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## EU RESEARCH PROGRAMS: STRONGER UNITED

*Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Helsinki, 18.02.2023*

### Recognizing that:

1. European research programs play a primary role in the continental cohesion of both academia and the social substrate of different member and non-member states.
2. Research programs are perceived by Europeans as one of the pillars of European identity. From a situation of a constellation of separate and independent programs, it has come to unite and coordinate all research. Standard Eurobarometer 87, spring 2017, clearly indicates how this has a positive impact on the perception of European identity by transcending national borders and giving a strong reason for unity.<sup>1</sup>
3. The 2021-2027 programme places a strong focus on social inclusion, the green and digital transitions, and promoting young people's participation in democratic life.<sup>2</sup>
4. The non-participation of a state in the Erasmus+ exchange program and Horizon research program does not result in political pressure on the excluded state, but rather has extremely negative consequences for the young people who engage in the various areas of training (education, sports, youth,...), intercultural experience and internship possibilities.
5. Access to international networks and expert "know-how" worldwide is essential for developing breakthrough innovations and technologies into global leading products and companies.
6. The EU's role in research and innovation is based on the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU, Art. 179-190 TFEU. Science policy is therefore also a very political matter.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Standard Eurobarometer 87, spring 2017

<sup>2</sup> Website Erasmus, "What is Erasmus"?

<sup>3</sup> Christian Ehler, MEP, 21 November 2021



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### Acknowledging that:

1. Swiss participation in the EU-Framework Programme for Research and Innovation is part of the first series of bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU that came into effect in 2002. However, Switzerland's association with Horizon Europe is considered in the light of overall relations between Switzerland and the EU.
2. Cohesion payments are seen as the entry fee for non-EU members like Switzerland or Norway to take part in the European Single Market. They aim to reduce economic and social disparities and to manage migration better in selected EU member states, basically the one that joined the EU after 2004. On August the 31st 2022, Switzerland has agreed to pay a further 1.2 billion euros, while during the exploratory round of talks on October the 13th, Switzerland expressed its willingness to make the cohesion contribution regular.
3. In its last years of participation to the research Program Horizon (Horizon 2020; 2014–2020), Switzerland contributed with more than 2.3 billion euros, which corresponds to 3% of the nearly 80 billion euros of funding available over 7 years.<sup>4</sup>
4. Switzerland and the European Union have had a long successful cooperation in research projects since 1987.<sup>5</sup> Switzerland is the 4<sup>th</sup> most important business partner of the EU in terms of export and import market of EU goods and the third biggest investor in the EU. Both sides can benefit by pursuing the path of cooperation in research areas.<sup>6</sup>
5. Switzerland excels in many areas of research at the European level as the only Continental European Country which has a global top 10 ranked University (ETH Zurich) and Top 15 (EPFL Lausanne). Other areas of excellence are supercomputers (the new supercomputer "Alps" will be fully operational in 2023 and will become the most powerful in the world), space activities, quantum technologies, not to mention the importance of infrastructures such as the CERN in Geneva (the European Organization for Nuclear Research).<sup>7</sup>
6. Just a united European science world can keep pace with super powers such as the USA and China. This factor is necessary to maintain prosperous stability or even growth, brings new

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<sup>4</sup> The Impact of Switzerland's Participation in the EU Framework Programmes 2019 report, Swiss Confederation, Federal Department of Economic Affairs

<sup>5</sup> The Impact of Switzerland's Participation in the EU Framework Programmes, 2019 report, Swiss Confederation, Federal Department of Economic Affairs

<sup>6</sup> Mission of Switzerland to the EU, Issues, Economy and trade – an essential partnership

<sup>7</sup> Added Value of Swiss Participation in the EU Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation, State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI



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investment from foreign companies and governments, attracts a highly skilled workforce, and ensures a high quality of life and political stability

**YEPP calls on:**

1. The EU to prioritize academic and research cooperation over disputes with partners who share the same values of democracy, freedom, solidarity and human rights.
2. The EPP to promote a quick stabilization of the EU-Swiss relations and to urge the Swiss federal government to take a clear position on the matter. This will finally bring to the official start of the negotiations aiming to update the existing agreements and therefore once again to a united European scientific world at its fullest potential.