioners in the media sector have a better understanding of astroturfing, its use in spreading mis- and disinformation and information manipulation, and are equipped with tools and policy recommendations to recognize and counter this phenomenon.

- EU institutions, national decision-makers, practitioners in the media sector, and other relevant societal actors have adequate educational materials to understand how to design and implement initiatives to combat mis- and disinformation and information manipulation without harming freedom of expression.

Scope: Mis- and disinformation and information manipulation can thwart political and societal responses to external challenges, such as climate change, public health, or migration. Solutions to such challenges, to be successful, must be based on evidence.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right that involves the right to hold and express one's opinions, as well as the right to receive and impart information and ideas, without prior authorization (censorship) or other forms of interference from the government or any other form of public authority. Therefore, freedom of expression is crucial to democracy and a key value of the European project, and it is closely linked to the role of the independent (news) media, a key pillar for checks and balances in a democratic system[55].

Proposals should investigate how the functioning of the media systems (in particular the data-driven information systems, that use data as a core component of their operation, decision-making processes, and overall functionality) favours disinformation, including gendered disinformation and anti LGBTIQ rhetoric, by creating an optimal environment for its creation, diffusion and proliferation.

Proposals are encouraged to look into the market incentives for media that promote mis- and disinformation and information manipulation, such as decline in viewers and incentives to focus on content that promotes engagement over factuality. This trend is driven by the need to catch audience attention in a competitive media landscape, which often prioritizes sensationalism and emotional reactions over accuracy.

Proposals should also explore how regulations aimed at countering disinformation can be conceived in compliance with citizens' fundamental rights, such as the right to freedom of expression, and preserving independent and pluralistic news media.

Proposals should investigate how to develop a diverse and healthy online (news) media sphere, through the design and management of trust indicators and comparison between facts and opinions on social media platforms, browsers, and websites, to help citizens, particularly children and youth, distinguish content produced with journalistic standards from non-sourced content and opinions. Such investigation should consider existing initiatives such as browser

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[55] Article 11 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provide the guiding definitions of this right, which encompasses also the freedom of artistic expression: https://fra.europa.eu/en/eu-charter/article/11-freedom-expression-and-information and https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

plugins and journalism trust indicators and should be developed/tested with media organisations. Therefore, research activities should involve media organisations and/or media practitioners, as well as information spreaders (individuals or entities that actively disseminate information across various platforms and channels, such as influencers, among others), in consultation and piloting activities to develop theoretical models and policy recommendations. The involvement of one or more of these categories of stakeholders is particularly important to develop innovative methodologies and solutions to counter growing phenomena, such as astroturfing. Astroturfing misleads by impersonating grassroots support through fake accounts or paid actors, amplifying visibility and public influence of misleading media content. It undermines trust in genuine online exchanges, manipulates public opinion, and reinforces echo chambers. This misuse of digital platforms spreads disinformation, undermining online debate integrity.

Proposals are also encouraged to investigate the role of professional "mediators", i.e. individuals and entities involved in the development, structuring, and dissemination of media content: journalists, editors, producers, and broadcasters. These "mediators" play an important role in understanding and filtering information before it reaches the public and are critical in developing narratives and shaping public discourse. Moreover, proposals are encouraged to investigate the role of "media dissemination hubs", which distribute information and influence public opinion and public discourse through news, entertainment, and other types of content (such as platforms similar to traditional media, newspapers, TV, radio, and digital channels, namely social media, news websites).

Proposals should develop policy recommendations and methodologies for how to define and provide legal safeguards for protecting open civic discourse in the face of, but not limited to, Holocaust denial, hate speech or incitement to violence.

Proposals should build on past EU-funded projects, and seek cooperation with on-going ones, as well as plan to exploit potential complementarities with project(s) funded under HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-05 — Evolution of political extremism and its influence on contemporary social and political dialogue; HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-06: Media for democracy – democratic media; HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-07: Politics and the impact of online social networks and new media; HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-03: Disinformation and fake news are combated and trust in the digital world is raised. Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

Research activities should involve a wide range of stakeholders and societal actors, including non-scientific and non-academic ones, such as, but not limited to public bodies, policymakers, private corporates, media organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations, fact-checkers, educational bodies, education and security practitioners, libraries and other cultural heritage institutions. The latter, with their extensive collections - including newspaper archives and web archives from recent decades - can provide valuable historical insights and help study the evolution of disinformation practices over time. Proposals are encouraged to make use of participative methodologies and experimental methods.

Research activities should also involve entities which are signatories of the Code of Practice on Disinformation, and entities which are subject to the Digital Services Act (DSA) and to the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA).

Research activities could also involve signatories of the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, media companies, public and private broadcasters, online news platforms, and digital services object of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), and other private entities, such as providers of intermediaries' services under the Digital Services Act (DSA).

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-10: The role of civic and citizenship education for strengthening civic and democratic participation and support for common European values

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [56].
Eligibility and admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following additional eligibility criteria apply: In order to achieve the expected outcomes, consortia must include, as

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[56]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

	beneficiaries or affiliated entities, (i) at least one secondary or higher education establishment, or public body with the capacity to roll out curricula, or public body in charge of teacher education and training; and (ii) at least one civil society organisation.

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers, education and training institutions, and educators have a better understanding of the impactful learning, teaching and assessment of citizenship education (underpinned by SSH research and evidence), including formal or formal and non-formal learning.

- Policymakers, education and training institutions, and educators gain a sound understanding of the impact of citizenship education related formal or non-formal learning on young people's (aged 15-29) civic and democratic engagement (through different forms of community and political engagement), including young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and considering gender-specific barriers and opportunities.

- Policymakers, education and training institutions, and educators gain a sound understanding of effective collaborative mechanisms between different actors in formal and/or non-formal education sectors in delivering effective citizenship education.

- Policymakers, education and training institutions, and educators are more aware of and can roll out competence-based, transformational (fostering critical thinking and personal development) and action-oriented (fostering active civic engagement and democratic participation) pedagogical approaches to citizenship education, including innovative learning methodologies.

Scope: Education should equip young people with competences for their personal, social, professional as well as civic engagement and development, enabling them to contribute to our democracies, now and in the future, by shaping active, engaged and creative citizens who are aware of their shared values and able to improve their living environment, as recalled in the 2023 Council conclusions on the contribution of education and training to strengthening common European values and democratic citizenship[57]. In the current context of growing social concerns and political polarisation, as well as in some cases insufficient engagement of young people in democratic life, we need effective educational and training tools to increase and nurture civic engagement and democratic participation and trust in democratic processes. How can different types of citizenship education (including combining formal education with non-formal or informal learning) increase the level of democratic knowledge, and encourage young people to become more involved in their communities and in democratic decision-making?

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[57] Council conclusions on the contribution of education and training to strengthening common European values and democratic citizenship

This involves developing citizenship competence, in line with the 2018 Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning[58], and includes, for example, building knowledge and understanding of the European common values, of citizens' obligations and responsibilities, developing critical thinking in understanding main contemporary events and history, understanding of social and cultural diversities and how national identities contribute to the European identity, an ability and willingness to constructively communicate and engage with others in common or public interest and in decision-making, as well as supporting equality and diversity, culture of peace and non-violence.

The aim of this topic is twofold. First, to understand and enhance – through innovative methodologies tested and measured by successful projects – young people's civic knowledge (understanding of democratic institutions and processes) and democratic citizenship attitudes, as well as their experiences, willingness, and opportunities to engage in their communities and participate in civic life, fostering a culture of dialogue, democratic debate, and tolerance. Second, to assess the effectiveness of the teaching methods used to promote civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement, ensuring they contribute to the development of informed and active citizens.

Proposals are expected to consider learning in formal educational settings and can also examine non-formal educational settings (e.g. extra-curricular activities, community service projects, youth clubs etc.). While both formal and non-formal learning are relevant and interesting for the purpose of the topic, they are very different in nature, with some overlap, and would require different research methods and approaches, which can be costly. The focus of research should be on formal education, while research on non-formal education would bring an added value because of the interplay: whether and how formal education actors collaborate with non-formal education actors, for example.

Proposals should address both young people from disadvantaged and from non-disadvantaged backgrounds and should also consider the gendered aspects of young people's engagement, looking at the different barriers and opportunities for young women and men. Proposals should cover ages 15 to 29.

Proposals should also address the following aspects:

- Design, pilot and test methodologies in formal learning, or in formal and non-formal learning, such as pedagogical approaches on transformational and action-oriented learning, aimed at helping to create critically engaged participants in society, civic learning opportunities, measures related to open classroom climate or student co-creation of education institution related policies and processes (democracy-in-action learning environments). Proposals are encouraged to use mixed methods approaches combining qualitative and quantitative (e.g. small, randomized control trials to test the effectiveness of specific interventions) methods. They may include methodologies for direct youth participation in decisions that concern them, for example in school, sport, cultural

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[58] Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning

activities, public space, any policies in the remit of local administrations. Proposals are expected to pilot innovative methodologies, and not simply to test existing protocols. They are encouraged to include young people in the design of these innovative methodologies and may develop digital gamified pedagogical tools.

- Produce step-by-step explanations for education and training institutions, educators, national education authorities, and policymakers to roll out innovative methodologies in formal and possibly also non-formal learning, designed to create positive effects on levels of civic engagement, a culture of democratic debate, tolerance, and understanding of democratic institutions and processes. To help improve the supply and quality of democratic citizenship education, proposals are expected to develop guidelines on methodology, content and teacher training, a toolbox of pedagogical materials for teachers, and assessment tools to help identify implementation gaps.

The proposed research should also examine what educational tools and approaches need to be in place in formal, or formal and non-formal education, to equip young people for constructive participation in democratic decision-making, understanding of social and cultural diversity, readiness to support inclusive societies, and peaceful conflict resolution. Proposals may also devise (and run) ways to measure the extent to which extending the right to vote to young people aged 16 and 17 has increased their political participation (e.g. voting in elections), and what specific awareness-raising educational accompanying measures were put in place, in those countries where such measures have recently been put in place, focusing on the varying effects across different genders and intersectional demographics.

Proposals may also study where existing models and practices of civic and citizenship education may have failed (could have a negative impact or are simply insufficient) and led to a paucity of civic engagement, and a culture of polarisation rather than debate. This could include, for example, an analysis of large-scale assessments of young people's knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues related to civics and citizenship, in order to build on previous findings in the tested methodologies.

For their contributions to the outcomes of this topic to be successful, applicants must include in their consortia public authorities with the capacity to roll out curricula or institutions in charge of teacher education and training, and/or education and training institutions, in order to better understand the realities faced by those with the capacity to implement the project's findings and design adapted pilots and methodologies, and to facilitate the roll-out of the methodologies successfully tested by the project. There must also be active engagement of civil society in projects as partners, e.g. youth clubs, sports clubs, community projects, or arts and culture organisations. Testing and innovation work packages should be led or co-led by public authorities with the authority to roll out curricula or education methodologies, and/or education and training institutions, and/or educators in formal and non-formal learning.

Proposals should detail how they will develop close involvement of education bodies and practitioners in the field of democracy promotion, and in particular those involved in relevant projects that received support from other EU programmes, e.g. Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, CERV, or Global Europe. Proposals should explain how they will establish

connections, find synergies, and build on the work of projects funded under previous Horizon Europe Calls as, for instance:

HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-04: Education for democracy; HORIZON-CL2-2024-DEMOCRACY-01-08: Culture, the arts, and cultural spaces for democratic participation and political expression, online and offline; HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-02-01: Network for innovative solutions for the future of democracy; HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-03: The impact of inequalities on democracy; HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-08: Representative democracy in flux; and HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-01-02: The future of democracy and civic participation.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-11: Independence of the judiciary as an aspect of rule of law compliance

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [59].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- EU authorities and public authorities in the Member States have access to comparative research information on the independence, impartiality and integrity of judicial institutions across the EU to ensure the rights to an effective remedy and fair trial and to strengthen accountability in the broad sense.

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[59] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Policymakers and judicial authorities have a better understanding of the functioning of the safeguards for judicial independence in each other's justice systems, also strengthening judicial cooperation between the Member States.

- Policymakers and public administrations in Member States are provided with research on the implementation at national level of international and EU rules and standards to better assess their impact on judicial independence.

- The EU's capacity to proactively promote rule of law, fundamental human rights and democracy is strengthened with a better understanding of the functioning of the safeguards for judicial independence in the Member States, including their context, current legal practice, the statutory framework, leading court cases and major relevant developments with up to date, reliable and comparable information.

Scope: Judicial independence is a principle of EU law, closely linked to the rule of law, the right to a fair trial and effective judicial protection, as guaranteed by the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU.

The EU already benefits from several tools to ensure the respect of the rule of law. These instruments serve to promote the rule of law, prevent rule of law problems from emerging, and respond to them when they materialize.

On the preventive side, one of the tools is the annual EU Justice Scoreboard which has been providing comparable data on the independence, quality, and efficiency of national justice systems since 2013. In addition, the annual European Rule of Law Mechanism, with the annual Rule of Law Report at its centre, has been providing since 2020 a qualitative assessment of significant developments in the areas of justice, anti-corruption, media independence and institutional checks and balances in every Member State[60], including specific recommendations for all Member States, aiming to prevent challenges to the rule of law from emerging or deepening.

Gaining a better understanding on the implementation of international and EU standards and its impact on judicial independence is crucial to support the EU's capacity to proactively promote rule of law, fundamental human rights, and democracy.

Reflecting on reform activities at national level and the complexity of national justice systems, proposals should contribute to improve the understanding of the functioning of the safeguards for judicial independence in each other's justice systems. This can be achieved with a multidisciplinary research approach (including research in SSH disciplines), complementing the data and analysis gathered through the annual EU Justice Scoreboard and annual Rule of Law Report.

While using a multidisciplinary approach such as a socio-legal approach, proposals should compare and critically assess national frameworks for judicial independence. Special focus should be put on how national rules, covering e.g. the procedure regarding appointments,

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[60] Since 2024, the Rule of Law Report has also been covering selected candidate countries.

promotion and dismissals of judges and members of judicial administration bodies, workload assessment of judges, allocation of cases, disciplinary proceedings, and transfers of judges, work in practice.

Proposals should also contribute to building concrete knowledge on current legal practice, the statutory framework, leading court cases and major relevant developments at national level with up to date, reliable and comparable information in the Member states and in the enlargement countries.

Additionally, a comparative analysis on the independence, impartiality and integrity of judicial institutions across the EU could serve as a case to illustrate the rights to an effective remedy and fair trial, and also to strengthen accountability in the broad sense.

To support this goal, proposals should provide an outline for a comparative analysis of the safeguards for judicial independence in the Member States and, where appropriate, enlargement countries. Proposals should also highlight good practices on the implementation of international and EU rules and standards at national level.

Based on the research on the implementation of international and EU rules and standards at national level, policy recommendations could be developed to reflect on how judicial cooperation between the Member States could be strengthened.

Proposals are encouraged to network with and build on previously funded projects under the Horizon Europe[61], Horizon 2020 or other EU programmes, e.g. Citizen, Equality, Rights and Values, and the Internal Security Fund (ISF)[62]. Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this topic and other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-DEMOCRACY-12: Community of democracy practitioners and researchers

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.50 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following

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[61] In particular the projects funded under HORIZON-CL2-2024-DEMOCRACY-01-03: What is the long-term impact of rule of law and other European values on socio-economic outcomes.

[62] Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme - European Commission (europa.eu) and Internal Security Fund - European Commission (europa.eu)

conditions	exceptions apply: If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [63].
Eligibility and admissibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following additional eligibility criteria apply: In order to achieve the expected outcomes, consortia must include, as beneficiaries or affiliated entities,(i) at least one public body with a policy-making role, and (ii) at least one civil society organisation.

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- The networking and capacity-building work of the European network set up under HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-02-01[64] is strengthened and augmented.

- Research and innovation communities in the field of democracy and civic deliberation and participation and citizenship education are less fragmented and better networked across Europe.

- Researchers in democracy, including rule of law; practitioners in civic participation and deliberation; communication experts; and public authorities and governments have access to research results, innovative methodologies, and tools in the field of democracy and civic deliberation and participation and citizenship education through networking events, accessible platforms, databases, knowledge repositories, advice and capacity building on enhancing diversity and inclusion, civic participation, civic and citizenship

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[63]   This [decision](#) is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[64]   https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101112280

education and innovative and experimental deliberation processes at all governance levels.

- Public authorities and governments practice democratic innovation, by applying research results, innovative methodologies, and tools in the field of democracy and civic deliberation and participation and citizenship education which have been distilled by the network into useful "how-tos" and trainings for policymakers, public authorities, and governments.

- Policymakers and research funding organisations are provided with proposals for future research agendas in the field of democracy.

Scope: Creating a network for researchers (including from SSH disciplines), policymakers and civil society organisations to collaborate to formulate policy recommendations and to create knowledge-sharing opportunities was the goal of the HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-02-01 call topic [65]: to support a necessary tool to strengthen and renew European democracy. The goal of this current call topic is to strengthen, augment, and pursue the work of the network[66] of researchers in democracy together with practitioners of civic participation and deliberation and of citizenship education across Europe, previously set up. This network should contribute to the EU's future policy to strengthen and renew democracy.

The selected proposal will establish an innovative successor network of democracy research organisations and practitioners of democratic innovation, which will:

- Produce policy recommendations to strengthen and renew democracy in all governance levels and democratic debate in Member States and Associated Countries, drawing on the existing body of knowledge. These recommendations must be accessible, publicly available, and well disseminated including through a central open access repository.

- Help policymakers in the EU and Associated Countries to design civic participation strategies for relevant policy areas, in conjunction with the European Commission's Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy[67] as relevant.

- Organise 2 retreats per year for policymakers from EU Member States, Associated Countries and EU institutions, targeting high-level officials, to learn and exchange from experts and peers on democratic strengthening and renewal, and encourage exchange on emerging or persisting challenges and threats to democracy, participation, and civic engagement.

- Design capacity building activities on inclusive participatory and deliberative forms of democracy at different governance levels, including training and knowledge sharing.

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[65] https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl2-2022-democracy-02-01
[66] https://nets4dem.eu/
[67] https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/participatory-democracy_en

- Organise at least one conference on democratic innovations gathering researchers, practitioners, education bodies and EU and national policymakers.

Proposals should establish links to and seek complementarities with closely related actions, such as relevant R&I actions funded by Horizon Europe (such as the network established under HORIZON-CL2-2024-DEMOCRACY-01-12 [68]) or synergies with the Citizens Equalities Rights and Values programme (CERV)[69]. Specifically, it must build on, rather than repeat or reproduce, the work produced by Nets4Dem under HORIZON-CL2-2022-DEMOCRACY-02-01. Proposals are also invited to build links with global communities addressing democracy.

The project should have a minimum duration of 36 months.

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[68]   See: https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101178637
[69]   https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/programmes/cerv

Destination Innovative Research on European Cultural Heritage and Cultural and Creative Industries

Europe's rich cultural heritage and strong creative industries not only reflect our past but also shape our future. It is by building on this foundation and developing our strengths that we can face the great challenges of our time with confidence and shape a desirable common future. Europe's cultural heritage originates from the interaction between people and places through time and is constantly evolving[70]. Every citizen has a right to engage with the cultural heritage of their choice, while respecting the rights and freedoms of others, as an aspect of the right freely to participate in cultural life[71].

Europe's diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage and dynamic cultural and creative industries (CCIs) are strategic assets. They enrich our lives, foster social cohesion and societal resilience, and contribute to a sense of belonging. They underpin a growing economy that generates more employment than the automotive industry and a similar trade balance as food, drinks and tobacco combined. Many of Europe's multinational companies build their international success on European heritage and creativity. At the same time, the sector is nurturing large numbers of dynamic small, medium (SMEs) and micro enterprises, creating employment not the least for young people, while deploying their creativity not only to generate income but also to contribute to social and cultural sustainability, wellbeing and to projecting European values at home and abroad. The cultural and creative industries are engines of innovation not only in themselves, but across the entire economy, thus contributing strongly to Europe's overall competitiveness and future prosperity.

This destination adopts a people-centred perspective and places cultural heritage and the cultural and creative industries at the very heart of the European economy, its competitiveness and sustainability. R&I activities under this destination will support and strengthen European cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries essentially along the following lines:

GREEN: Europe's cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries engage for carbon neutrality and for adapting to and mitigating the consequences of climate change. European citizens and societies are mobilised for an inclusive, socially and culturally sustainable climate transition.

R&I actions will focus in particular on the establishment of a new European partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage, supporting cultural heritage institutions to turn the challenges of the climate transition into opportunities, and become drivers of an inclusive societal transition. R&I actions will for instance foment the development of new environmentally friendly technologies and methods to manage, restore and preserve cultural heritage, with a view to making Europe a world leader in sustainable management of cultural heritage. R&I

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[70]   Council conclusions of 21 May 2014 on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe (2014/C 183/08) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XG0614(08)

[71]   CETS 199 - Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (coe.int)

actions will also assess the role intangible cultural heritage plays for fostering societal resilience amidst societal challenges.

DIGITAL: The digital transition promises enormous opportunities for Europe's cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries but also implies serious challenges. It is important to ensure that, throughout the digital transition, EU citizens enjoy cultural heritage and contribute to its interpretation and enrichment.

R&I actions will focus on how the benefits of digitised and digital cultural heritage may be exploited, reaping the benefits while avoiding the pitfalls. A particular focus will be on supporting the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH), as well as on exploring challenges and opportunities of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence for culture, creativity and cultural heritage, and the ways cultural and creative industries can successfully engage with such technologies.

INNOVATIVE: To an ever-greater degree, creativity and cultural dimensions drive innovation and competitiveness – while underpinning resilience and well-being. Cultural and creative dimensions make new digital and physical products and services appealing and attractive. Similarly, societal transformations depend on behavioural changes, which are largely based on changes in lifestyle, culture and perceptions. In such processes, the human is at the centre, and cultural heritage, the arts and the cultural and creative industries are key.

R&I actions will cover a variety of subjects, such as strengthening the capacity of European design to act as a driver of sustainable competitiveness and reinforcing the role of culture and the arts for promoting European values, preventing conflicts, fostering peace and reconciliation and promoting health, well-being and social cohesion.

Many of the actions funded under this Destination will need access to and/or generate data. Where appropriate, actions should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud or included in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and the ESFRI roadmap, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of such actions is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

The innovation ecosystems created and nurtured by the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), in particular the KIC "EIT Culture and Creativity", may contribute to actions under this destination, and may as appropriate be considered by applicants.

In line with the Commission priorities, R&I actions under this Destination will help promote our European way of life, contribute to a Europe fit for the digital age and to achieving the European Green Deal goals, as well as support an economy that works for people. They will

contribute to the New European Bauhaus [72] initiative, to reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to building a stronger, more participatory and crisis-resilient society and economy. They will support the realisation of the full potential of cultural heritage, arts and cultural and creative industries as drivers of sustainable innovation and a European sense of belonging.

The topic 'HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-03: A European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage – Innovative use cases' aims at supporting the digital European cultural heritage collaborative space referred to as the "European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage" (ECCCH), and contributes to the vision and objectives of the Commission[73].

An ex-ante impact assessment for the ECCCH was carried out between December 2021 and March 2022 by eight renowned independent experts contracted by the Commission[74]. This ex-ante impact assessment examined and described the needs of a digital European cultural heritage collaborative space from the perspective of the foreseen users (cultural heritage institutions, researchers, cultural and creative industries, etc.) and of European societies, thoroughly reviewed existing initiatives that might satisfy parts of these needs, and outlined the most important aspects to consider in implementing such a collaborative space.

The conclusion of the ex-ante impact assessment is that the ECCCH is highly important to Europe's cultural heritage institutions and to European societies. In order to address the urgent evolving needs of Europe's cultural heritage sector in the digital age for specifically adapted collaborative spaces, the European Union is ramping up its investments through the ECCCH, and also the common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage (the Data Space)[75] funded under the Digital Europe programme. The topics under the ECCCH are based on the conclusions and recommendations of the experts' ex-ante impact assessment.

Some key characteristics of the vision for the ECCCH include:

- The ECCCH will be addressed to professionals[76]. It will enable an unprecedented level of lasting collaboration and co-creation between public and private players that will generate new realms of research, knowledge and creation of societal value.

- The basic ECCCH platform will provide easy to use tools for the most important needs.

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[72]   The New European Bauhaus initiative was launched by European Commission President von der Leyen in her State of the European Union speech autumn 2020. More information here: https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/index_en

[73]   Recommendation (EU) 2021/1970 of 10 Nov 2021 on a common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage.

[74]   European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Brunet, P., De Luca, L., Hyvönen, E., et al., Report on a European collaborative cloud for cultural heritage : ex – ante impact assessment, 2022, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/64014

[75]   See further https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/staff-working-document-data-spaces

[76]   In the context of the ECCCH calls, 'professionals' should be understood as the wide and interdisciplinary group of people working with cultural heritage in a professional or semi-professional way, researchers as well as people working with related activities such as within the cultural and creative industries.

- Active user communities that contribute to training and support, as well as common data models, guidelines and libraries for developing tools (including support for Graphical User interfaces (GUI) and visualisation), will ensure that also less well-equipped institutions will draw the full benefit of the ECCCH.

- To enhance collaboration and co-creation, IPR rights of the digital objects stored in the ECCCH and produced by ECCCH-based collaboration will be fully recorded and traceable. Guidelines for the use of IPR rights, such as rights statements provided by RightsStatements.org should be used where appropriate. This will enable new business models in the intersection between cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries.

- The long-term sustainability of data and data formats is one of the underlying principles of the ECCCH. The ECCCH will tackle these challenges through its architecture and basic functionalities. The design and architecture of the ECCCH is based on three principles:

  a. digital twins of heritage objects,

  b. digital continuum, tracing all interactions with heritage objects and related data objects,

  c. digital ecosystem, open to all stakeholders, professions and activities to interact with each other and with the digital heritage objects, ultimately leading towards a new generation of multidimensional, interconnected and knowledge-enhanced heritage data forming digital commons, where the ECCCH will play a key role.

- The architecture of the ECCCH will ensure an evolutionary design, which will allow the adaption and incorporation of new technologies and tools and to fulfil new user requirements, while discontinuing less used tools.

- An open Application Programming Interface will allow new functionality to be developed and incorporated in the ECCCH by different initiatives, and encourage interoperability.

- The ECCCH will be open and inclusive, both in terms of the users of the platform and the connections to other related initiatives/platforms such as the Data Space.

- The ECCCH should build on the wealth of existing knowledge, technologies and work processes in Europe. It should draw on previous experience and best practice. The ECCCH and the Data Space should complement each other towards the common vision.

- The ECCCH should ensure, through its Governance body, the engagement of a wide range of appropriate representatives from Member States and Associated Countries, as well as from related EU initiatives.

The ECCCH will thus be a genuine collaboration platform, which brings together a wide array of professions, researchers and technologies for museums and other cultural heritage

institutions. It will include and develop interactive tools for research, curation, restoration, preservation and for reaching out to citizens and cultural and creative industries, properly protect and manage IPR and allow commercial as well as non-commercial collaboration with a wide range of players.

All topics under the ECCCH are subject to the following conditions:

- All software developed should be open source, licensed under a CC0 public domain dedication or under an open source license as recommended by the Free Software Foundation[77] and the Open Source Initiative[78].

- If the use of fully open source software would require disproportional efforts or significantly diminish the quality or performance of the software, and if suitable non open source function libraries exist, such libraries may be used provided that a full user license free of charge for an unlimited period of time is granted to the consortium responsible for the ECCCH as well as to all users of the ECCCH.

- All software and other related deliverables should be compliant with the data model and the software development guidelines elaborated by the project funded under topic 'HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01'.

- All projects funded should participate in concertation activities with the project funded under topic 'HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01'

Expected impacts:

Proposals for topics under this Destination should set out a credible pathway to contributing to the following expected impact of the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan:

- The full potential of cultural heritage, arts and cultural and creative industries and sectors as drivers of both sustainable innovation and a European sense of belonging is realised through a continuous engagement with society, citizens and economic sectors.

Legal entities established in China are not eligible to participate in Innovation Actions in any capacity. Please refer to the Annex B of the General Annexes of this Work Programme for further details.

GREEN

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

HORIZON-CL2-2025-03-HERITAGE-01: Co-funded European partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage

Call: Cluster 2 Partnerships

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[77] https://www.gnu.org/licenses/license-list#SoftwareLicenses
[78] https://opensource.org/licenses

Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 60.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 60.00 million.
Type of Action	Programme Co-fund Action
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: If projects use satellite-based earth observation, positioning, navigation and/or related timing data and services, beneficiaries must make use of Copernicus and/or Galileo/EGNOS (other data and services may additionally be used).
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: Representatives of the EU institutions will be part of the evaluation committee. The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: The starting date of grants awarded under this topic may be as of the submission date of the application. Applicants must justify the need for a retroactive starting date in their application. Costs incurred from the starting date of the action may be considered eligible. Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties (FSTP). The support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants. Financial support provided by the participants to third parties is one of the primary activities of the action in order to be able to achieve its objectives. As financial support provided by the participants to third parties is one of the primary activities of the action in order to be able to achieve its objectives, the EUR 60 000 threshold provided for in Article 208(a) of the Financial Regulation does not apply. Given the type of action and its level of ambition, the maximum amount of FSTP to be granted to an individual third party is EUR 3 million, per grant. However, if the objectives of the action would otherwise be impossible or overly difficult (and duly justified in the proposal) the

	maximum amount may be higher.
	The funding rate is up to 30% of the eligible costs.

Expected Outcome: In line with the European Climate Law[79] and its vision for a climate-neutral and resilient Europe by 2050, this topic aims at supporting transnational activities which will enable or contribute to several expected impacts of the Horizon Europe programme and its 2nd Strategic Plan 2025-2027, in particular expected impact 8, related to realising the full potential of cultural heritage, and impact 21, related to advancing science for a fair transition to a climate-neutral and resilient society.[80] To that end, proposals under this topic should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Public funders of research and innovation actions, policy-makers and research communities are provided with a holistic and strategic research and innovation multi-annual programme of activities related to cultural heritage[81] and resilience (European Partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage, hereafter referred to as partnership), including challenges, expected impacts, outcomes, objectives, governance, and opportunities for cooperation contributing to the achievement of the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[82] and the targets of the Paris Agreement[83];

- Investments in research and innovation at the intersection of cultural heritage and climate change sciences are increased and better co-ordinated between the two fields of research through the sharing of findings, data, tools and methodologies across sectors for the benefit of the society as a whole. To this end, research-based policy recommendations will be proposed to policy- and decision-makers in different sectors of governance at national and regional levels, with a view to overcoming existing fragmentation in the European Research Area (ERA);

- Research funders, businesses, policymakers, cultural heritage professionals and research communities from various scientific disciplines covered by STEAM (natural and formal

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[79] Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ('European Climate Law'): https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R1119

[80] European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, *Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2024, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/092911, p. 8.

[81] Definition of cultural heritage mentioned in the Council conclusions of 21 May 2014 on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe (2014/C 183/08) and recalled in the European Framework for Action on cultural heritage: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5a9c3144-80f1-11e9-9f05-01aa75ed71a1

[82] SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being, SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 5 Gender Equality, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG 13 Climate Action, SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals.

[83] Council Decision (EU) 2016/1841 of 5 October 2016 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (OJ L 282, 19.10.2016, pp. 1-3); Paris Agreement (OJ L 282, 19.10.2016, pp. 4-18

sciences, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) and SSH (social sciences and humanities), as well as actors from different economic sectors will work towards common objectives and measures. The long-term Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for the partnership will aim to demonstrate the role and potential of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in advancing Europe's climate neutrality and green transition by providing innovative and traditional knowledge-based solutions;

- A significantly strengthened scientific knowledge base at the intersection of heritage- and climate sciences contributes to more effective climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. Policy-makers and various stakeholders, including local communities, should be enabled to learn and draw lessons from the past, design and tailor risk management to specific threats and the resulting challenges for the traditions and living areas of different populations, cultural landscapes and sites, monuments, intangible cultural heritage and other assets, such as museums, libraries and archives collections under their responsibility;

- European cultural heritage professionals and stakeholders will engage with a wide range of partners from the EU, Associated Countries and worldwide, in the research and innovation actions under the partnership to address the global challenges of climate change, deploy good practices and enhance cultural heritage transnational research, its societal impact and Europe's leading position in the field of cultural heritage and climate neutrality.

Scope: The challenge of cultural heritage lies in preserving and safeguarding a society's rich history, traditions, artefacts, and knowledge. This involves addressing issues such as deterioration, damage, theft, conflict, changing societal values and new challenges such as the climate change. In addition, it is essential to strike a balance between accessibility for future generations and respect for cultural sensitivities.

Proposals for the co-funded partnership on resilient cultural heritage must aim to enhance efforts to better understand and mitigate the effects of the triple planetary crisis (climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss), with focus on the impact of climate change on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, in line with the EU's cultural and environmental policies, embodied in the Creative Europe programme and the European Green Deal.[84]

The partnership will focus on resilience as the individual and collective capacity to anticipate, respond and adapt to situations where the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage becomes more challenging due to increased risks of loss and damage. At the same time, the potential of cultural heritage to support resilience needs to be harnessed, as cultural heritage has a strong societal, environmental, economic ,psychological and well-being dimension and

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[84] Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R0818; European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, *European green deal – Delivering on our targets*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/373022 ; Legal documents on Delivering the European Green Deal - European Commission (europa.eu)

contributes to the construction and preservation of individual and collective identity and acceptance of incoming changes.

Through its ability to bring together different stakeholders (e.g. research funders, cultural heritage authorities and professionals, citizens, innovators, policy-makers), the partnership will create a critical mass of resources to implement a long-term Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), building on the work of the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) Cultural Heritage and the ARCHE Coordination and Support Action funded under Horizon Europe 2021 call for proposals in Cluster 2. Proposals should build on existing knowledge, activities and networks, notably the ones funded by the European Union, to the extent appropriate. The input of other ERA entities such as HERA[85], CHANSE[86], the JPI Climate[87] may be considered.

Proposals should in addition take into account the findings of the first-ever European Climate Risk Assessment (EUCRA) report[88], which calls for decisive evidence-based actions to prevent lock-in in maladaptive pathways to address climate-related risks, such as in land-use planning and long-lived infrastructure. The partnership is expected to contribute to the Communication *Managing climate risks - protecting people and prosperity*, which requires improving the science base for future adaptation actions and aims to foster innovation and build resilience.[89] The partnership should also develop its activities considering the 8th Environment Action Programme Mid-Term Review as published in March 2024.[90]

Given that climate change is leading to an increase in the frequency, intensity and complexity of natural disasters within the Union and worldwide, the partnership should in addition contribute to achieving the objectives of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism[91], which includes a focus area on cultural heritage when protecting people, environment and property against natural and man-made disasters in a spirit of international solidarity, through practical cooperation and coordination.

The partnership should be implemented through a joint programme of activities ranging from coordinating transnational research efforts to other activities such as improving access to data and services, optimising the use of and services provided by research infrastructures, as well as networking, capacity building, training and dissemination activities.

In the preparation of topics for the partnership's transnational calls for proposals and additional activities, due attention should be paid to the gender dimension and the

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[85]   https://heranet.info/
[86]   https://chanse.org/
[87]   https://jpi-climate.eu/
[88]   European Climate Risk Assessment — European Environment Agency (europa.eu)
[89]   COM(2024) 91 final; https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2024:91:FIN
[90]   COM(2024) 123 final;
        https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0123
[91]   Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 924) and Regulation (EU) 2021/836 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 amending Decision No 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism (OJ L 185, 26.5.202, p. 1);
        https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/836/oj

intersectionality of grounds for potential discrimination such as disability, age, socio-economic status, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, etc., in order to be in line with EU anti-discrimination policy[92] and to achieve meaningful and significant outcomes that enhance the societal impact of the relevant activities. The advice of gender experts should be taken into account in developing mitigation and adaptation measures at the nexus of cultural heritage and climate change, in examining the functions of cultural heritage and related societal values, and in supporting sustainable development.

Taking all aforementioned priorities and references into account, the partnership should aim to:

- Build capacity by fostering fundamental and applied interdisciplinary collaborative research (SSH and STEAM) between the cultural heritage and climate research communities.

- Provide resources and incentives to conduct holistic research and nurture collaborative actions to drive the transformation towards more sustainable development, just futures and a healthier way of life and overall well-being.

- Create and disseminate new knowledge, techniques, skills, strategies and materials for sustainable preservation, conservation, and management of climate-related risks in the cultural heritage field as well as other man-made related risks.

- Promote innovations in industries and to provide scaled-up solutions and applications for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

- Develop a coherent methodology for obtaining reliable information, quantitative and qualitative data on cultural heritage and climate change, as well as on the costs and benefits of adaptation measures, with particular emphasis on processes and life cycles related to the circular economy.

- Improve long-term monitoring of cultural heritage through the use of innovative technologies and risk management models to document, inventory and predict the negative and positive impacts of climate change on and through cultural heritage.

- Integrate cultural heritage into mainstream climate change and environmental regulations, policies and adaptation strategies by operationalising heritage-based solutions and knowledge of the past.

- Provide policy recommendations to enhance social cohesion and the European sense of belonging through cultural heritage in communities and societies impacted by climate change.

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[92] *A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025*, COM(2020) 152 final, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152

- Encourage the continued conservation and preservation (through maintenance) by involving, educating and facilitating community participation, with a special focus on sustainability and a quality approach.

- Increase collaboration across countries and regions and to move away from a focus on individual geopolitical regions to overcome the fragmentation of the wide landscape of stakeholders, competences, resources, policies, programmes and initiatives.

The partnership is open to all EU Member States and countries associated to Horizon Europe and will remain open to third countries wishing to join.[93] Partners are expected to contribute financially and/or in kind, depending on the level of ambition of the proposed activities. The partnership should be open to new partners throughout its lifetime. Important note: the EU contribution will not be increased accordingly.

The partnership should include or engage with the following stakeholders: (i) ministries responsible for R&I policy, as well as national and regional R&I and technology funding agencies and foundations; (ii) ministries responsible for cultural heritage, education, environment, spatial planning and development, tourism, etc., as well as other relevant national and regional authorities, organisations and providers; (iii) research infrastructures such as the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science (E-RIHS); (iv) industry; and (v) charities and other non-profit organisations, for example of end-users of cultural heritage assets, active in safeguarding cultural heritage and/or in adapting to or mitigating the effects of climate change.

The governance structure of the partnership should implicate the relevant stakeholders in advance to coordinate, guide and mentor the research and innovation activities and facilitate the use and uptake of the results. The partnership's activities should give rise to ready-to-use solutions. The governance structure should involve key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the research and innovation community and cultural heritage professionals from sectors relevant to the scope of the partnership. In order to enhance the societal impact of the activities, the approach should empower citizens to contribute to the co-design/co-creation/co-assessment of research and innovation agendas/contents/outcomes.

To ensure coherence and complementarity of activities and leverage knowledge and investment possibilities, the partnership is expected to establish relevant complementarities with other Horizon Europe actions under relevant Clusters of Pillar II, partnerships and missions, such as "Adaptation to climate change – Climate-ADAPT", "Restoring our ocean and waters by 2030", "Biodiversa+", "Climate-neutral and smart cities", "Built4People", and the "New European Bauhaus" Facility.[94]

Proposals should be complementary to ongoing Horizon Europe projects to ensure the complementarity of deliverables and outcomes, where appropriate. Proposals should include a

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[93]   The Global Approach to Research and Innovation *Europe's strategy for international cooperation in a changing world,* COM(2021) 252 final

[94]   Working document on 'Coherence and Synergies of Candidate European Partnerships under Horizon Europe';

budget for the attendance of regular joint coordination meetings and may consider covering the costs of any other joint activity, without the prerequisite to detail concrete joint activities at this stage. The partnership will be encouraged to develop cross-fertilisation links with projects funded since the beginning of Horizon Europe notably under Cluster 2, following the call topics within the Green priority of Destination 2, topics relating to the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH) or projects such as those selected on the basis of topics HORIZON-CL2-2021-HERITAGE-01-01 – Green technologies and materials for cultural heritage[95], HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01-08 - Effects of climate change and natural hazards on cultural heritage and remediation[96], or HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-01: Advanced technologies for remote monitoring of heritage monuments and artefacts[97].

Proposals should also explore how to co-operate with other relevant EU and international actions and describe specific activities envisaged. They could propose to facilitate interactions and knowledge transfer with various economic sectors such as: cultural and creative sectors and industries (CCIs), agricultural and forestry policy, blue economy sectors, sustainable tourism, circular economy, infrastructures and construction, as well as society changes and transitions; urbanisation, spatial planning, regional growth, sustainable tourism development.[98]

Moreover, proposals should consider synergies with different EU programmes, including EU space programmes (Copernicus, Galileo) to foster the use of emerging or operational space technologies for policy development, and the Digital Europe programme.[99] Cooperation with the JRC may be envisaged, in particular for actions related to monitoring monuments, cultural heritage sites and cultural landscapes. The partnership should align with EU-wide initiatives on open access and FAIR data (findable, accessible, interoperable and re-usable).

The partnership should be linked to the European Institute of Innovation and Technology's Knowledge and Innovation Community - EIT Culture & Creativity as there is a common aim to scale up and widen to as many Member States/Associated Countries as possible a culture and creativity-driven European innovation ecosystem.

Proposals may include synergies between Horizon Europe and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes, including Interreg programmes, since Horizon Europe seeks to promote synergies with other EU programmes and to combine Horizon Europe funding with other EU, national or regional funding instruments in the same

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[95] https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/HORIZON_HORIZON-CL2-2021-HERITAGE-01-01/en
[96] https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/HORIZON_HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01-08/en
[97] https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/HORIZON_HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-01/en
[98] See above and European Cultural Heritage Green Paper produced by Europa Nostra in close cooperation with ICOMOS and the Climate Heritage Network, with the input of other members of the European Heritage Alliance, and supported by the European Investment Bank Institute and the Creative Europe EU programme. https://www.europanostra.org/our-work/policy/european-cultural-heritage-green-paper/
[99] Regulation (EU) 2021/694 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the Digital Europe Programme and repealing Decision (EU) 2015/2240 (OJ L 166, 11.5.2021, p. 1–34); https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R0694&qid=1623079930214

operation, project or initiative in order to achieve greater impact and efficiency (cumulative/complementary funding).[100]

To address the ambitious challenges in front of the partnership, cooperation with international organisations, the private sector and non-European institutions and experts may be considered. The participation of third countries is encouraged but their commitment to the partnership would not be taken into account for the calculation of EU funding. Applicants should describe in their proposal the methodology for their cooperation and the objectives they wish to achieve by joining the partnership.

Proposals should pool the necessary financial resources from the participating national (or regional) research programmes with a view to implementing joint calls for transnational proposals resulting in grants to third parties. It is expected that the partnership organises joint calls on an annual basis and will therefore have sufficient time to carry out the co-funded projects.

The total indicative budget for the partnership is up to EUR 60 million and subject to the effective implementation of the financial commitments made by the members of the consortium.

The expected duration of the partnership is seven to ten years.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-HERITAGE-02-two-stage: Innovative approaches to intangible cultural heritage for societal resilience

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025 - Two-stage	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 4.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions

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[100] Annex IV to Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe. - the 2022 Commission Notice on 'Synergies between Horizon Europe and ERDF programmes' (2022/C 421/03)(2022/C 421/03)(2022/C 421/03); - the 2014 Commission guidance document on 'Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes'; - the European Court of Auditors' Special Report No 23/2022 'Synergies between Horizon 2020 and European Structural and Investment Funds – Not yet used to full potential'

	under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025) [101].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to the following expected outcome:

- Policymakers are provided with a multi-dimensional overview and assessment of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) role in contemporary societal challenges and European social, economic, and cultural dynamics. A comprehensive analysis of ICH's potential for societal resilience and its contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation becomes available.

Additionally, proposals should contribute to at least two of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers (at all levels), public authorities and stakeholders have access to an array of innovative practices, strategies, and tools for incorporating ICH in community resilience planning, for ICH innovative safeguarding and for expanding community engagement with ICH practice, safeguarding, and communication. This includes awareness of gender dynamics in ICH practices.

- Innovative policies aimed at preserving ICH amid disasters, conflicts, migration, and population displacements are supported by data and knowledge.

- New methodological approaches and tools using digital technologies for documenting, communicating, and transmitting ICH become available. Community engagement with ICH, particularly among youth, crucial for sustainable and intergenerational transmission of living cultural practices, is broadened. The alliance between communities and researchers is strengthened. The involvement of education and heritage preservation institutions and agencies is enhanced.

- The sustainable use of ICH as source of inspiration for creative designs and practices, to spur sustainable development and provide a valuable resource to communities, e.g. for attracting cultural tourism, is enhanced. Measures to prevent overuse, inappropriate use, and depletion are strengthened.

- A future research agenda is devised for sustainable ICH practices respecting cultural diversity, human rights, and gender equality; cultural aspects of societal resilience will be addressed.

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[101] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

<u>Scope</u>: Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) includes traditions, oral histories, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, as defined by UNESCO[102]. ICH represents a repository of traditional knowledge and forms the backbone of a community's identity and continuity.

Societal challenges such as globalization, urbanization, migration, conflicts, disasters, and climate change significantly threaten the safeguarding and transmission of these cultural legacies. Additional threats include rural depopulation, an ageing society, and a growing disconnection between older and younger generations[103]. Research on ICH is dynamic but noteworthy gaps exist. There is a need for comprehensive risk assessments on the impact of societal challenges and climate change on ICH, including the erosion of cultural practices due to migration, displacement, or to a changed living environment.

A crucial under-researched area is the role of ICH in strengthening resilience against societal challenges and disasters and in fostering climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. Traditional knowledge systems and practices developed over generations by communities, including indigenous communities, and embedded within ICH, provide insights for sustainable natural resource management and adaptation strategies tuned to local ecosystems. This includes identifying natural hazard risks, disaster response, and post-disaster restoration of social and natural environments. Additionally, ICH practices such as rituals, storytelling, or traditional craftsmanship, help preserve cultural identity while enhancing mental health and quality of life, contributing to social well-being, community resilience, and recovery efforts.

In parallel, there is an urgent need for innovative approaches to sustain and revitalize ICH by fostering participatory approaches that actively involve communities, with particular attention to young people, whose engagement is key for safeguarding and transmitting ICH. Furthermore, strengthening research-community collaboration and involving the education sector are essential for co-creating knowledge and innovation with concrete societal impacts. Potential areas for exploration include innovative methods to promote and safeguard ICH, and bridging gaps in heritage roles, including women's contribution in the safeguarding and transmission of ICH. Advanced digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, can innovate support for ICH through sustainable documentation, safeguarding, and dissemination, including through immersive experiences, and respecting the balance between safeguarding and evolution. Consideration should be given to preserving audiovisual collections which serve as carrier of ICH and capture its history and evolution. Proposals might consider leveraging the digital platform and tools provided by the European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage[104].

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[102] Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (2003) https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention. Proposals may adopt a broader definition of intangible cultural heritage, supported by a solid scientific foundation.

[103] UNESCO highlighted in a visual the phenomena threatening intangible cultural heritage, grouping them into nine categories https://ich.unesco.org/dive/threat/?language=en.

[104] In addition, where applicable, proposals can leverage the data and services available through the research infrastructures included in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and the ESFRI roadmap and those federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that any data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

Leveraging ICH through sustainable practices can contribute to sustainable development. ICH reveals ways of living that are less resource demanding. For example, traditional building techniques can inspire sustainable architectural designs; centuries-old agricultural practices can inform organic farming; and traditional crafts, music, and folklore can drive innovation in fashion, product design, and the arts. By integrating intangible cultural elements into modern practices, communities can create globally resonant, high-value products while keeping their cultural significance. Cultural tourism, centred around ICH, can boost local economies, and foster intercultural dialogue. Maintaining the integrity of ICH and preventing depletion is essential, as is ensuring the sustainability and fair distribution of benefits from ICH among the community.

Proposals should consider involving communities bearing and practicing intangible cultural heritage alongside with researchers and other stakeholders. Proposals should build on existing knowledge, activities, and networks, notably those funded by the European Union. They should complement ongoing Horizon Europe projects and are expected to liaise with the European Partnership on Resilient Cultural Heritage (see HORIZON-CL2-2025-03-HERITAGE-01).

The Commission expects funded projects to regularly coordinate with relevant Cluster 2 projects (including those under the European Partnership on Resilient Cultural Heritage) to ensure complementarity of deliverables and outcomes, where appropriate.

DIGITAL

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-03: A European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage – Innovative use cases

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.50 and 4.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 26.00 million.
Type of Action	Innovation Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: If projects use satellite-based earth observation, positioning, navigation and/or related timing data and services, beneficiaries must make use of Copernicus and/or Galileo/EGNOS (other data and services may additionally be used).

Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [105].
	Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties to cultural heritage institutions, in take-up of tools, technologies and for populating and validating the relevant use cases through experiments. A maximum of 15% of the budget may be dedicated to financial support to third parties. The maximum amount to be granted to each third party is EUR 60 000.

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Findings from thorough end-to-end testing based on real use cases contribute to a seamlessly working, user-friendly, inclusive and powerful European Collaborative Cloud for Cultural Heritage (ECCCH).

- By documenting and communicating the use cases deployed, a wide collection of innovative uses of the ECCCH is elaborated, which contributes to exemplify and illustrate its benefits and attract new users and user groups.

- By identifying and implementing improvements and engaging with users, significant contributions are made for the ECCCH to be widely used by European cultural heritage professionals and researchers, enabling new ways to interact, cooperate and co-create, thus supporting the generation of new knowledge and opening of new research paradigms.

Scope: This topic aims at implementing real use cases and carrying out demanding end-to-end testing of the platform and its tools, in order to verify its capabilities and improve the ECCCH.

The activities carried out should focus on concrete use cases, undertaken by the participating institutions, professionals and researchers with a view to improve their results or work processes.

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[105]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

The activities carried out should make use of several of the key features of the ECCCH, including the user tools implemented on it[106]. Such key features may include use of the advanced digital twins, of the large-scale cooperation and co-creation features, of the digital continuum or of the advanced features for commercial cooperation with, for example, cultural and creative industries [107] . Activities carried out may also focus on the seamless interconnection of the ECCCH with other related platforms such as the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage and the European Open Science Cloud. Proposals should outline a focus of the planned activities that best achieve the expected outcomes, which may include some of the aspects mentioned.

Activities should involve a wide range of different organisations from across Europe, in accordance with the focus chosen. Entities from at least five different Member States or Associated Countries should be involved as active users of the ECCCH platform. Also, entities of different characteristics should be involved, such as small and large organisations, from different subsectors/areas of activity or scientific disciplines, etc.

The activities carried out and the results generated should be properly documented so as to serve as a good base for improvements or corrections of the platform and/or of the user tools implemented on it, and also for communicating innovative uses of the ECCCH. Contributions should be made to extend the user base of the ECCCH by promoting use cases and outreach activities, possibly together with or coordinated with other ECCCH projects.

Projects funded under this topic may build on testing or other activities carried out by other ECCCH projects, but must not duplicate activities that are funded under other ECCCH projects. Activities should add new value to the ECCCH. Therefore, projects funded under this topic should coordinate closely with previously funded ECCCH projects and provide for sufficient flexibility so as to avoid duplication and ensure that the activities carried out offer important contributions to validate and improve the platform.

Proposals should foresee own capacity to implement important improvements and fix problems detected. Such modifications or extensions of the ECCCH platform functionality should be carried out in accordance with the data model and the software development and documentation guidelines of the ECCCH, established by the project funded under topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01 [108] . All software and other related deliverables should be compliant with the guidelines elaborated by the project funded under topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01, and should be implemented in compliance with the design of the ECCCH, using the low-level libraries established by the project funded under topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01.

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[106] For an orientation of the range of user tools being developed, please refer to the previous ECCCH call topics in the Horizon Europe Cluster 2 Work Programmes 2023 and 2024.

[107] The key features of the ECCCH are further explained in the Destination introduction text and in the 'Report on a European collaborative cloud for cultural heritage - Ex – ante impact assessment' available here:
https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/90f1ee85-ca88-11ec-b6f4-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

[108] See further https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101157364

All software developed should be open source, licensed under a CC0 public domain dedication or under an open-source licence as recommended by the Free Software Foundation [109] and the Open-Source Initiative [110]. If the use of open source software components would require disproportional efforts or significantly diminish the quality or performance of the software, proprietary components may be used provided that: An open functional replacement is available; they do not introduce proprietary data formats or Application Programming Interfaces; a full user license free of charge for an unlimited period of time is granted to the consortium responsible for the ECCCH and all its users. Applicants should state clearly if all developed software will be open source, and if not clearly explain the reasons.

To the extent that data is produced, efforts should be made to ensure that it is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable). To the extent that new or modified interoperability standards need to be developed for data sharing within and across data ecosystems, these should build on the FAIR data principles and leverage already adopted practices, especially those in the relevant European common data spaces and in the European Research Infrastructures.

Financial support to third parties may be used to facilitate the engagement with ECCCH users beyond the project consortium. The financial support to third parties can only be provided in the form of grants.

In order to ensure good coordination among the different ECCCH projects, proposals should make provisions to actively participate in the common activities of the ECCCH initiative. Projects funded under this topic should coordinate technical work with the relevant projects funded under other call topics of the ECCCH initiative, and contribute to the activities and objectives of the project funded under the topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01. Proposals should include a budget for the attendance to regular joint coordination meetings, and may consider covering the costs of any other joint activities without the prerequisite to detail concrete joint activities at proposal stage.

Projects funded under this topic should set up their project websites under the common ECCCH website, managed by the project funded under topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-ECCCH-01-01.

The Commission expects the different projects funded under this topic to establish regular coordination mechanisms in order to ensure synchronised planning, as well as synergy and/or complementarity of deliverables and outcomes, where this is appropriate.

The Commission estimates that a project duration of approximately 2 – 2.5 years is appropriate for the projects funded under this topic.

Please also refer to the Destination introduction text to consider some key characteristics of the vision for the ECCCH.

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[109] https://www.gnu.org/licenses/license-list#SoftwareLicense
[110] https://opensource.org/licenses

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-04: Leveraging artificial intelligence for creativity-driven innovation

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 4.00 and 5.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 15.00 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [111].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to at least three of the following expected outcomes:

- Policy makers, Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)[112] and other stakeholders gain insights into the impact of AI, including, but not limited to, generative AI, on artists, creatives, cultural professionals, creative businesses and on the market for cultural and creative goods and services, as well as on the future of creative work.

- Policy makers, research (including SSH disciplines), education, industry, and society benefit from robust, evidence-based policy recommendations and concrete solutions promoting a mutually beneficial interplay between CCI and AI. These policy

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[111] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[112] "Cultural and creative industries are those industries that are based on cultural values, cultural diversity, individual and/or collective creativity, skills and talent with the potential to generate innovation, wealth and jobs through the creation of social and economic value, in particular from intellectual property; they include the following sectors relying on cultural and creative inputs: architecture, archives and libraries, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, software and video games, and multimedia and recorded music), cultural heritage, design, creativity-driven high-end industries and fashion, festivals, live music, performing arts, books and publishing (newspapers and magazines), radio and visual arts, and advertising" European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2016 on a coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries (2016/2072(INI))

recommendations and solutions aim for a fairer marketplace that fosters transparency, fairness, non-discrimination, diversity, and accountability by design, while respecting artistic freedom.

- Policy makers, the CCI, and stakeholders are provided with case studies and evidence-based policy recommendations to harness the CCI' potential for AI innovation and promote human-centric, unbiased AI applications.

- Frameworks, protocols, and tools for managing intellectual property and personality rights in AI development, training, and use, addressing unauthorised data use and legal breaches, are available to CCI and public authorities.

- Mechanisms or platforms, such as CCI-led competence centres or hubs, are proposed to facilitate interaction among artists, creatives, AI specialists, cultural institutions, and creative businesses. These will facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences on AI-powered innovations and aim to develop new solutions that serve the needs of the CCI and society at large, ultimately enhancing creativity-driven innovation.

Scope: The rapid development and deployment of artificial intelligence are increasingly permeating and transforming economy and society, notably impacting the diverse and dynamic domains of the CCI which, notably, are predominantly composed of SMEs. This transformation offers significant opportunities for innovation, within the CCI and in the economy and society at large, and poses challenges including bias, ethical dilemmas, employment shifts, skills need, and issues related to data access, transparency, preservation of cultural diversity and respect for creators' rights.

To foster a culture- and creativity-driven European innovation ecosystem, it's crucial to understand and address these impacts, build capacity to steer development, anticipate consequences, and prepare the CCI with the necessary skills to thrive in the new scenario. Enhancing the capabilities of the CCI in this rapidly evolving landscape increases innovation potential at the intersection of technology, arts, culture, and society.

Initiatives at the crossroads between art, technology, science, and society, such as the EU's STARTS – Science, Technology, and the Arts – demonstrate the advantages of involving artists and creative professionals to advance innovation and develop technologies that resonate with individuals and reflect cultural diversity. Artistic skills like intuition, imagination, and creativity, which are challenging for AI to replicate, along with expertise in design, visualisation, storytelling, to mention just a few, provide fresh ideas and unique insights for creating human-centric AI tools that address specific challenges and are designed to be ethical, sustainable, trustworthy, culturally sensitive and enhance user experience.

To address the multifaceted intertwining between AI and the CCI, and to foster a sustainable, innovative environment, the following areas could contribute to this topic's expected outcomes:

- Explore the impact of AI - including generative AI, and emerging AI systems - on CCI markets and audiences, ranging from individual artists and creators to processes, services, products, and consumer interactions.

- Investigate AI's current and potential applications within CCI that enhance creativity, innovation, and competitiveness.

- Focus on AI integration in those cultural and creative industries where it is most disruptive or most needed to optimise processes and reap business opportunities, identifying key risks, changes in employment and job profiles, and the need for upskilling, reskilling, and capacity building.

- Develop a sound understanding of how the intersection of CCI and AI can drive innovation both within the CCI and across other sectors, promoting business processes that respect and promote cultural diversity, foster the discoverability of European content and protect and reward human creativity.

- Investigate the underexplored potential of creativity and the arts to engage with AI developments and collaborate with AI specialists and third parties when appropriate. This can aim to design trustworthy, ethical, user-friendly intelligent systems that meet people's needs, enhance user experience, safeguard cultural diversity, address biases (including biases towards gender, sex, age, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, and migrant status) boost CCI's competitiveness, and promote societal adoption of AI.

- Develop pilots, guidance, and innovative toolkits, including use cases, checklists, and algorithms, addressing CCI needs and values, cultural diversity, and the protection of intellectual property rights, including copyright and related rights.

- Facilitate interaction among artists and creatives, AI developers, cultural institutions, creative businesses, and third parties as appropriate, to promote knowledge transfer and enhance AI-powered innovation in CCI.

- Provide mechanisms or platforms for collaborations, peer learning, and knowledge sharing to build capacity and foster creativity-led innovation, while integrating humanistic perspectives into AI through dialogues that blend creativity and the arts with AI communities within research, policy, and practice.

- Assess the role cultural organisations can play in training AI systems in their areas of competence to represent multilingualism and cultural diversity in digital environments and to foster accessibility, and the extent to which AI contributes to their value creation, enhancing traditional methods and practices and personalising engagement with their public.

- Devise strategic recommendations for policies and practices that foster a mutually beneficial relationship between AI and CCI, propose fair rights management solutions and address employment, skills, and innovation challenges.

Proposals should involve from the outset representatives from the CCI, including the arts and cultural heritage, to ensure their central role in activity development. Proposals need not cover all CCI but may focus on a specific area for thorough analysis to develop a strong knowledge base and highlight strategic directions and routes to improvement.

Proposals should, to the extent appropriate, build on existing knowledge, activities, and networks, especially those funded by the European Union. They should seek complementarities with relevant projects funded under Horizon Europe Clusters 2 and 4[113] and explore synergies with projects dealing with AI and the cultural and creative sectors and industries, funded by other EU programmes like Creative Europe, and Digital Europe.[114]

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-05: Evolution of culture in a virtualising world

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.50 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [115].

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[113] For example: HORIZON-CL2-2024-HERITAGE-01-03: Leverage the digital transition for competitive European cultural and creative industries; HORIZON-CL2-2024-HERITAGE-01-02 and HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-02: Cultural and creative industries for a sustainable climate transition; HORIZON-CL4-2021-HUMAN-01-24 - Tackling gender, race and other biases in AI.

[114] Proposals can leverage the data and services available through the research infrastructures included in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and the ESFRI roadmap and those federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces, including the common European data space for cultural heritage. They could also explore digital infrastructures, including the Alliance for Language Technologies European Digital Infrastructure Consortium (ALT-EDIC). Any data produced in the context of this topic should be FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

[115] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- A deepened understanding is developed and made available to researchers (including from SSH disciplines), policy-makers and industry professionals of the possible key long-term impacts on culture[116] when citizens spend ever more time and experience an ever-larger share of life events in virtual worlds[117], including benefits and risks in relation to human wellbeing, European values, social cohesion and cultural and linguistic diversity.

- Research and knowledge-based measures with a long-term view are developed and put in practice that guide development towards realising the opportunities linked to the virtualisation of life while mitigating the most important threats.

- Significant contributions are made towards making Europe a global leader in virtual worlds that contribute to wellbeing, social cohesion and resilience in addition to competitiveness and growth.

<u>Scope</u>: As technology improves, attractive content is developed and virtual worlds become more accessible, European citizens will spend ever more time and experience an ever larger share of important life events in virtual and blended environments. Leading multinational companies as well as the European Union are making great efforts to accelerate this development, whereby it is the ambition of the European Union to create a thriving and world-leading European industrial ecosystem for virtual worlds[118].

As life thus becomes ever more virtualised, in the long term this will inevitably lead to drastic changes in perceptions, beliefs, behaviours and values. Culture will evolve; possibly new elements of culture will be born while old ones disappear. Creativity, cultural production and access to culture will have an ever-greater virtual component, changing the playing field for cultural heritage institutions as well as for cultural and creative industries. European creators will have new ways to create, promote and disseminate European cultural content and engage widely with new audiences.

The development towards virtualisation of life is not entirely new. For instance, gaming communities exist since many years, where members spend large parts of their lives online, and where virtual economic and social ecosystems can be said to have evolved. However, the scale and breadth of the virtualisation of most aspects of human life that is to come will have cultural impacts many orders of magnitude stronger than has been experienced thus far.

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[116] In the context of this topic, 'culture' should be understood in a holistic sense, along the definition proposed by UNESCO in 2001: "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs"

[117] In the context of this topic, 'virtual worlds' should be understood as persistent, immersive environments, based on technologies including 3D and extended reality, which make it possible to blend physical and digital worlds in real time, in line with the Communication COM(2023) 442 'An EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds: a head start in the next technological transition'

[118] See for instance the above mentioned COM(2023) 442 'An EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds: a head start in the next technological transition'

It is therefore of great importance to deepen our knowledge and understanding of the long-term effects on culture when people spend ever more time in virtual and blended environments - for work, entertainment, playing, studying, socialising, etc. Research should explore both benefits and risks in depth, based on a thorough understanding of what is realistically possible and probable in a long-term perspective. Key opportunities and threats should be identified in relation to the EU's ambition to strengthen human wellbeing, sense of purpose and agency, as well as social cohesion, resilience and growth.

Based on research findings and scientific knowledge, projects should furthermore develop measures that would help realise the opportunities of cultural evolution in virtual and blended worlds, and mitigate the most important threats. Projects should, to the extent reasonably possible, make sure that findings and proposed measures are valid and feasible across the cultural diversity of Europe.

Proposals are not expected to address all aspects of the virtualisation of life, but should choose a focus that has the potential to bring decisive benefits, and should make sure to analyse these areas with sufficient depth to create a solid knowledge base.

Proposals should, to the extent appropriate, build on existing knowledge, activities and networks, notably the ones funded by the European Union. In particular, projects may want to establish links to the future European Partnership on Virtual Worlds, and may want to build on findings developed by relevant past and/or ongoing Horizon Europe projects[119].

INNOVATIVE

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-06: Europe as a global powerhouse of design for sustainable competitiveness

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.50 and 4.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 13.50 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions

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[119]   Such as project 'OPENVERSE': https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101135701

	under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [120].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Enhanced and updated understanding of the European design [121] sector and design professionals, including its cross-sectoral relevance for innovation and key strengths, opportunities and challenges, is made available to scientists, policy makers, designers, private companies and other key stakeholders.

- Methods, techniques and applications based on research and knowledge that enable the European design sector and design professionals to stay at the forefront of design for sustainable competitiveness[122] are developed and put into practice.

- Significant contributions are made to boost Europe as a global powerhouse of design for sustainable competitiveness.

Scope: Innovation and competitiveness are driven to an ever-greater degree by cultural dimensions and creativity. Successful new digital and physical products and services need to be not only functional but also appealing and attractive, adapted to cultural traits and market needs.

The process of creating or adapting products, services, processes or business models to human needs and desires, commonly called design, is key not only for competitiveness but also for environmental sustainability and cultural affirmation. It is widely acknowledged that the environmental impact of a product is largely determined at the design stage. The same also holds for digital products or services.

Building on Europe's world-renowned cultural heritage, well-educated and talented workforce, craftmanship and strong creative traditions, European design is in many ways considered world leading. Large parts of the European economy rely on top-notch design for competitiveness, such as for instance luxury and high-end goods, fashion or the automotive

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[120] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[121] In the context of this topic, 'design' should be understood as the process of devising or adapting products, services or organisational and business models to the needs and desires of humans.As a reference, applicants may also refer to the scope of specialised design activities and professions as identified by Eurostat under the NACE classification Revision 2.1 (Regulation 2023/137)

[122] Sustainable competitiveness builds on productivity growth, environmental sustainability, macroeconomic stability and fairness. See for instance COM(2023) 168 final 'Long-term competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030'

industry. It is estimated that design-intensive industries employ around 27 million persons in the EU, representing around 13% of total employment and more than 15% of GDP[123].

Despite its outsize importance for future prosperity and societal and planetary wellbeing, design and its role in driving innovation and competitiveness have not been sufficiently researched. While being one of Europe's key competitive strengths, the European design sector and design professionals are structurally vulnerable and face a challenging pace of drastic changes. For instance, ever more powerful 'generative artificial intelligence' tools become capable of automating tasks previously requiring high levels of skills, while challenging new expectations in terms of reducing the environmental impact of products and services are added.

The challenge is to deepen evidence-based understanding of the European design sector and design professionals, and devise effective methods to strengthen the sector and make Europe a global powerhouse of design for sustainable competitiveness. Such methods may include new or adapted technological solutions, conceptual frameworks as well as innovative business models[124] and policies. The proposed solutions should to the extent possible be effective as well as economically and politically feasible and culturally acceptable across the diversity of EU member states and associated countries, as well as across different economic sectors. Thus, a wide range of stakeholders should be involved, in accordance with the focus chosen.

Proposals are not expected to address all aspects, subsectors or applications of design, but should choose a focus that can be expected to deliver a significant impact.

Solutions may involve the use of platforms or networks to facilitate sharing investments, facilities or competencies among actors. In such cases, established platforms, networks or clusters should be taken into account, to avoid duplication of efforts.

Proposals should, to the extent appropriate, build on existing knowledge[125], activities and networks, notably the ones funded by the European Union. In particular, findings and results from projects funded under the topics 'Cultural and creative industries for a sustainable climate transition' of the 2023 and 2024 calls of Horizon Europe Cluster 2 may be taken into consideration, and cooperation may be sought with the collaborative platform 'EKIP'[126] or its successor.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-07: Cultural Strategies for Peace: culture and creativity as catalysts for conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025
Specific conditions

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[123] See for instance European Union Intellectual Property Office, Report 'Women in Design' (April 2023).

[124] Such innovative business models may be based on 'circular economy' principles and design for circularity.

[125] For instance the work of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) working group of Member States experts on "Stimulating the green transition of cultural and creative sectors" might be relevant.

[126] See further https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101112111

Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 4.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 12.00 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [127].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all the following expected outcomes:

- Organisations active in diplomacy, culture, research (including SSH disciplines), and education gain insights into the strategic importance of culture, including cultural heritage and the arts, in the contemporary geopolitical context. They understand better how culture can be manipulated, instrumentalised, and even destroyed, to fuel conflict, and how culture, the arts, and tangible and intangible cultural heritage contribute to conflict prevention, reconciliation, preparedness, security and sustainable peace.

- Public authorities, international organisations, NGOs, and society benefit from the empirical knowledge base derived from extensive case study collection, analysis, and evaluation, and from the identification of patterns and best practices, offering adaptable models for integrating culture into sustainable peacebuilding, conflict prevention, preparedness and post-conflict reconciliation.

- Policymakers receive evidence-based recommendations and guidelines for innovative, sustainable peacebuilding strategies working with culture and aligned with EU principles and values.

- Mechanisms fostering ongoing collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers are established, to ensure sustained progress in culture for security, foreign policy, and sustainable peace, and to support continuous advancement and integration of knowledge beyond the projects' conclusion.

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[127] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

Scope: Rapidly evolving geopolitical dynamics place the EU amid escalating conflicts and emergent crises, requiring an innovative approach to security frameworks, foreign policy, and peacebuilding strategies. R&I actions can develop groundbreaking solutions for the future, fostering innovative approaches to security and foreign policy. Integrating culture, including cultural heritage and the arts, into these frameworks could contribute to long term peace and stability by preserving community identity and history, enhancing communities' preparedness to crises, facilitating dialogue, reconstructive learning, reconciliation, and social cohesion. International cultural relations need to adapt to contemporary and future challenges by leveraging innovative strategic approaches to culture to facilitate dialogue, promote mutual understanding, and address socio-cultural disparities fuelling conflicts. The arts and culture offer unique avenues for expression, communication, and trust, transcending socio-political barriers and fostering non-violent strategies for social change, while supporting the preparedness of citizens in case of major disruptions.

Addressing the innovative role of culture in conflict prevention, security, preparedness, resilience, and post conflict reconciliation calls for a fully interdisciplinary approach, drawing from a rich variety of disciplines.

Since 2016, the EU has established a policy framework for international cultural relations heading towards a comprehensive strategy[128] and initiating pilot projects, preparatory actions, and flagship initiatives alongside numerous ground projects. The European External Action Service Concept and the Council Conclusions on the EU approach to cultural heritage in conflicts and crises (2021) emphasize integrating cultural heritage protection into broader security and peacebuilding frameworks. Proposals should map relevant actions and initiatives led by European institutions, international organisations, individual States, and civil society organisations in Member States and Associated Countries, including those from partnerships in international cultural relations. Analysing these initiatives will build an empirical knowledge base, serving as models and inspiration, and provide insights into different approaches under various circumstances, enhancing understanding of what works best for specific purposes, as well as identifying gaps.

To pursue the expected outcomes, proposals might, by way of example:

- Identify successful approaches to integrating cultural heritage as a strategic asset into foreign policy and security frameworks. Explore the potential of cultural heritage as common ground for conflicting parties, contributing to social fabric reconstruction and long-term stability in conflict-affected regions. Examine intangible cultural heritage and traditional knowledge as sources for peacebuilding strategies, fostering people-to-people connectivity, cooperation, and trust.

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[128]   European Commission, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations", Brussels, 8.6.2016 JOIN (2016) 29 final; Council conclusions on an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and a framework for action (2019/C 192/04).

- Explore strategies and approaches at the intersection of art and culture, emergency management, and community resilience, with a view to increase preparedness before, during and after crises.

- Collect and analyse case studies of peacebuilding initiatives involving cultural and creative expressions and the arts, including bottom-up practices.

- Analyse current policies to identify gaps and opportunities for integrating culture and peacebuilding into security and development frameworks. Develop policy guidelines and frameworks to help policymakers incorporate cultural strategies into peacekeeping, security and social development agendas.

- Explore digital technologies for enhancing cultural exchange and dialogue in peacebuilding. Explore the imaginaries, narratives, and metaphors currently prevalent in the AI sector, and consider how the development of AI systems could be enhanced to better support cultural diversity, intercultural understanding, and 'digital humanism' to promote peace, safety, and fairness.

- Develop metrics for evaluating the impact of cultural initiatives on peacebuilding, preparedness, and conflict resolution. Conduct empirical studies to measure long-term benefits of these programmes on economic stability, social cohesion, and well-being in conflict-affected areas.

- Investigate how culture can be manipulated, instrumentalised and exploited to provoke conflict, including the tactical use of cultural identity and cultural appropriation to incite tensions. Investigate how cultural heritage of troubled pasts can be approached, providing new insights on how co-existence narratives of the past can contribute to reconciliation, reconstructive learning, and mutual understanding. In this respect, complementarities with topic HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-08 might be sought.

- Collect and analyse good practices related to leveraging cultural heritage, culture, and creativity to address societal challenges such as fragmentation, polarisation, rising extremism, migration, the refugee crisis, and regional and local tensions.

- Investigate how intersectional factors such as gender, age, citizenship, and socioeconomic status affect participation in and outcomes of cultural peacebuilding initiatives. Assess the differential impacts on various demographic groups and develop strategies for inclusivity. Evaluate the role of cultural institutions and practices in restorative and transformative justice.

- Conduct longitudinal studies to assess long-term effects of cultural interventions on community resilience, social cohesion, and economic recovery in post-conflict regions. Identify key determinants of sustainability of cultural peacebuilding efforts and consolidate understanding of how to sustain peace once achieved.

- Investigate the link between culture, cultural heritage, and sustainable economy, examining their effects on post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and sustainable peace. Conflicts damage local economies, leading to exploitation of natural and cultural heritage for sustenance. These activities, often illegal, may generate quick profits but undermine long-term economic stability.

- Establish sustainable collaboration mechanisms to ensure continuous engagement among key stakeholders, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, including in diplomacy, promoting robust and long-lasting exchange and cooperation.

International cooperation, as well as synergies with the Jean Monnet project HER-UKR: Challenges and opportunities for EU heritage diplomacy in Ukraine[129] are encouraged.

The Commission encourages projects funded under this topic to seek complementarities for stronger impact. Proposals should, to the extent appropriate, build on existing knowledge, activities, and networks, notably the ones funded by the European Union, in particular under the Horizon Europe framework programme[130].

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-08: Bridging historical past and future potential through conservation, preservation, and adaptive use of Europe's contentious and dissonant heritage

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 2.50 and 3.50 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 3.50 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.

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[129] https://www.kuleuven.be/her-ukr.

[130] Where applicable, proposals could leverage the data and services available through the research infrastructures included in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and the ESFRI roadmap and those federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply: The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [131].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all the following expected outcomes:

- Dialogues between academics, local authorities and communities are strengthened by a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda identifying trends, drivers, gaps and opportunities and highlight the added value for further research in this area.

- Academic researchers and practitioners (including from SSH disciplines) collaborate to apply tangible research findings in real-world contexts, addressing challenges posed by contested heritage, threatened by neglect, deterioration or abandonment.

- Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs)[132] and local authorities have access to innovative solutions to revitalise and reconsider contested cultural heritage to ensure its preservation, conservation, and adaptability for use while engaging future generations in tackling complex historical challenges.

- Policy makers and public authorities are equipped with actionable recommendations to tackle the lack of awareness on contested heritage, with a focus on education and sustainable cultural tourism as key areas for action.

Scope: Europe's rich heritage includes numerous objects, documents in libraries, museums, and archives, but also sites and cultural landscapes that recall complex and often troubled pasts. These heritage assets, often contested and frequently neglected or at risk of deterioration or abandonment, pose significant challenges for preservation, conservation, interpretation, and engagement. Gaining a better understanding of the dissonance and contestation surrounding cultural heritage assets is crucial not only for safeguarding memory and heritage but also for fostering historical understanding, cultural dialogue, and reconciliation on persisting dissonances.

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[131] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[132] CCIs as defined in the European Parliament Resolution 'A coherent EU policy for cultural and creative industries':https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016IP0486&from=EN

Proposals should explore the multiple perspectives on troubled pasts and their impact on cultural heritage, with a focus on heritage assets connected to colonial, totalitarian and authoritarian regimes which may be linked biased or discriminatory beliefs. By engaging with such complex and often painful legacies, proposals should contribute to a broader reflection on participatory approaches in cultural heritage governance. Proposals are also encouraged to adopt a gendered and intersectional approach to advance gender equality and build more inclusive societies. Furthermore, the interplay between culture and nature in managing cultural landscapes is also crucial, requiring a balance between human and environmental values to ensure sustainable preservation.

Proposals should establish a collaborative and multidisciplinary network of professionals. It could rely on expertise from given disciplines and fields, such as: anthropology, history, heritage science (focused on conservation and exhibition and museum curation), media and intercultural communication, political science and science education. Researchers and experts with thematic expertise in the field(s) of memory studies, war and conflict, decolonisation, post-totalitarian regimes, and/or intersectionality could bring an added value. The integration of cultural and creative industries and local authorities could contribute to ensure the real-world applications of this research network.

This collaborative network should develop a comprehensive Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the preservation, conservation, transmission, and adaptive reuse of contested and dissonant heritage across Europe. This agenda should identify trends, clear drivers, gaps and opportunities to highlight the added value of complementary research activities or initiatives in this field. The proposed consortium should have an active role in promoting critical dialogues on remaining controversies and their lasting impacts on contemporary societies. Proposals should provide an assessment offering policy recommendations for the documentation, revitalisation (such as better understanding preservation, restoration, transmission, and transformation) and adaptive reuse of dissonant and contested heritage assets to preserve historical and cultural values. The recommendations should support public administrations, particularly local authorities, and the Cultural and Creative Industries in managing contested heritage and engaging with local community.

Proposals should shape recommendations to leverage contested objects, documents, sites and cultural landscapes for educational and cultural tourism purposes, ensuring historical understanding, cultural dialogue, and reconciliation. To address the challenges posed by these heritage assets, proposals should integrate innovative approaches that prioritize sustainability and preservation for future generations.

Proposals could aim to develop educational programmes to target various audiences, including young people, local communities, and international tourists to ensure the engagement of future generations in tackling complex historical challenges. Pilot programmes could be implemented to assess the effectiveness of these tools and recommendations. Public bodies with an interest in supporting the long-term sustainable use of these educational tools could be involved in these efforts.

Recommendations for the integration of contested and dissonant heritage assets into sustainable tourism practices that respect their sensitive nature and contribute to the sustainable development of local communities, is another aspect that should be considered in the strategic agenda. Utilizing existing digital tools and platforms to promote virtual tours, augmented reality experiences, and interactive educational content, making these heritage assets accessible to a broader audience and enhancing visitor experience could be considered as an added value.

While shaping the above-mentioned Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, the proposal should identify key EU-funded projects contributing to this research area and suggest how to strengthen collaboration and networking in this field. It could also use results from existing evidence-based research, including insights from EU-funded projects. For that purpose, proposals are encouraged to network with and build on previously funded projects under Horizon Europe, in particular HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-04 Cultural heritage in transformation – facing change with confidence calls, HORIZON-CL2-2024-HERITAGE-01-04 Europe's cultural heritage and arts – promoting our values at home and abroad, Horizon 2020 or other EU programmes, e.g. Global Europe[133] as appropriate. Applicants are also encouraged to consider the services offered by the European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science[134].

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

International cooperation is encouraged.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-HERITAGE-09: Impacts of culture and the arts on health and well-being

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 2.00 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following

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133   https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/global-europe-programming_en
134   https://www.e-rihs.eu/

conditions	exceptions apply:
	If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:
	The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [135].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all the following expected outcomes:

- Policy makers at European, national, regional and local level from the health, culture, social care, relief/ humanitarian, youth and education sectors are aware of the impacts of arts and culture on health, well-being and social cohesion and are equipped with policy recommendations and with practical guides on to implement cross-sectorial policies and programmes in this field;

- Stakeholders from the health, culture, social care, relief/ humanitarian, youth and education sectors are aware impacts of arts and culture on health, well-being and social cohesion and are equipped with tools to implement cross-sectorial projects in this field;

- Research gaps in this field are documented and explained, and further the R&I implementation science (including in SSH disciplines) by presenting new scalable and replicable best practices;

- Policy-makers working in international relations/ cooperation are provided with recommendations for promoting EU priorities, culture and fundamental values abroad through the angle of cooperation in the areas of culture, health and well-being.

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[135] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

<u>Scope</u>: An Open Method of Coordination expert group is working on culture and health in 2024, building on the preparatory action "Bottom-up Policy Development for Culture & Well-being in the EU[136]" (2022-23)

There has been a major increase of research into the effects of culture and the arts on health and well-being[137], alongside developments in practice and policy activities in different EU countries. A recent example is the covid-19 pandemic, which challenged individual and collective wellbeing in an unprecedented manner. Its consequences – particularly in terms of mental health – have been felt long after the conclusion of the crisis in medical and public health terms. The covid-19 pandemic has showed that culture may play a profound and fundamental role in our lives. Moreover, the war of aggression against Ukraine has recalled the importance of culture and arts for the mental health of forcibly displaced people.

The Commission Communication "A comprehensive approach to mental health" recognized the contribution of culture to mental health and well-being of individuals and society, for example through culture-based social prescribing and the fight against stigma. The EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 recognises that "cultural activities have a positive impact on people of all ages and backgrounds, enhance people's quality of life and increase the health and overall well-being of individuals and communities. There is also a significant economic impact."

The objective of this topic is to reinforce and mainstream the foster cross-sectorial cooperation among cultural, health, social, youth, education and humanitarian/ relief sectors as well as researchers and academia of Member State and Associated countries. The proposals should include cultural and creative sectors at large and consider both the active and the receptive nature of cultural participation; a special attention should be given to analyse situations in which art and culture are disruptive for mental health or are polarizing, thus having an adverse impact.

They should:

1. Create a dedicated platform to enable policy discussions and exchange of knowledge on culture and well-being, as well as further increasing the connection between arts, culture, health, well-being and inclusion of all individuals into the society, particularly among the health and social care sectors.

2. Provide policy guidelines for implementation and evaluate mixed methods, arts and culture- based interventions that address one or more of the following areas (at least one intervention per area):

   o health promotion;

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136   Cultureforhealth.eu
137   The societal value of the arts and culture - Publications Office of the EU (europa.eu)

o mental health and well-being (with a focus on children and young people, but also including other population segments, such as working people suffering from burn-out);

o the ageing population;

o health and well-being of forcibly displaced people; and

o links between ill-health and patterns of inequality.

3. Create an evidence gap map of arts and health research and innovation within health promotion, illness prevention, trauma recovery, disease management, and/or disease treatment.

The proposals should collect new practices and policies, evaluate various types of art and culture interventions, in order to better understand their clinical effectiveness and their cost effectiveness. The proposals should develop convincing narratives from the point of view of arts and health economics, health policies and more widely, well-being economics. Well-being is considered here both from an individual and from a societal and community perspective, therefore social cohesion and inclusion should be considered a priority. Moreover, the proposals should allow to map existing research and innovation gaps, identify potential existing barriers and propose a mixed model for cooperation that will take into account participation at the local, national and regional level and the coordination of different sectors and stakeholders.

The proposals should include arts and culture organisations with experience in the area of cross-sectorial collaboration with the other sectors mentioned above.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

Destination Innovative Research on Social and Economic Transformations

Draft expected impacts:

Projects funded under this destination should contribute to the following expected impacts in the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan 2025-2027[138]:

- Strengthening social and economic resilience and sustainability

- Boosting inclusive growth and reducing vulnerabilities effectively

The expected impacts reflect the two-pronged nature of the destination. On the one hand, research funded by this destination will improve the understanding of how the macro drivers of change (technological change, climate change, new global trade patterns, along with migration, human mobility, and other demographic changes) impact society and inform policy makers on how to mitigate negative consequences and harness newly created opportunities. The results obtained should improve the understanding of the interplay between different drivers of change and their social, ethical, political, and economic implications. The improved understanding of these challenges and their economic, social, and distributional impacts will fill in the research gaps while also inform the design and assessment of policies addressing existing and emerging challenges, including in the areas of education, well-being and mental health.

On the other hand, research and innovation investment should be geared towards deepening the understanding of how ongoing changes impact society, with a specific emphasis on the key objectives of boosting inclusive and sustainable growth and effectively reducing vulnerabilities, poverty and inequalities. This knowledge should provide valuable insights to policymakers to design and assess policies that effectively address vulnerabilities while capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

Overall, the destination's activities will help promote the EU's inclusive growth, resilience, and fair transition towards climate neutrality, by providing solid analytical evidence to implementing actions related to:

- The European Pillar of Social Rights, and its Action Plan with its three ambitious targets (78% employment rate, 60% of population with yearly training, and reduction of the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 15 million by 2030)

- the European Education Area and its EU-level 2030 targets

- The Union of Equality policies and strategies, including:

    o the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, the European Accessibility Act (Directive 2019/882), and the European Disability Card.

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[138]   https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6abcc8e7-e685-11ee-8b2b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

- o The Gender Equality Strategy 2020 – 2025 and the Directive combating violence against women and domestic violence

- o EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025

- o The Strategic EU Framework for Roma Equality, Inclusion and Participation 2020-2030

- o The LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025

- o The Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-203

- The Communication on Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action

- The EU's just transition policy framework, in line with the 2040 Climate Target Plan, including the Just Transition Mechanism, the Social Climate Fund, and the Council Recommendation on ensuring a fair transition towards climate neutrality.

- The Council Recommendation on strengthening social dialogue in the EU.

- The European Child Guarantee

- The Council Recommendation on adequate minimum income

- EC Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health

- The New Pact on Asylum and Migration and its accompanying actions, initiatives and legislation.

Applicants are encouraged to consider, where relevant, the services offered by the current and future EU-funded European Research Infrastructures, particularly those in the social sciences and humanities domain[139].

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this research is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

To maximise the impacts of R&I under this Destination in line with EU priorities, international cooperation is encouraged whenever relevant in the proposed topics.

Research on socio and economic transformations funded by topics in the Work Programmes 2025-27 will build upon its predecessors in Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe and further push the boundaries of state-of-the-art knowledge. It will do so by further engaging with a vast array of stakeholders. Not only universities and research centers, but also social partners

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[139]   https://ri-portfolio.esfri.eu/
for example CESSDA - Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives

(trade unions and business organizations), civil society organizations, practitioners, VET providers, and SMEs.

The destination will rely on a carefully balanced mix of actions, to bring together the right mix of actors to achieve the highest quality research, while aiming at providing recommendations to policymakers at European, national, regional and local level that could have a beneficial societal and economic impact. In order to achieve this, it will maximise the feedback to policy and the dissemination and exploitation of research and innovation results and practices in the domain of social and economic transformations.

Proposals are invited against the following topic(s):

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-01: Tackling gender-based violence in different social and economic spheres

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [140].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Collect data and analyse the prevalence and impact of gender-based violence (GBV), including tech-facilitated GBV, in different socio-economic contexts and legislative frameworks, and provide policymakers at regional, national and EU level with recommendations to address it.

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[140] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Support employers, policymakers, practitioners, and civil society organisations in their work on the prevention, protection, prosecution, and provision of services in addressing GBV, including through promoting best practice sharing, mutual learning and education material focused on consent.

Scope: Gender-based violence (GBV) is a prevalent issue, with 1 in 3 women in the EU having experienced physical and/or sexual violence, 22% of women in the EU having experienced violence by an intimate partner, and 55% having been sexually harassed.[141] GBV has destructive consequences for individuals, organisations, the economy, and society as a whole. Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of that person's gender or violence that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. It can be sexual, physical, verbal, psychological, or economic and occur in different forms, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty. However, important knowledge gaps remain on the prevalence and impact of gender-based violence across different social and economic areas. For example, in certain sectors, occupations and work arrangements, like night work, healthcare, hospitality, social services, emergency services, transport and education, workers are more exposed to violence and harassment, although comparable, intersectional data is often still lacking in these fields.[142] While the restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in domestic violence, still little is known about the impact of the associated rise in teleworking on women's working conditions, including the safety of their working environment. Moreover, in sports, initial studies on sexual GBV showed that a significant percentage of female athletes in Europe are exposed to sexual harassment[143], but no comprehensive pan-European data is available on this.

Another research field, which requires further attention is the impact of tech-facilitated GBV, including non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit images, manipulated intimate images (e.g., deepfakes and other forms of generative AI), or child sexual abuse online, as well as the potential positive and negative use and effects of AI on GBV.

Therefore, proposals should look at gender-based violence in one or more of the following areas: 1) GBV in the world of work, 2) GBV in sports 3) GBV on online platforms.

Across these areas, proposals should take into account online and offline forms of gender-based violence, and consider intersecting factors, such as age, socio-economic and migrant background, disability, racial or ethnic origin , religion, geography, as well as gender identity and sexual orientation. Proposals should also address the role of bystanders and superiors in addressing gender-based violence and assess the availability and effectiveness of victim support. For data collection, proposals should make use of surveys, as well as administrative data, where available, to assess how public services respond to the needs of GBV survivors

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[141] European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Results at a glance, 2014.

[142] Violence and harassment in the world of work: A guide on Convention No. 190 and Recommendation No. 206 International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2021.

[143] See Recommendations and Action Plan from the High-level group on gender equality in sport: Towards more gender equality in sport. https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/684ab3af-9f57-11ec-83e1-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

and can foster a safe environment. Where appropriate, proposals should seek the involvement of law enforcement, prosecutors and judges, together with academia/SSH research to optimise input and uptake. For proposals addressing the world of work, the involvement of social partners is encouraged.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

The outcomes of this research will be particularly important in view of recent policy developments, including the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention, the EU Directive on Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, Commission Recommendation on integrated child protection to protect children from all forms of violence, as wells the ILO Convention no.190 on eliminating violence and harassment in the World of Work.

Synergies with projects under the DAPHNE strand of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme are encouraged. International cooperation is encouraged, in line with the Gender Equality Strategy for External Action (GAPIII).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-02: Historical and regional analyses of industrial transitions and their lessons for ensuring a fair green transition

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [144]

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[144] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link:

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Provide policymakers with an analysis of past and present industrial transformations and what successful policies and measures were used to combat their negative externalities.

- Improve the understanding on the mechanisms of regional responses (e.g. geographic mobility of labour) and provide policymakers with a set of recommendations for seizing the opportunities and smoothing the risks of the developments. Analyse and evaluate forms of collaborative and participatory approaches to the management and governance of transition processes, including through social dialogue and collective bargaining.

Scope: The geographic variation in the impact of the European Green Deal is crucially important. Even though the green transition will have a positive impact and will improve our societies in many respects, regions with sizable employment in coal mining or traditional vehicle manufacturing will be disproportionately impacted. The resulting labour market imbalances can be addressed by people's movements within and between countries and training and skilling policies adapted to regional contexts.

The current economic system favours urbanisation, with jobs and skilled labour now concentrated in large urban areas. However, many jobs needed for the transition towards carbon neutrality are not in the most urbanised regions. Further still, green jobs will not automatically be created in regions with declining industries (such as coal mining, traditional vehicle manufacturing, or maritime transportation ports).

One important field of research should be on mechanisms of geographic mobility of labour (of EU citizens and third country nationals), incorporating a gender perspective to understand how mobility patterns differ and influence workforce dynamics. This is particularly pertinent given the documented impact of gender occupational segregation on labour market outcomes.

Another important research avenue is firm adaptation. Much of the current research is focused on the closing of factories and the subsequent reallocation of labour. However, the great challenge of the green transition is how to prevent existing businesses from closing and to upgrade them in a circular, cost- and resource-efficient manner, and make them more competitive. There is, therefore, a need to study cases of successful transitions that may not involve closing of factories and the policies and practices that enabled them.

Past transitions can provide insight into how to handle economic readjustment in regions strongly impacted by the green transformations. The success of the green and energy transitions hinges on political feasibility. Research is needed to understand what drives feasibility across contexts and how it can be strengthened. Past transitions have forced regions and communities to diversify their economic models. In this regard, they bear many similarities to the green transition.

To ensure Europe will benefit from current transitions, proposals should employ a whole ecosystem approach and draw from a rich variety of (SSH) disciplines including history, sociology, economics, and geography. Proposals may focus on policies which favoured local job creation, upskilling, labour mobility, and business model diversification. Proposals may also focus on the experiences of workers to provide adaptation lessons for the current transitions. Another research perspective could be the role social conflicts and compromises linked with social partners and how these have shaped past transitions. Lastly, proposals may take into account other key megatrends such as labour-saving technological innovation or demographic changes and evaluate how those change in the context of past and current industrial transformations, and how these impact different groups disproportionately.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-03: Working time reduction: barriers, challenges, benefits and policy implications

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [145].

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[145] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

<u>Expected Outcome</u>: Projects should contribute to at least three out of the four expected outcomes:

- Deepen the understanding available to policy makers, employers, trade unions and other stakeholders regarding the impacts and implementation of the working time reduction, including its implications on social, economic or environmental outcomes in the society.

- Provide policymakers with recommendations on the feasibility of implementing working time reduction across all types of economic activity and occupations while promoting positive macroeconomic outcomes;

- Provide relevant stakeholders (e.g. social partners, SMEs, large companies and public authorities) with recommendations and data on the enablers and barriers to successful implementation of working time reduction, including at employer and employee level.

- Improved understanding of the potential of working time reduction to increase employment and inclusion in the labour market by activating underrepresented groups, including women, the elderly, workers with disabilities and others.

<u>Scope</u>: Reduction of the working time, understood as a coordinated reduction in weekly working hours concentrated into an extra free day per week without a corresponding decrease in pay, has existed in the economic debate for more than a century, yet much of its potential impact on economic, social, and environmental aspects remains unexplored.

Recently, various initiatives at national, company, and sectoral levels have been launched to test the employment and societal outcomes of these reduced working arrangements. Past experiences generally show some positive evidence on workers' well-being and wages, with marginal impacts on employment levels, but mixed outcomes regarding productivity. Yet, understanding the feasibility of working time reduction across different sectors and occupations is key to assessing its impacts on inequality, societal fairness, and overall economic growth. Moreover, the gender perspective and impacts on workforce inclusion in the working time reduction context is an area that is yet to be thoroughly understood. There is a wide range of environmental outcomes from working time reduction to be also considered, including energy costs and savings, energy poverty, and consumption patterns.

More insights are needed to understand the full battery of enablers, barriers, benefits, challenges, and policy implications arising from implementation of working time reduction, including at organisational level, across a diverse variety of sectors.

While feeding into the expected outcomes, the research project should assess the impacts of working time reduction along at least two out of the three axes: economic, social, and environmental.

These may include but are not limited to the following channels:

- Social impacts on workers, including well-being at the workplace, health outcomes (including stress levels), work-life balance, gendered employment outcomes, labour market inclusion;

- Economic impacts, including effects on productivity, employment, economic growth, hiring and staff retention, absenteeism, firm costs, overall economic demand, innovation;

- Environmental impacts, including on energy expenditures and savings, energy poverty, emission reduction, consumption patterns, sustainable lifestyles.

Applicants are encouraged to employ a variety of SSH research methods, including quantitative micro-economic analysis or behavioural and other experimental research methods.

Proposers may consider the data offered by European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences domain[146].

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TRANSFO-04-two-stage: Gender differences in career trajectories of parents and their implications for gender equality and family well-being

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025 - Two-stage	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the

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[146]   ri-portfolio.esfri.eu/ri-portfolio/table/

	Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025) [147].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders have better understanding of gender differences in career trajectories of parents and their consequences for gender inequalities in the labour market and within households.

- Policymakers, social partners, and other relevant stakeholders have better understanding of links between parental career- and childcare-related decisions, family well-being, and different policy/institutional settings.

- Providing policymakers with effective policy options that help reduce gender gaps in labour market outcomes of parents and support family well-being.

Scope: Gender differences in career trajectories of parents account for large shares of gender employment and pay gaps. This is often referred to as child/motherhood penalties for women (as opposed to child/fatherhood premium for men).

The research proposals should identify key gender differences in careers of parents and assess how they affect at least some of the current gender gaps in socio-economic outcomes such as employment, entrepreneurship, choice of occupation, pay, career opportunities, working conditions, (mental) health, or poverty risks. The research should take an intersectional perspective, considering that career trajectories of women and men also depend on other individual and household characteristics, such as household composition (e.g. single parents), socio-economic status, gender identity (e.g. LGBTIQ parents), migrant background or racial or ethnic origin.

The proposals should assess key positive and negative consequences of different career trajectories of parents for families, taking into consideration the diversity of family arrangements, age and number of children (with emphasis on pre-school ages), quality and stability of family relationships, the availability of economic and social resources, and family well-being.

The proposals should analyse key drivers of parental career and household-related decisions, paying particular attention to the division of unpaid childcare within households, social and cultural norms and stereotypes, work cultures in different economic sectors and occupations, and institutional and policy settings (e.g. childcare, maternity/paternity/parental leaves and other work-life balance policies such as flexible working arrangements or telework).

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data

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[147] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

The proposals should:

- Explore the use of longitudinal data from administrative or survey sources on parental careers and/or children's well-being;

- Explore both individual and structural drivers of gender differences in career trajectories of parents through quantitative models;

- Provide in-depth insight into careers of mothers and fathers, and their implications for family well-being, through qualitative research and case studies.

Within the broad scope of SSH research described above, the proposals are encouraged to pay particular attention to:

- Exploring how specific features of early childhood education and care systems (e.g. quality, availability or affordability) affect child participation and family wellbeing;

- Exploring how child/parent friendly workplaces and organisational cultures affect parental careers and family well-being;

- Quantifying economic costs of child/motherhood penalties;

- Reflecting on how child/motherhood penalties affect women from migrant backgrounds, for example in the context of migration flows following the Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine;

- Investigating the impact of heteronormative norms, discrimination, and support systems on LGBTIQ parents' career trajectories and family well-being.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-05: Improving fairness in the economy through a better understanding of undeclared and underdeclared work

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions

set-up of the Grant Agreements	apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [148].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Policymakers and social partners have insights into the scope and/or characteristics of un(der)declared work or actors involved in un(der)declared work.

- Policymakers receive actionable advice on policy measures effective in reducing the prevalence of un(der)declared work and/or its adverse social consequences.

Scope: Un(der)declared work, as well as the evasion of compulsory payments linked to workers' remuneration (e.g. bogus self-employment to avoid payment to social security schemes) hinder fair social market economy and reduce the sustainability of social protection system.

The proliferation of disruptive technologies, the increased presence of third-country nationals in the Member States, as well as rapidly rising living costs are leading to higher volatility on the labour market, including an accelerated rate of change in the characteristics of labour demand and supply, and new forms of employment such as e.g. project work in the gig-economy. These circumstances are conducive to growing inequality on the labour market and a spread of unfair practices, including un(der)declared work and the evasion of compulsory payments.

The SSH research activities are expected to have a strong multidisciplinary aspect. Proposals should contribute to advancing research on the scope, volume and/or characteristics of un(der)declared work in the economy and/or the evasion of compulsory payments linked to workers' remuneration. Subsequent research activities should contribute to our understanding of the causes and main structural drivers behind actors' willingness to engage in un(der)declared work and/or the related evasion of compulsory payments. Moreover, the research project should contribute to the evidence-based assessment of policies seeking to tackle un(der)declared work and/or the evasion of compulsory payments.

The geographical focus of the research activities should comprise a group of economies with a heterogeneous prevalence of un(der)declared work. The proposals are encouraged to consider the impact of disruptive technologies (e. g. digital platforms, cloud computing,

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[148] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

generative artificial intelligence) on the proliferation and/or changing features of un(der)declared work.

The proposal may:

- focus on methods seeking to address social desirability bias in public surveys

- focus on experiments and/or counterfactual analysis to advance the measurement of the impact of policy interventions

- focus on mechanisms of efficient cooperation among national authorities responsible for tackling un(der)declared work

- explore opportunities for the use of machine learning in tackling un(der)declared work

- explore un(der)declared work in the platform economy and/or in new professions created in response to rapid technological change

- focus on un(der)declared work among mobile workers

- insights from behavioural research into drivers behind un(der)declared work and/or the evasion of compulsory payments.

- explore the potential for social-demographic or other typologies of undeclared work

- aim at a establishing a more systematic link between un(der)declared work and taxation system or social security system.

- examine gender and social stratification variations in the nature of un(der)declared work (e.g., occupational segregation, motives, working time patterns).

Clustering and cooperation with other relevant projects are strongly encouraged.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-06: Evaluation and use of evidence in education policy and practice

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.

Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [149].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- New analysis and evaluation of education policy measures.

- Support use of SSH research evidence by education and training policy makers and practitioners.

- Enhanced culture of research and evaluation in education policymaking and among practitioners. Better understanding of the types of expertise and institutional settings that are more effective at informing education policies and practices with evidence.

Scope: The European Education Area[150] aims to improve access to quality education for all. The strategic framework for the European Education Area set the EU-level target: "*The share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%, by 2030*" (Council of the European Union 2021). The latest data (2022) suggest that the European Union average is much higher[151] than 15% and that pupils from low socio-economic status face a considerably higher risk of low achievement than their peers from high socio-economic background. Student performance varies widely, with differences at the student, school and education system levels. Improving educational quality and closing gaps in learning outcomes are important societal issues, and a major challenge for education systems across the European Union. There is a research gap in the empirical evaluation of education policies and practices and the understanding of the circumstances under which they are most beneficial. There is also a gap in the translation of scientific evidence into practices in educational institutions.

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[149] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf
[150] https://education.ec.europa.eu/
[151] Data from the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) are used to measure progress towards the EU-level target and the latest data (2022) put the EU average at 26.2% for reading, 29.5% for mathematics and 24.2% for science.

The action must enhance interdisciplinary collaborations among researchers in education and engage diverse educational research disciplines from social sciences, the arts and humanities. The action must include the perspectives of policy makers and practitioners who look at similar topics from different angles. The action should analyse policies in at least one level of education, with a particular focus on transitions from the previous level of education and to the next. Proposals may choose to analyse and evaluate general measures for all learners or targeted and individualised support in inclusive settings. Involvement of authorities responsible for the education and training policies is essential and should be ensured. The action should enhance collaborations to improve the access of researchers to administrative data and other types of data, including surveys of children and young people, to develop new research approaches and perspectives. Therefore, close cooperation with authorities and/or other institutions owning the data is essential and should be ensured.

The action should analyse and evaluate policy measures in their context, using a mixed methods approach including qualitative and quantitative methods. Proposals can include an experimental design, using e.g. small, randomized control trials and quasi-experimental methods (such as difference-in-difference or discontinuity designs) to test the effectiveness of specific interventions in different contexts. Proposals can also include participatory research approaches. Complementarities with the projects funded under the topics HORIZON-CL2-2023-TRANSFORMATIONS-01-05, HORIZON-CL2-2023-TRANSFORMATIONS-01-06; HORIZON-CL2-2024-TRANSFORMATIONS-01-10 and Topic HORIZON-CL5-2023-D1-01-10 are encouraged.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-07: Impact of the learning environment and the use of digital tools in everyday life on key skills and competence development

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:

Agreements	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [152].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Provide analyses of the impact of digital tools in everyday life on wellbeing and how children learn.

- Provide analyses and evidence-based recommendations on how to provide opportunities for high quality education that uses digital technologies in ways that support the wellbeing of the school community (students, teachers and school leaders).

Scope: Digital devices and tools are an integral part in the lives of children and teenagers as they grow. There is discussion about the impact of the use of digital tools in everyday life on children's wellbeing (cognitive, emotional, social) and development, but the evidence is often piecemeal[153] Proposals should investigate the impact that the expansion and normalisation of children's use of digital technologies (including generative AI) in everyday life has on their learning, at a time in their lives when literacy and numeracy skills are developing, and during adolescence.

Proposals may select different target groups to investigate how intersecting factors influence children's experiences with digital tools, paying a particular attention to age, gender, disabilities, digital exclusion of marginalised groups, and socio-economic status. In this context, proposals should investigate how the school learning environment can support learning and identify effective interventions to support children's social emotional and academic needs. Proposals should focus on primary and/ or secondary general compulsory education, and they could choose to address one or several age groups.

While educational institutions cannot act in isolation, students spend thousands of hours within buildings, and the same holds for teachers and school leaders. Sustainable Development Goal (4.a.) emphasises the importance of physical learning environment in

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[152] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

[153] For example, mobile phones or smartphones could have a potentially unprecedented impact on children's development, as the frequency of engagement is likely to be high. Possible impacts include for example cognitive overload, increased distraction, altering memory and learning patterns, impact on sleep duration and sleep quality, on wellbeing among adolescent girls and boys, on wider social activities, such as sport or cultural activities, or on leisure. There are also concerns that excessive screen time can impact children's social and emotional development, leading to debates about the quality of their interactions. Recent findings from the PISA survey highlight a negative correlation between leisurely digital device use at school and academic performance.

education facilities. Proposals could investigate the impact of learning environments on education outcomes and how its design responds to changes in teaching and learning.

Proposals should propose methods that address the complex nature of the topic under study, the existing data and the rapid changes in the technological landscape. Proposals are encouraged to use mixed methods approaches, and deepen inter- and transdisciplinary research in education (including from SSH disciplines), involving multiple perspectives, with the aim to improve learning and educational settings. Proposals can choose on which aspect of student well-being (cognitive, emotional, social) and skill development they focus. Proposals should include the voice of children and young people through active and meaningful participation and other relevant stakeholders as part of the data collection.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-08: Improving mental health outcomes for people in education, training and work

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 5.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 15.00 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply: Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [154].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

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[154]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Deliver scalable and replicable integrated person-centred interventions on mental health included blended ones, in a manner that they are transferable to the new contexts in education, training and work, and studying and comparing their impacts;

- Deliver integrated person-centred interventions to all segments of population and age groups, with a particular focus for the youth with mental health conditions to improve their education, training and work trajectories, in order to ensure all these people's inclusion into society;

- Provide relevant authorities, policy makers, key stakeholders and practitioners with viable tools to make evidence-based informed decisions for implementation to benefit mental health outcomes in education, training and work. This includes effectiveness studies as well as the delivery of data, including health economics data of the developed intervention(s) to further advance this policy area; and

- Provide quality evidence-based data to policy makers and research and innovation stakeholders to bridge the gap between mental health outcomes and related socio-economic transition.

Scope: In Europe, 84 million citizens ranging from the youth to ageing population of all socio-economic backgrounds of all genders, including vulnerable groups are suffering from various mental health issues in their everyday lives at home, at work, at school as well as in the virtual cyber-world. The mental health issues affect people in different ways and/or period(s) of their life course as well as the people who live, work and/or study in vicinity of these persons with mental health issues, and/or people who belong to their family, friends and/or social circuits.

The foundation of mental health is mostly laid in adolescence: half of all mental health conditions start by 14 years of age and most cases go undetected and untreated. The staggering figures show that the second leading cause for death of young people of 15-19 years is suicide after the road accidents.

Addressing and treating mental health conditions is therefore essential to improve the downstream impacts on education, training and work and future socio-economic outcomes. It also represents a long-term investment in public health.

Over the past years, many innovative solutions (supported EU Framework Programmes for research and Innovation and/or international, national, regional, and local initiatives) for tackling mental health problems have been developed. However, few interventions have been implemented at scale. There lacks evidence about the feasibility, acceptability and suitability of these mental health interventions at scale.

Building on innovative solutions supported by EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and/or international, national, regional, and local initiatives, the challenges of the topic are:

- to significantly increase / scale-up the percentage of interventions that are actually used, and

- to involve families, individuals/communities, stakeholders and authorities, such as public services, civil society organisations in the development and implementation of interventions aimed at heterogeneous segments of population

Additional evidence is also needed about to which extend mental health interventions are actually cost-effective and cost-efficient – looking via various policy perspectives, e.g. education, training, working life, well-being and health. This would aid policy makers to decide on which one (or a combination) of the policy choices to use when weighing up policy choices in investment for education, training and work- related outcomes.

To ensure replicability, projects are required to specify clearly how they target primary prevention (benefitting an entire target group), and/ or secondary prevention (provided for vulnerable groups and individuals with existing mental health problems). The project design and implementation should clearly outline and justify who they are targeting with what types of interventions and in what type(s) of contexts.

Special attention should be paid to the visibility and communication of the research and innovation findings to direct beneficiaries of the intervention and their families, communities, wider publics and stakeholders from the start of the work.

Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this call and other relevant projects is strongly encouraged. Considering the complex design and implementation of these projects, it is expected that projects may take 4 years or more to deliver solid evidence for take-up by policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders, which also justifies an appropriate budget per project.

Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-09: Good practices for increased autonomy of persons with disabilities, including physical, mental, intellectual and sensory disabilities

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 3.40 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.

Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [155].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to some of the following expected outcomes (minimum three outcomes):

- Develop innovative evidence-based policy approaches to promote the autonomy of persons with disabilities of any age and any origin of the disability or impairment.

- Develop practices that facilitate the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in different areas of life, including education, family life, employment, living arrangements, leisure, arts, culture and sport on equal basis with others.

- Address the seamless use of accessible and assistive technology, including digital technologies and artificial intelligence, in the community and related services and infrastructure. If possible, identify specific measures and tools for different addressed areas of lives of persons with disabilities, such as education, recruitment, hiring, return to work, and independent life.

- Identify and compare the usefulness of different options for policies and measures aiming to increase the autonomy and quality of life of persons with disabilities, as well as the quality of life and well-being of their families, using a person-centred approach, taking into account the individual needs of persons with disabilities and ensuring their full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on equal basis with others.

- Identify relevant actors to achieve effective results (public actors, civil society organizations, private sector, social economy actors, etc.) and explore their roles and interaction, with a view to assessing integration among different social, support and essential services (including e.g. transport or housing) necessary to promote autonomy and inclusion in the community.

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[155] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

Scope: The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[156] recognises the right to individual autonomy and independence for persons with disabilities, including the freedom to make their own choices. Ensuring this right requires a differentiated landscape of measures in all areas of society, including ensuring accessibility and quality person-centred support services.

Having affordable and community-based services and measures in place, which meet the individual needs of persons with disabilities, is a basic pre-condition for autonomy and independence. Social and support services and measures need to be inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities of any age and with any disability. The proposals may focus on a specific disability or address several of them. Research (including from SSH disciplines) should address barriers and solutions with regard to specific disabilities to increase inclusiveness, decision-making and autonomy, taking into account the integrated and person-centred support provided by families. The role of the family as carers and as the first agent to promote inclusion needs to be addressed. Different solutions for accessible and inclusive housing could also be explored.

A key aspect of the autonomy and independence of persons with disabilities is the access to inclusive education, training, active labour market measures and employment in the open labour market. Promising support practices in these areas should be mapped, analysed and tested, including the integration and communication between different services for a user-centred approach.

European Education Area initiatives such as the Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success[157] aim to address equity and inclusion in education. A wide range of actions and peer learning activities aimed at supporting inclusive education are also implemented, in particular through two European Education Area strategic framework Working Groups[158]: Working Group on Equality and Values in Education and Training and Working Group on Schools – Pathways to School Success.

The proposals should consider the impact – including the impact on the self-esteem of persons with disabilities – of inclusive education versus special needs education or special schools/classes for promoting the autonomy of persons with disabilities. The proposals may also consider the role of special training and lifelong learning adapted to persons with physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disabilities.

New and innovative ways of increasing the autonomy of persons with disabilities need to be explored and tested with the objective to reduce inequalities, promote their full inclusion in society in different areas of life, including education, family life, employment, living arrangements, leisure, arts, culture and sport, and improve their quality of life, as well as the

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[156]   Article 1 of the Un Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities: *Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.* https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities

[157]   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022H1209%2801%29

[158]   https://education.ec.europa.eu/about-eea/working-groups

quality of life and well-being of their families. This includes the use of assistive technology and other accessible digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) measures and tools to increase accessibility in society and overall communication, social participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The possible loneliness, impact on emotional well-being and inactivity status of many persons with disabilities needs to be addressed when designing approaches to increase their autonomy and independence. Moreover, the higher risk of persons with disabilities to be exposed to abuse, neglect (including self-neglect), scams and aggression needs to be considered, including when disability is combined (from an intersectional perspective) with other conditions which may be a source of vulnerability (e.g. age, gender, migrant status, discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin). Loneliness and other mental health issues (e.g. burnout) suffered by family carers or other informal carers may be also considered.

Proposals should include civil society engagement and dialogue, for wider input and uptake. Proposals are encouraged to seek synergies and collaboration whenever possible with projects funded under the topic HORIZON-HLTH-2025-01-STAYHLTH-01: Improving the quality of life of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families. Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-10: Intergenerational fairness in the context of demographic change in the EU

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of between EUR 3.00 and 4.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 10.20 million.
Type of Action	Research and Innovation Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply: The Joint Research Centre (JRC) may participate as member of the consortium selected for funding.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:

Agreements	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [159].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Enhance the understanding and engagement on intergenerational fairness among policy makers, researchers and citizens on future trends and drivers of intergenerational fairness in the EU through quantitative and qualitative analyses;

- Provide policy makers with scientific knowledge (including knowledge generated through SSH) and data for evidence-informed policies to address the drivers of intergenerational inequalities, tailoring interventions to diverse demographic groups, ensuring inclusivity across gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status;

- Develop an action plan to inform policy making, including a set of viable policies to adapt the European economic and social model to reduce intergenerational imbalances and help prevent them in the future, taking into account cross-policy synergies in terms of factors influencing intergenerational fairness.

Scope: Demographic trends over the last decade and future projections show that the share of the population aged 65+ is growing, both in comparison to the working-age population and to the child population. This is due to an increasing life expectancy and lower fertility and poses major challenges for intergenerational fairness and affects the implicit social contract across generations.

There is a growing need to provide an adequate framework for addressing fairness across generations (including knowledge on past generations, current and in particular future ones) related to education and labour market opportunities and outcomes, wealth accumulation and distribution of economic gains and costs, housing affordability, well-being and health, including environmental impact, role of institutions and public services, in the face of new challenges, such as ever-faster technological and climate change and changing public preferences.

- Proposals should provide in-depth analysis of at least 3 different drivers of intergenerational inequalities such as, but not exclusively, from the ones listed above, and the interdependence between them.

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[159]   This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

- Proposals should investigate intergenerational fairness, solidarity and trust through an intersectional lens, considering gender, family structure, racial or ethnic origin, socioeconomic and migration backgrounds.

- Proposals may have a regional and/or national dimension.

- Proposals may focus on developing and/or forecasting intergenerational fairness indicators.

- Proposals may draw lessons from recent policy interventions in EU Member States in a contextual and transdisciplinary manner and propose adjustment measures or test them through social innovation experiments.

- Proposals may focus on democratic participation and socially inclusive pathways to co-creating public values for current and future generations.

Clustering and cooperation with other selected projects under this call and other relevant projects is strongly encouraged.

Applicants are encouraged to consider the data offered by European Research Infrastructures in the social sciences domain, particularly SHARE (ri-portfolio.esfri.eu/ri-portfolio/table/). Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

Proposals should consider the involvement of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) based on its experience and with respect to the value it could bring in providing an effective interface between research activities and policymaking.

HORIZON-CL2-2025-01-TRANSFO-11: Migration and climate change: building resilience and enhancing sustainability

Call: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society - 2025	
Specific conditions	
Expected EU contribution per project	The Commission estimates that an EU contribution of around EUR 2.00 million would allow these outcomes to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of a proposal requesting different amounts.
Indicative budget	The total indicative budget for the topic is EUR 2.00 million.
Type of Action	Coordination and Support Actions
Eligibility conditions	The conditions are described in General Annex B. The following exceptions apply:

	If eligible for funding, legal entities established in non-associated third countries may exceptionally participate in this Coordination and support action as a beneficiary or affiliated entity.
	The Joint Research Centre (JRC) may participate as member of the consortium selected for funding.
Procedure	The procedure is described in General Annex F. The following exceptions apply:
	The granting authority can fund a maximum of one project.
Legal and financial set-up of the Grant Agreements	The rules are described in General Annex G. The following exceptions apply:
	Eligible costs will take the form of a lump sum as defined in the Decision of 7 July 2021 authorising the use of lump sum contributions under the Horizon Europe Programme – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) – and in actions under the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2021-2025). [160].

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Strengthen EU and national migration governance by developing a dynamic knowledge database and an exchange platform, for enhanced collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, promoting the integration of environment and climate change migration considerations-into EU and national policies.

- Develop a strategic roadmap that outlines key research (including in SSH disciplines) and policy priorities addressing climate change and migration and supports implementation measures.

- Develop policy recommendations to improve the EU's understanding and preparedness, and to enhance collaboration between the EU and third countries within the frameworks of relevant EU policies.

Scope: Proposals should develop a strategic roadmap that will act as a comprehensive framework for understanding the impacts of climate change on migration and its impact on future generations and outline key research and policy priorities in the context of environmental degradation, climate change and migration.

Having developed such a roadmap, proposals should develop a dynamic exchange platform with up-to-date information, to be accessed by all concerned parties, involved in climate change and migration including EU and national authorities, researchers, policymakers, and

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[160] This decision is available on the Funding and Tenders Portal, in the reference documents section for Horizon Europe, under 'Simplified costs decisions' or through this link: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/ls-decision_he_en.pdf

relevant stakeholders. This platform should be collaborative, user-editable, and community-driven, allowing for future updates and contributions from various stakeholders. It should act as comprehensive go-to place, a source repository, and a networking and coordination space, with a focus on integrating climate change considerations into migration policies. The platform should incorporate comprehensive data on migration patterns, including on international and internal displacements, on international destinations including neighbouring EU countries, and EU arrivals, and on climate change as a root cause or its interaction with other root causes, with the goal to inform policy decisions.

Proposals should identify gaps and set the groundwork for future research and policy initiatives. They should adopt an interdisciplinary approach integrating climate, population, and human mobility studies addressing the complex relationship between environmental disasters and migration intentions. They should encompass a broader analysis of vulnerabilities, such as internal displacements, how preexisting inequalities (e.g. social, economic, political, health, gender) are exacerbated due to climate change, and populations stranded in their countries of origin, aligning with EU's external policy frameworks for adaptation strategies[161].

Proposals should consider the involvement of the Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography (KCMD) operated by the European Commission's JRC[162] with a view to be sustainable beyond the lifetime of the project. In particular:

- the structure and the format of the platform should be decided together with DG RTD, DG HOME and the JRC, and it should be built and hosted within the web environment of the Knowledge Centre on Migration and Demography as part of its knowledge management efforts;

- the development of the roadmap is encouraged to be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, particularly including with DG RTD, DG HOME and the JRC;

- findings and recommendations should be translated in very concise policy briefs, preferably in coordination with the KCMD.

Proposals could identify local case studies to perform context-specific analysis and extract actionable insights and scalable solutions that could inform broader migration and climate adaptation policies. These local case studies could explore the impact of climate change in different regions and the phenomenon of environmental immobility, where individuals are unable or unwilling to move despite facing significant environmental threats.

The proposals are strongly encouraged to look into the findings of completed Horizon 2020 projects on forecast and foresight, particularly from the topic 'MIGRATION-01-2019 - Understanding migration mobility patterns: elaborating mid and long-term migration scenarios', and wherever possible build on their outcomes and methodology[163]. They are also

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161   https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/adaptation-climate-change/eu-adaptation-strategy_en
162   https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/migration-demography_en
163   https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/H2020_MIGRATION-01-2019/en

encouraged to build on the deliverables of project INNOVATE[164] and of relevant projects of Destination "Effective management of EU external borders" of Horizon Europe Cluster's 3/Horizon 2020' SC7, such as projects ITFLOWS[165], CRITERIA[166], MIRROR[167] and PERCEPTIONS[168], as well as the relevant use cases and pilots conducted as part of the Destination Earth initiative[169].

Proposals should consider incorporating in the platform the data provided by European Research Infrastructures, such as the European Social Survey[170] or other Research Infrastructures dealing with climate change and environment. Where applicable, proposals should leverage the data and services available through European Research Infrastructures federated under the European Open Science Cloud, as well as data from relevant Data Spaces. Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the data produced in the context of this topic is FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable).

The selected project should produce a range of feasible policy recommendations. These recommendations should be based on evaluations of existing EU humanitarian aid, development and migration policies and drafted as policy options that are directly actionable , include cost considerations and explicitly recommend additions or modifications of current EU strategies, regulations, and directives. The option of non-action should also be elaborated. The recommendations should be firmly embedded in EU values such as respect for human dignity, gender and age equality, and fundamental rights.

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[164] Beneficiary of the topic HORIZON-CL2-2023-TRANSFORMATIONS-01-04: Bridging the migration research to policy gap https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101132593
[165] https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/882986
[166] https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101021866
[167] https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/832921
[168] https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/833870
[169] https://destination-earth.eu/
[170] ri-portfolio.esfri.eu/ri-portfolio/table/

OTHER ACTIONS not subject to calls for proposals

Public procurements

1. Studies, conferences, events and outreach activities

A number of specific contracts will be signed under existing framework contracts in order to: (i) support the dissemination and exploitation of project results; (ii) contribute to the definition of future challenge priorities; (iii) undertake citizen surveys such as Eurobarometers, (iv) carry out specific evaluations of programme parts; and (v) organise conferences, events and outreach activities. Should existing framework contracts prove unsuitable or insufficient to support the abovementioned activities, one or more calls for tender may be launched as appropriate.

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged: studies, technical assistance, conferences, events and outreach activities within the scope of Cluster 2 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society'.

Form of Funding: Procurement

Type of Action: Public procurement

Indicative timetable: 2025

Indicative budget: EUR 1.00 million from the 2025 budget

Other budget implementation instruments

1. Mobilisation of research funds in case of Emergencies 2025

This action will only be used in case of exceptional and duly substantiated emergencies as described in the scope section of the action.

Expected Impact: Proposals should set out a credible pathway to contributing to one or several expected impacts of the 3 destinations of Cluster 2 'Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society'.

Expected Outcome: Projects should contribute to at least one of the following expected outcomes: Allow the Union to respond to emergencies in the field of:

- Democracy and governance, especially in the field of the rule of law, extremism, racism and/or foreign interference to democratic processes of the EU, its Member States, EU Neighbourhood and Candidate countries;

- Cultural heritage, cultural and creative sectors and industries, especially the protection of cultural heritage, provenance research and fight of illicit trafficking of cultural goods;

- Social and economic transformations, especially economic and financial shocks and unprecedented pressures on global supply chains, labour markets and social protection systems;

- Migration, refugee and asylum policies, especially unforeseen humanitarian crises caused by sudden migration and refugee flows and displacement of civil population.

Scope: Future emergencies, such as potential new, unexpected consequences of the unprovoked military aggression and invasion of Ukraine by Russia[171], , consequences of other conflicts in Europe and its vicinity, or major events with societal impact (including, but not limited to, public health and climate-related ones), require the urgent mobilisation of Cluster 2 Research and Innovation stakeholders in order to assist European policy and decision-making with evidence, analysis and policy options, therefore funding will be mobilised for:

- The award of grants without a call for proposals according to Article 198 (b) of the EU Financial Regulation[172] in exceptional and duly substantiated emergencies. At that time, the Funding & Tenders Portal will open a dedicated section where proposals can be submitted. This will be communicated to the National Contact Points. The invitation to apply for funding will be open to all eligible entities or be limited to targeted entities, taking into account the need to achieve the underlying objectives in a quick and efficient manner considering the exceptional circumstances.

Specific conditions:

- In order to ensure a balanced portfolio covering, grants will be awarded to applications not only in order of ranking, but also to those projects that enhance the quality of the project portfolio through synergies between projects and avoidance of overlaps, provided that the applications attain all thresholds.

- The action may also include justified derogations from the standard limits to financial support to third parties. Where applicable, the relevant grant agreement options will be applied.

Form of Funding: Grants not subject to calls for proposals

Type of Action: Grant awarded without call for proposals according to Financial Regulation Article 198 (b)

The general conditions, including admissibility conditions, eligibility conditions, award criteria, evaluation and award procedure, legal and financial set-up for grants, financial and operational capacity and exclusion, and procedure are provided in parts A to G of the General Annexes.

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[171]   Condemned on a global scale by the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States in the Resolution of the UN General Assembly of 2 March 2022 (UN GA Resolution ES 11/1) and addressed by European Commission Communications COM(2022) 107 final and COM(2022) 131 final.

[172]   Article 198(b) of the Financial Regulation "Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals only in the following cases: […] (b) in other exceptional and duly substantiated emergencies;".

Indicative timetable: Will depend on the emergency

Indicative budget: EUR 3.00 million from the 2025 budget

Indirectly managed actions

1. Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) Phase 4

Expected Outcome: the project is expected to contribute to all of the following expected outcomes:

- Creation of new knowledge and expanding the horizon for public sector innovation: The project will significantly expand the frontier of public sector innovation knowledge with first-hand, in-depth research on emerging innovative approaches to tackle public challenges (from twin transitions to leveraging AI for public good) and will support governments with the application of that knowledge in internal government policy, service processes and practices.

- From theory to practice: The project will support governments in the creation of organizational frameworks, ways of working, rules, processes, coordination, and capabilities conducive to sustaining innovation within government administrations; preparation for anticipatory governance and adaptation to emerging challenges through innovative internal working methods, action research, and capability-building.

- Fostering multi-party collaboration and strengthening the network: The project will foster multi-party collaborative projects among networks of governments to build new knowledge, share good practices and jointly develop practical guidance for public sector innovation. OPSI will convene and facilitate high-level strategic reflections and extend existing networks by intensifying collaborations via common shared research and online tools, deepening the reach of innovation into core professional communities (such as policymakers and regulators, analysts, auditors, budget officials, etc) within national government administrations. The project will further expand and connect the public sector innovation community inside governments at EU, national, and sub-national levels.

- Taking stock of national governments' internal innovation efforts: The project will help expand the understanding of how national governments in the EU and Horizon Europe Associated Countries promote and facilitate innovation in their government through e.g. more granular mapping, policy-relevant and easy-accessible comparative data. This support will be aimed at producing a comparative outlook on public sector innovation in the EU and Horizon Europe Associated Countries as regards their internal innovation efforts, new governance practices, working methodologies, innovative policymaking practices (e.g. through experimentation, systems approaches, etc.). By engaging with the broader innovation system, governments will become better equipped to develop effective public policies, responsive public services, and co-create solutions to pressing societal challenges.

<u>Scope:</u> In this new era of rapidly emerging disruptive technologies, climate change, and mounting geopolitical, economic and societal pressures, governments are facing multiple, simultaneous challenges, and changes at national and global level. Governments must evolve to meet these multifaceted challenges, fostering resilience and adaptability through internal innovation efforts and positively impactful public sector reforms. This evolution will reshape administrative structures, redefine collaboration with other ecosystem players, and transform resource management and operational strategies—and it needs to be done while building trust and democratic legitimacy with constituents. It is essential to provide a framework for governments to exchange experiences, learn from one another and to be supported in their efforts of bringing innovative practices into the daily operations of their public administrations.

Activities that need to be conducted to attain the above expected outcomes are the following:

- Systematically identify and map potential enablers of innovation in public administrations through mechanisms like e.g. procurement, budgeting, and human resources management as points for innovation in public administration. Provide enriched sets of data on major trends and enablers with a view of distilling policy-oriented guidance. Explore how innovation can drive public trust in government, linking innovation with core public functions and leveraging insights from behavioural science.

- Define and support the next generation of public sector innovation labs, handle complexity and change, provide purpose-driven approaches to citizens'/societal challenges, and host exploratory and experimental methods and practices in public administrations. Gather up-to-date relevant data to go beyond normative approaches to innovation labs, drawing on experiences, challenges and opportunities for innovation labs at the global level. Design guidelines and instruments to support innovation labs to create value for people and lever innovation in Government. Test and compare models for delivering innovation across different governance contexts and at different scales. Specify frameworks and instruments to provide actionable and re-usable guidance to steer and support the embeddedness and sustainability of innovation labs in the public sector, as well as secure and improve high-level commitment and sponsorship.

- Revisit the core skills for public sector innovation and identify the factors that transform public administrations from talk into action. Evaluate and enhance modalities for capacity building in innovation, focusing on structures and practices that foster an authorizing environment for innovation, especially at senior management levels. Share learnings through structure knowledge-enhancing programs for civil servants, policymakers, public managers, and senior leaders.

- Broad-based and practical anticipatory innovation governance through actioning existing principles and developing new tools, such as those aimed at anticipatory intelligence collection and sharing, regular outlooks on the future of government, as well as case research on emerging trends and behavioural science, to help governments anticipate and navigate future changes.

- Strengthen multi-party projects via online platforms, extending its reach within national government administrations, and expanding the public sector innovation community at all levels. Disseminate the vast collection of practical knowledge through new channels and in new formats, leveraging behavioural science to reach audiences that are not already "innovation enthusiasts."

- Design and support purpose-driven approaches for governments to address societal challenges, such as social inclusion. Strengthen existing methods and tools for the engagement of stakeholders from the broader innovation ecosystem for co-creation, co-delivery, and co-assessment of innovative policies and initiatives. Test challenge-based approaches for ecosystem engagement in order to demonstrate their potential benefits (and challenges) for public sector innovation, and share the lessons learned and related methodological resources.

The Observatory of Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) was established and managed by the OECD, co-funded by the Horizon Europe Programme (and other OECD countries) since 2015. Based on the results of the work and on the collaborations developed with the network of OPSI national contact points, the Observatory offers leading edge action research, related infrastructure and valuable support to governments investing in the development of internal innovation capabilities, strategies and practices within their government administrations. The OPSI shares a wealth of new knowledge and experience with OECD governments, including 24 EU Member States signatory to the OECD Declaration on Public Sector Innovation (2019). There is no other actor with the necessary infrastructure, state-of-the-art analytical capacity and data in international comparison, political processes and networks in place, and with access to this large constituent of governments of the world's leading economies that could do the work of this scale and scope. This action would enable the OECD OPSI to intensify, deepen and widen its work with governments in support of their internal innovation efforts.

Legal entities:

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2, rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France

Form of Funding: Indirectly managed actions

Type of Action: Indirectly managed action

Indicative timetable: 2025

Indicative budget: EUR 1.50 million from the 2025 budget

Budget[173] [174]

	Budget line(s)	2025 Budget (EUR million)
Calls		
HORIZON-CL2-2025-01		275.10
	from 01.020220	*275.10*
HORIZON-CL2-2025-02-TWO-STAGE		22.20
	from 01.020220	*22.20*
HORIZON-CL2-2025-03		60.00
	from 01.020220	*60.00*
Other actions		
Public procurement		1.00
	from 01.020220	*1.00*
Grant awarded without a call for proposals according to Financial Regulation Article 198		3.00
	from 01.020220	*3.00*
Indirectly managed action		1.50
	from 01.020220	*1.50*
Estimated total budget		362.80

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[173] The budget figures given in this table are rounded to two decimal places.
The budget amounts are subject to the availability of the appropriations provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2025.

[174] The contribution from Cluster 2 for the year 2025 is EUR 16.80 million for the Missions work programme part and EUR 3.06 million for the New European Bauhaus Facility work programme part.