

## OPEN LETTER

# EU-LIFE urges the European Commission, the EU Council and the European Parliament to leverage R&I as a key driving force for Competitiveness through a transformative FP10

EU-LIFE's open letter following the [EC proposal](#) for the EU's next long-term budget (MFF)

EU-LIFE, the alliance of 17 leading Research Institutes in the Life Sciences across Europe, welcomes the European Commission's (EC) proposal for the 2028-2034 EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and urges the EU Council and the European Parliament to enforce Research & Innovation (R&I) as a powerful engine of Europe's competitiveness.

During the presently commencing negotiation period, **we call for:**

- The strengthening of an ambitious FP10 with a commensurate budget.
- A robust, independent governance for FP10, with strong and well-supported elements - particularly the ERC, the EIC, MSCA and collaborative research.

EU-LIFE is committed to a proactive role in supporting the political and financial cycles of the EU, as evidenced by the positions released on this topic (listed at the end of this document). As an immediate reaction to the European Commission's 2028–2034 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) proposal announced on 16 July 2025, **EU-LIFE welcomes:**

- The announcement of a self-standing and independent FP10, with predictable funding focused on ensuring the right conditions for long-term, bottom-up R&I.
- The almost doubling of the standalone FP10 budget to EUR 175 billion. This is a fair starting point for the upcoming negotiation period and must, at least, be maintained.
- The principle that FP10 must be excellence-based.
- The recognition of the European Research Council (ERC), the European Innovation Council (EIC) and the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions (MSCA) as critical foundations of European competitiveness, reflected in proposed increased budgets.
- The decision to retain collaborative research within FP10 rather than transferring it into the Competitiveness Fund.

However, EU-LIFE is **extremely concerned** about the following:

- The need to ensure that during the negotiations between the EC, the European Parliament and the EU Council the proposed budget for FP10 – EUR 175 billion is enforced. Although an increase in absolute numbers, it remains less than 10% of the whole MFF and is still far from the broadly supported minimum of EUR 200 billion proposed by leading independent experts and the R&I sector, including EU-LIFE.
- The subordination of FP10 to the rules, governance, and ad hoc budget allocations of the Competitiveness Fund over the seven-year MFF period. This is a critical threat to FP10 impact delivery and must be amended. Likewise, the ringfencing of the FP10 budget during the implementation must be a reality.
- The (veiled) attack on the ERC's independent governance. In particular, the proposal to reduce the term of the President's mandate as well as its profile requirements are unacceptable.
- The missed opportunity to rebalance FP10 across the full R&I continuum, especially the lack of adequate investment in early-stage research (low TRLs/SRLs). We reiterate our call to enhance bottom-up, low-to-mid TRLs/SRLs collaborative research in all five policy windows of FP10 Pillar 2, including specifically all four intervention areas aligned with the Competitiveness Fund.
- The lack of clarity on the measures to reduce top-down, prescriptive calls. Open calls as mentioned in the current proposal are not the same as a bottom-up approach and can still be too prescriptive, hindering the impact of the programmes. Likewise, the role of early stage (low to mid TRLs/SRLs) remains to be enabled in EU Missions and the newly announced Moonshots.

The upcoming MFF is the final opportunity to translate today's policy rhetoric into tomorrow's European strength. We urge the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to address the concerns raised in this letter and work towards a reinforced FP10 that empowers discovery, enables innovation, and secures Europe's global leadership and competitiveness.

EU-LIFE remains committed to contributing constructively to European R&I policy and stands ready to continue this role in building a strong Europe.

Barcelona, 23 July 2025

**For detailed information on EU-LIFE's proposals, consult:**

R&I for Competitiveness

- [R&I needs a strong place in the next Multiannual Financial Programme \(MFF\)](#)
- [The future of European research: 5 key actions for a competitive Europe](#)
- [Scientific research is a strategic necessity for resilience and competitiveness in Europe](#)
- [EU-LIFE's 4 elements to strengthen Europe's competitiveness through the European Life Sciences Strategy](#)

Future Framework Programme FP10

- [Towards FP10: EU-LIFE's guiding principles for FP10](#)

- [Towards FP10: EU-LIFE reply to High-Level Group Consultation on HE and FP10](#)
- [Towards FP10: EU-LIFE's vision for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(MSCA\)](#)
- [Towards FP10: EU-LIFE's vision for the European Innovation Council \(EIC\)](#)
- [Preserving the foundation of innovation: enhancing early-stage collaborative R&I in FP10](#)

#### Horizon Europe - strategy and budget

- [EU-LIFE answer to the Public Consultation of EU R&I Programmes 2014 – 2027](#)
- [Reaction of EU-LIFE to the next framework programme budget agreement](#)
- [Europe needs Research & Innovation to address the future: EU-LIFE reaction to the EU Council deal](#)
- [Open letter to the EU Council and the European Parliament to prioritise R&I by committing an appropriate budget for Horizon Europe](#)

#### MSCA

- [No directionality in MSCA. Joint statement on the proposed introduction of directionality in the draft MSCA Work Programme 2026-2027](#)

#### Research Infrastructures

- [Call for action on small and medium research infrastructures in Europe](#)

#### Pillar II Health Cluster

- [How to ensure health safety in Europe: the vision of EU-LIFE research institutes](#)
- [EU-LIFE calls for impactful collaborative research in European Biomedicine](#)

#### Pillar II Cancer Mission

- [Reaction of EU-LIFE: Cancer Mission work programme 2021-22](#)
- [EU-LIFE recommendations to the Cancer Mission draft](#)

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### About EU-LIFE

EU-LIFE is an alliance of research centres whose mission is to support and strengthen European research excellence ([www.eu-life.eu](http://www.eu-life.eu)). EU-LIFE members are leading research institutes in their countries and internationally renowned for producing excellent research, widely transferring knowledge and nurturing talent.

### EU-LIFE Members

Centre for Genomic Regulation ([CRG](#), Spain) | Central European Institute of Technology ([CEITEC](#), Czech Republic) | European Institute of Oncology ([IEO](#), Italy) | Flanders Institute For Biotechnology ([VIB](#), Belgium) | Friedrich Miescher Institute for Biomedical Research ([FMI](#), Switzerland) | Gulbenkian Institute for Molecular Medicine ([GIMM](#), Portugal) | Institut Curie ([Curie](#), France) | Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland ([FIMM](#), Finland) | Institute of Molecular Biology & Biotechnology ([IMBB FORTH](#), Greece) | International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology in Warsaw ([IIMCB](#), Poland) | Max Delbrück Center ([MDC](#), Germany) | Research Center for Molecular Medicine of the Austrian Academy of Sciences ([CeMM](#), Austria) | Ruđer Bošković Institute ([RBI](#), Croatia) | The Babraham Institute ([Babraham](#), United Kingdom) | The Francis Crick Institute ([Crick](#), United Kingdom) | The Netherlands Cancer Institute ([NKI](#), The Netherlands) | The University of Copenhagen Biotech Research & Innovation Centre ([BRIC](#), Denmark)