

Attention: news desks/science and education correspondents

For immediate release

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Horizon 2020: European universities call for more competitiveness and efficiency

The European University Association (EUA) has released the results of its 2016 member consultation on Horizon 2020. As the European Commission undertakes its mid-term review of the current Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and prepares discussions on its post-2020 successor, EUA invited its members to share their views and experiences with Horizon 2020.

The report, "[EUA member consultation: A contribution to the Horizon 2020 mid-term review](#)," showcases the responses of more than 150 universities from 28 countries across Europe. It puts forward a comprehensive view of Horizon 2020 and includes reflections from EUA's ongoing work on the [Ninth Framework Programme](#), the [European Innovation Council](#) and the [Public Funding Observatory](#).

European universities are key beneficiaries of the Framework Programme and staunch supporters of Horizon 2020, which is seen as being highly successful. Indeed, EU-level funding for research and innovation based on grants and open competitive calls creates unparalleled added value and is paramount to retaining scientific talent and boosting Europe's global competitiveness. Nevertheless, the EUA member consultation revealed that it is endangered by critically low success rates due to insufficient funding at the EU and national levels. In fact, the [latest data published by the European Commission](#) shows that the success rates are even lower than expected by the sector.

"This translates into higher participation costs, wasted research ideas and greatly reduces the competitiveness of the European Research Area and the efficiency of public investment," explains Thomas Estermann, EUA Director of Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development.

Furthermore, respondents pointed out that despite progress on simplification, Horizon 2020 projects bear significant administrative and financial burdens given accounting and reporting complexities, as well as insufficient coverage of indirect costs. In addition, rigid and costly implementation undermines sustainability and capacity in retaining and attracting scientific talent, hampering global competitiveness.

"Excellent, multidisciplinary, and collaborative university-based research is key to ensure societal progress and well-being in the long-term," explains David Drewry, EUA Vice-President and Chair of the Research Policy Working Group. "This requires increased, sustainable and efficient grant funding that benefits the entire continent."

The university sector's views provide the basis for a series of core messages and actions addressing the different issues identified with Horizon 2020. To read these messages and the corresponding analysis, [please click here](#).

In November 2016, EUA also released the findings of its membership consultation on Erasmus+. To see that report, [please click here](#).

For info, please contact: Jessica Carter, +32 2 743 11 59; mobile: +32 473 74 87 85; jessica.carter@eua.be

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of more than 800 universities in 47 European countries and 33 national rectors' conferences (NRCs). The EUA Council is made up of the president, the members of the Board, and of the presidents of all of Europe's NRCs. EUA works closely with its members to ensure that the voice of European universities is heard.