

EARTO Press Release: Ahead of the New Council MFF Negotiating Box: No Competitiveness Without Research, Development & Innovation (RD&I)

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Ahead of the revised negotiating box for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2028–2034) to be tabled tomorrow by the Irish Presidency of the Council, the European Association of Research and Technology Organisations (EARTO) calls on EU leaders to shield Heading 2 – including the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP10) and the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) – from any further cuts.

EU leaders will discuss the new figures at the European Council on 15 October, while several Member States keep calling for cuts of several hundred billion euros. Research and innovation have already contributed: the June negotiating box reduced FP10 to €167.9 billion, around 4% below the Commission's €175 billion proposal and well below the €200 billion supported by the European Parliament and recommended in Mario Draghi's [report](#) on the future of European competitiveness.

Protect Heading 2 with FP10 & ECF: The figures discussed under previous Presidency proposals were already far below what is needed, as more than 14 EU Programmes are now brought together under this heading. What looks like a large budget on paper is far less impressive against reality.

Boost FP10 - No Competitiveness without Innovation: Europe's growth and productivity depend on innovation, and innovation depends on sustained public investment in RD&I to crowd in private investment. The FP10 figures discussed so far were already far from the step change called for by Mario Draghi; further cuts would send the wrong signal at the wrong time.

Restore collaborative RD&I as the heart of FP10: At least 60% of FP10's budget should go to collaborative RD&I, as in Horizon Europe. This is where Europe builds shared capabilities, strengthens value chains and turns knowledge into impact, yet its share falls from 56% today to around 43% in the European Commission proposal.

Europe cannot expect more competitiveness, resilience and technological sovereignty while investing less in the collaborative research, development and innovation that underpins them.

- Read the [Joint Declaration for a Bold FP10](#) by EARTO, BusinessEurope and 90 other associations.
- Read the [EARTO Recommendations on the Governance of the ECF](#).
- Read the [EARTO Position Paper on the EU Governance for Technology Infrastructures](#).

EARTO - European Association of Research and Technology Organisations

Founded in 1999, EARTO promotes RTOs and represents their interest in Europe. EARTO network counts over 350 RTOs in more than 32 countries. EARTO members represent 228,000 highly-skilled researchers and engineers managing a wide range of innovation infrastructures.

RTOs - Research and Technology Organisations

From the lab to your everyday life. RTOs innovate to improve your health and well-being, your safety and security, your mobility and connectivity. RTOs' technologies cover all scientific fields. Their work ranges from basic research to new products and services' development. RTOs are non-profit organisations whose core mission is to produce, combine and bridge various types of knowledge, skills and infrastructures to deliver a range of research and development activities in collaboration with public and industrial partners of all sizes. These activities aim to result in technological and social innovations and system solutions that contribute to and mutually reinforce their economic, societal and policy impacts.

EARTO Contact: www.earto.eu