What Is New?

Central Novelties Related to Research Valorisation in Horizon Europe

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The valorisation policy of the Europen Union (EU) illustrates the EU's strategic focus on making research results work for society: Research and Innovation (R&I), knowledge sharing and collaboration across Member States will accelerate turning publicly funded R&I results into innovative solutions with high socio-economic impact. To this end, the EU's valorisation policy is reflected in a number of strategic principles and activities of Horizon Europe. This article takes a look at some of the Programmes key novelties linked to valorisation along with their raison d'être.

Horizon Europe legislation defines three types of contribution to impact on society: Scientific, Societal and Economic, tracked through nine Key Impact Pathways. Additions to the Dissemination & Exploitation activities of results, to help maximise the impacts of EU R&I funding, are also covered, including proposal redesign, continuous reporting and reinforced intellectual property (IP) management.

To facilitate the uptake of research results by third parties, the Horizon Results Platform (HRP), the central showcase for EU-funded R&I results, now offers beneficiaries increased guidance and tools. In addition, the new Horizon Results TV offers experts' advice on how to exploit research results, as well as inspirational stories by researchers who have succeeded in becoming entrepreneurs.

Key Impact Pathways: a modernised monitoring approach

Horizon Europe is an impact-focused programme: from project selection to monitoring of its results and impact. We know from the previous programmes that EU's research and innovation is excellent, but at times may leave room for improvement when it comes to bringing new knowledge to the market and achieving a larger impact on society and economy.

The new Key Impact Pathways set a new, ambitious framework for Horizon Europe. They introduce new focus on impact next to consistent monitoring tools to track it on a granular level. Communication, dissemination and exploitation of results are some of the ways in which Horizon Europe projects can maximise their impact within this framework.

Horizon Europe legislation defines three types of impact tracked through Key Impact Pathways

1. Creating high-quality new knowledge
2. Strengthening human capital in R&I
3. Fostering diffusion of knowledge and Open Science

Scientific Impact

4. Addressing EU policy priorities & global challenges through R&I
5. Delivering benefits & impact via R&I missions
6. Strengthening the uptake of R&I in society

Societal Impact

7. Generating innovation-based growth
8. Creating more and better jobs
9. Leveraging investments in R&I

Economic Impact

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Research and Innovation

Dissemination & Exploitation

In Horizon Europe, Dissemination & Exploitation (D&E) remains a key aspect of research valorisation of the programme. Furthermore, a greater emphasis will be placed on gathering feedback from beneficiaries and providing integrated D&E support services. In order to accelerate the uptake of R&I results, various events and initiatives will be organised to connect beneficiaries and targeted stakeholders e.g. policy makers, investors, national and regional actors, universities, social entrepreneurs, etc.

D&E can be seen as an "ecosystem," where its main actors will be brought closer together to create a dynamic sharing of knowledge for the benefit of making EU-funded R&I research results matter.

In the following section, we spotlight some of the main D&E novelties under Horizon Europe:

What is new at the proposal stage?

No more D&E plan in the proposal

If you have applied to a Horizon Europe call, you may have noticed that the D&E plan is no longer a requirement. Instead, we ask beneficiaries to draft an outline of their D&E measures and IP strategy, where relevant.

You may wonder why this change? There are several reasons. Firstly, simplification. We just ask beneficiaries to list a few measures they intend to undertake for D&E and communication activities. Second, this puts all the applicants on an equal footing. In the past, we noticed that many beneficiaries used consultants to draft their D&E plans. Those projects received a very strong score when evaluated. However, at the moment of implementation, the consultants were no longer present to support the projects in the implementation of the foreseen plans.

In other cases, the projects drafted the D&E plans listing numerous ambitious activities but failed to deliver during the actual implementation. This is why under Horizon Europe, we ask projects to provide their D&E plans six months after the signature of the grant. The idea is that at this stage they will already have a better idea of the kind of (key) results to expect, the pressure of the selection process will be over, and they can truly focus on how to best disseminate, use and valorise their results.

Why did we group D&E with Communication (C)? Why isn't it CDE? D&E is present in the legal basis, whereas communication is not. However, we know that in practice beneficiaries tend to group D&C together. We know that they are complementary and sometimes overlapping, this is why the measures should be listed in the same section.

What is new with regard to project reporting?

Structured continuous reporting

Under Horizon Europe, continuous reporting templates have been adapted. The new reporting system entails filling in a structured template with prefilled answers. This brings along several benefits. By filling in the templates, the beneficiaries will have an indication of what the European Commission expects from them; it may also give them ideas of D&E activities to undertake. Beneficiaries will no longer need to fill in part B for D&E, unless if they want to.

Union interest

If any exploitation is to take place in non-associated third countries, beneficiaries must include justification on how this exploitation remains in the Union's interest. Another EC policy that is aligned with this notion is the Industrial Policy.

Post grant survey

Two years after the end of the grant, there will be a structured questionnaire for beneficiaries to report on their progress, needs and obstacles on their path towards exploitation. This questionnaire may become part of the EC grant management system and will

remain open until the conclusion of the follow up period after the end of the project where a final report will be created. Once the survey is available, beneficiaries will be duly informed.

To sum up, this new reporting system aims to provide a clear picture on: the number of patents (or lack of); whether there are Key Exploitable Results; ownership and more. The new monitoring and reporting for Horizon Europe will bring into spotlight what is being accomplished in each project in real time. It will also inform on indicators, such as the number of patents per country.

What is new with regard to managing IP?

For the management of IP, each Horizon Europe beneficiary shall use their best efforts to exploit the results they own, or to have them exploited by another legal entity, in particular through the transfer and licensing of results. Beneficiaries are thus required to adequately protect their results – if possible and justified – taking account of possible prospects for commercial exploitation and any other legitimate interest.

New elements concerning the IP strategy for projects, within the terms of Article 39 of the Horizon Europe legislation, include:

- Mandatory Results Ownership List (ROL): Beneficiaries must now inform on the owner(s) of the results (results ownership list) in the reporting. This includes whether the ownership is single or joint, the name of the owner(s), the country of establishment of the owner(s) and whether the results will be exploited by the owner(s). Failure to do so will block both the submission of the final periodic report and the final payment.

- Horizon Europe has a specific objective: to strengthen the exploitation of research results. This calls for clarity as to results ownership. Until Horizon Europe, lack of clarity has been an obstacle that has prevented certain results from being exploitable.

- Public emergency provision: Where the call conditions impose additional exploitation obligations in case of a public emergency, the granting authority may have the beneficiaries grant non-exclusive licences of their results to the legal entities that need the results to address the public emergency, for a limited period of time (four years maximum).
  - Public emergencies could cover events such as pandemic diseases (like Covid-19), terrorist attacks, hacking, earthquakes, tsunamis, CBRN events, e.g. novel and highly fatal infectious agents or biological or chemical toxins, as well as those from resulting cascading risks.

What is new with regard to what happens after the end of the project and the support services?

New obligation of beneficiaries to exploit their results on Horizon Results Platform

In Horizon Europe, the follow-up of the exploitation activities will continue after the end of the project. As formalized in the Model Grant Agreement: *"If despite the best effort for exploitation no uptake happens within a specific period after the end of the project (one year), then the project must use the Horizon Results Platform (HRP) to make exploitable results visible (unless obligation is waived)."*

The Horizon Results Platform, as part of the Funding & Tenders portal, provides multiple benefits to beneficiaries: greater visibility and faster matchmaking, targeted innovator promotional events, free access to support services, quick searches, and more.

Learn more about the Horizon Results Platform in the dedicated article "Making Results Matter" also published in this issue.

Conclusion

To sum up, Horizon Europe has introduced new measures and practices to facilitate collaboration and to maximise the impact of research and innovation in delivering on the EU's strategic priorities.

The European Commission's Dissemination & Exploitation strategy in Horizon Europe bolsters the European Union's key objective of the valorisation policy: transforming R&I into innovative solutions and valuable policy inputs.

In Horizon Europe, the new Key Impact Pathways to monitoring impact, the continuous reporting and the reinforced IP management are fundamental building blocks, enabling Europe's systemic transformations into a greener, digital, inclusive and sustainable society.

Where to find further information on Horizon Europe?

The Horizon Europe **Funding & Tenders Portal** is the central information hub giving access to key reference documents and supporting material:

- Rules for Participation
- Model Grant Agreement
- Online Manual (please note: the IP section is a work in progress)
- Horizon Europe Programme Guide
- Applicable Work Programmes (to be selected individually via the Portal)

Watch now!

Interested in diving deeper into "Dissemination & Exploitation" under Horizon Europe? Then watch the recording of our webinar session specifically dealing with this topic: