



# HORIZON EUROPE

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## THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

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2021 – 2027

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Infoday

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DESTINATION 3

# Social and economic transformations



# HORIZON-CL2-2026-02-TRANSFO-02: Open topic: Strengthen Europe's social model and sustainable competitiveness through productivity (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- The concept of sustainable competitiveness is analysed taking into account the shifts in geopolitics, global trade patterns, as well as changes in climate, the environment (including biodiversity loss<sup>168</sup>), technology and demography.
- Policymakers are provided with recommendations and innovative solutions, including a toolbox to boost Member States and Associated Countries (labour) productivity while ensuring high social and environmental standards and increasing competitiveness within planetary boundaries.

## Scope

- The Draghi report highlights Europe's declining competitiveness, productivity, and growth compared to global rivals, attributing it to challenges like demographic shifts, technology, climate change, and geopolitical instability. A competitive economy requires sustained productivity to drive growth, income, and welfare—but Europe must adapt its economic and social models to these pressures to avoid stagnation.
- The European social model underpins the EU's current productivity and competitiveness, but failing to modernise it risks rising poverty, weaker human capital, and reduced well-being. Research must propose ways to balance competitiveness, social protections, and environmental standards, fostering collaboration across projects to ensure Europe remains a sustainable global leader with an inclusive welfare state.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-03: Tackling child poverty and ensuring disadvantaged children's access to Early Childhood Education and Care (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Policymakers gain insights into the cost of child poverty and the returns from securing access of disadvantaged children to quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in the EU.
- Policymakers receive operational advice on ways to reduce this cost and support participation of disadvantaged children in quality ECEC to close the gap with other children in the EU.

## Scope

- Past studies on child poverty costs and ECEC participation benefits lack EU relevance, being outdated or non-EU-focused. This research aims to generate EU-specific insights to close the ECEC gap, improve social outcomes per the European Pillar of Social Rights, and promote fiscal sustainability and inclusive growth.
- Proposals should define disadvantage beyond income, assess costs/returns of child poverty and ECEC (short/long-term, economic/social), identify access barriers, and map cost-effective policies. Evidence-based advice—including scalable best practices—should use mixed methods, leverage existing/new data, and involve vulnerable children/parents for impactful solutions.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-04: The impact of the use of digital tools outside school and for communication on educational outcomes and mental health (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Provide policymakers, education practitioners and citizens with a solid understanding of how social media, video gaming and other leisure uses of digital tools relate to the educational outcomes of young people, including through their impact on well-being and mental health.
- Generate rigorous, policy-relevant evidence about policies and practices aiming to inform and regulate young people's use of digital tools for non-educational purposes, such as smartphones, at school..
- **Scope**
  - Use patterns of digital devices among primary, secondary and tertiary students.
  - Leisure use of digital devices at and outside school.
  - Analysis of 'digital distraction'.
  - Different uses of digital devices: social media, gaming, chatting.
  - Well-being, mental health, motivation, learning habits.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-05: Long-term contribution of basic skills to productivity, innovation, competitiveness and economic growth (RIA)

**€ 12 million / 3 projects**

## Expected outcomes

- Provide policymakers with a more detailed understanding of the contribution of basic skills on the economy in the short and medium term, with a focus on their contribution to productivity and innovation, to sustain EU competitiveness and growth.
- Develop actionable advice about how, in a lifelong perspective, education and training systems can help foster basic skills.
- Promote productivity, innovation, competitiveness and growth, including by reducing gender, disability and socioeconomic gaps in basic skills.

## Scope

- Five basic skill: maths, literacy, science, digital and citizenship.
- Analysis of causal links between skills and growth.
- School, vocational and adult education.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-06: Making Europe a global magnet for talent - Attracting and retaining students, researchers and high-skilled workers from outside the EU (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Generate rigorous, policy-relevant evidence on the factors that may influence students, researchers, and high-skilled workers from non-EU countries to move to and remain in the EU.
- Provide policymakers and higher education/research institutions with guidance on which policies and programmes could be effective in attracting talented students, researchers and high-skilled workers from non-EU countries to the EU.
- Develop actionable advice to policymakers and higher education/research institutions about how to retain talented students, researchers and high-skilled workers from non-EU countries to ensure a long-term positive impact on the EU economy's innovation and competitiveness.
- **Scope**
  - Global competition for talent
  - Mobilising professional potential of humanitarian migrants.
  - Students, researchers, professionals.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-07: Fostering competences for the green transition (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Provide policymakers, education and training institutions, and social partners with a solid understanding of which competences young people and workers need to support the EU economy towards the green transition to reach carbon neutrality and protect natural ecosystems.
- Develop actionable advice to policymakers and education and training institutions about which education and training programmes and policy measures can promote the acquisition of those competences by young people and workers in a lifelong perspective, including the gender and disability dimensions.
- Provide policymakers with guidance on how to address the interconnection between fostering the competences for the green transition and those for the digital transition.

## Scope

- Agriculture, automotive, energy, construction, climate adaptation.
- Attitudes towards green transition.
- Upskilling and reskilling.
- Gender dimension of skills.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-08: Strengthened implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, with a focus on inclusion and integration (RIA)

€ 12 million / 3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Improved implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum through evidence-based insights in asylum and migration management, age assessment of minors, and resettlement frameworks, ensuring fair and efficient migration governance.
- Insight into legal pathways addressing both EU Member States' needs and potential offers of circular and permanent migration schemes in selected partner countries.
- Enhanced health equity for migrants, including refugees by integrating robust health data into national systems, addressing governance barriers, and tackling intersectional inequities in healthcare access, identifying data/indicators on basic needs in health and sanitation, including as compared to adequate treatment

## Scope

- Analyse implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, legal pathways and migration governance, providing human-rights-compliant, evidence-based recommendations tailored to diverse national contexts.
- Evaluate migrant health data integration and long-term inclusion strategies (labour, housing, education, participation), addressing intersectional inequalities and identifying effective, scalable policy practices.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-09: Rethinking long-term care policy in the face of EU demographic shifts (RIA)

€ 15 million / 4 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Assess the efficacy and robustness of current long-term care (LTC) policies.
- Supply policy makers with scientific insight and data for developing evidence-informed strategies to meet the increasing demand for affordable, accessible, and high-quality LTC, with a focus on resources efficiency.
- Suggest new policy approaches to handle increasing LTC needs and ensure seamless (in)formal care transitions, considering active and healthy ageing policies and fostering integrated care service provision at the local level.

## Scope

- Assess the effectiveness of LTC policies in meeting current needs, focusing on workforce, affordability, accessibility, and quality. Consider the role of integrated care and social services.
- Develop methodologies to project LTC needs and supply until 2070 in 15 EU Member States. Quantify the impact and cost of non-action.
- Analyse innovative policy mixes to address LTC needs and supply challenges, with available or new resources. Focus on improving workforce conditions and exploring cost-effective funding options.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-TRANSFO-10: Fostering cooperation and integration between SSH and STEM research and innovation in the EU

€ 3.5 million / 1 project

## Expected outcomes

- Greater integration of SSH and STEM research and innovation in R&I initiatives funded at EU level, national and/or regional level, as well as in R&I policies by promoting dialogue, mutual learning and strategic cooperation among research funders
- Developing and maintaining a new, common, comprehensive 'Monitoring and Impact Evaluation Framework' for SSH integration in current and future EU R&I initiatives.

## Scope

- The action should create a new strategy in the first year of the project with the aim to develop and to monitor the SSH-STEM research cooperation
- Applicants should develop guidelines for SSH-STEM cooperation and support stakeholders in their projects when SSH-STEM cooperation is possible within the project, with a focus on increasing the quality and depth of cooperation and applying cooperation where most relevant.
- The action is expected to be a forum that promotes dialogue and cooperation among research funders and policy makers in the EU (linked to the European Research Area) and beyond to further the integration of SSH and STEM in EU-funded R&I initiatives



# Thank you!

## # HorizonEU

<http://ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe>



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