

Til:
Kunnskapsdepartementet

Ref:
Tematiske innspill til EUs kommende rammeprogram for forskning og innovasjon - 24/5497

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Innspill til Kunnskapsdepartementet om tematiske prioriteringer i EUs kommende rammeprogram for forskning og innovasjon

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide input on overall thematic priorities of the next European framework programme for research and innovation (FP10).

We focus our response on the first question raised by the Ministry: “Which thematic areas are particularly important for us to collaborate on at European level in the upcoming Framework Programme?”

In terms of structure and design of FP10, we think it is important to **strengthen excellent basic research and the collaborative research on societal challenges**, including research actions at lower TRL-levels. Basic research and collaboration with research organizations in key roles, is key to building capacity that is robust and can respond quickly to unforeseen crises and challenges.

Thematically, we see FP10 as an excellent opportunity to address global and European societal challenges and fostering collaboration to tackle pressing global issues and contribute to a Europe that remains competitive and is resilient. FP10 must both be set up to handle a more complex geopolitical landscape and unforeseen crises requiring swift responses.

We would emphasize the importance of addressing the broader dimensions of the green and digital transitions. We therefore support the Von der Leyen Commission’s priorities of sustainable prosperity and welfare and support to resilient population and societies (the first and third priority in the Commission’s Political Guidelines “Europe’s Choice”).

Key areas of focus should include:

Human and society-oriented dimensions and impacts of the green and digital transitions, ensuring a just transition and addressing potential disparities. This includes exploring the causes of increasing **mental health issues among young people** from digitalization. This is also supported by recommendations in the Letta report “Much More Than a Market”, emphasising the need to focus on “issues that have received less attention, such as mental health”. **Mental health problems are among our major public health challenges** and is exacerbated by the pace of technological change and demographic shifts, the latter including migration caused by conflicts and climate change. Good public health, including mental health, is central to ensuring participation in society as a prerequisite for sustainability. We need more research on effective prevention and treatment measures and their implementation. Research should also focus on **adverse effects of digitalization** on individuals and societies, such how it provides new tools and arenas for exercise of violence and harassment, and recruitment to radicalisation and extremism.

Preparedness for crises: We need more collaborative efforts that can expand knowledge and capacity to manage crises, including health crises and their mental health aspects, to build **societal resilience**. Geopolitical changes and war, security threats and terror, in combination with the nature and climate crisis, migration and refugee crisis and increasing social inequality, require that we prepare ourselves to deal with conceivable and unthinkable scenarios related to complex and extensive crises and disasters. This requires access to ongoing, valid knowledge about the current situation, in combination with data from previous crises and disasters for the assessment of risk and resilience factors. Preparedness for unknown disasters and processes, in combination with scarce resources, increases the need for good preparation and cross-sectoral coordination at a European level to ensure effective, adequate, and sustainable responses in and over time. We handle crises best when we have **robust systems that we can scale up when the crisis arises** and when we have resources that are available. Specific thematic areas to be addressed include risk assessment and crisis management, including **research on resilience factors and preparedness to handle crises** across local, national, regional and international levels. To meet these challenges, the framework programme **must integrate perspectives from the social sciences and humanities**.

Finally, it is important to protect the uniqueness and value of knowledge in light of digital changes and threats to democracy. We will highlight the importance of **reliable, valid, and relevant knowledge** obtained through accountable, verifiable scientific activity. Knowledge development, testing and implementation of evidence-based methods in practice help to ensure sustainable solutions to the challenges we face. A challenge associated with using knowledge more quickly, even in normal times, is that we know too little about the limitations and opportunities for using new knowledge among those who can make use of it. We thus need more research on implementation processes, and the factors that are crucial to succeed in maintaining knowledge-based methods.