

# The European Research Council



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Established by the European Commission



**ERC open to the world:  
focus on the Mediterranean region**

**ANGELA LIBERATORE,  
HEAD OF UNIT SOCIAL SCIENCES AND  
HUMANITIES  
ERCEA**

# What is ERC?



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The ERC supports excellence in frontier research through a bottom-up, individual-based, pan-European competition

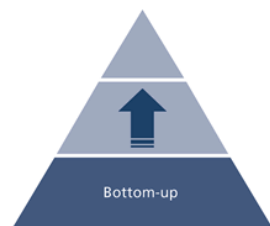
**Budget:** € 13 billion (2014-2020) - 1.9 billion €/year  
€ 7.5 billion (2007-2013) - 1.1 billion €/year

## Legislation

- Scientific governance: independent Scientific Council with 22 members including the ERC President; full authority over funding strategy
- Support by the ERC Executive Agency (autonomous)
- Excellence as the only criterion

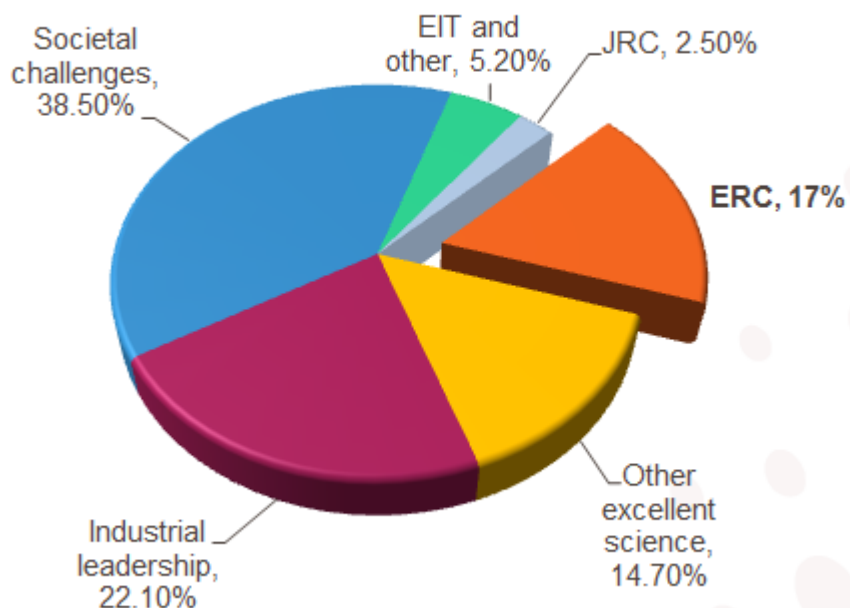
## Strategy

- Support for the individual scientist – no networks!
- Global peer-review
- No predetermined subjects (bottom-up)
- Support of frontier research in all fields of science and humanities

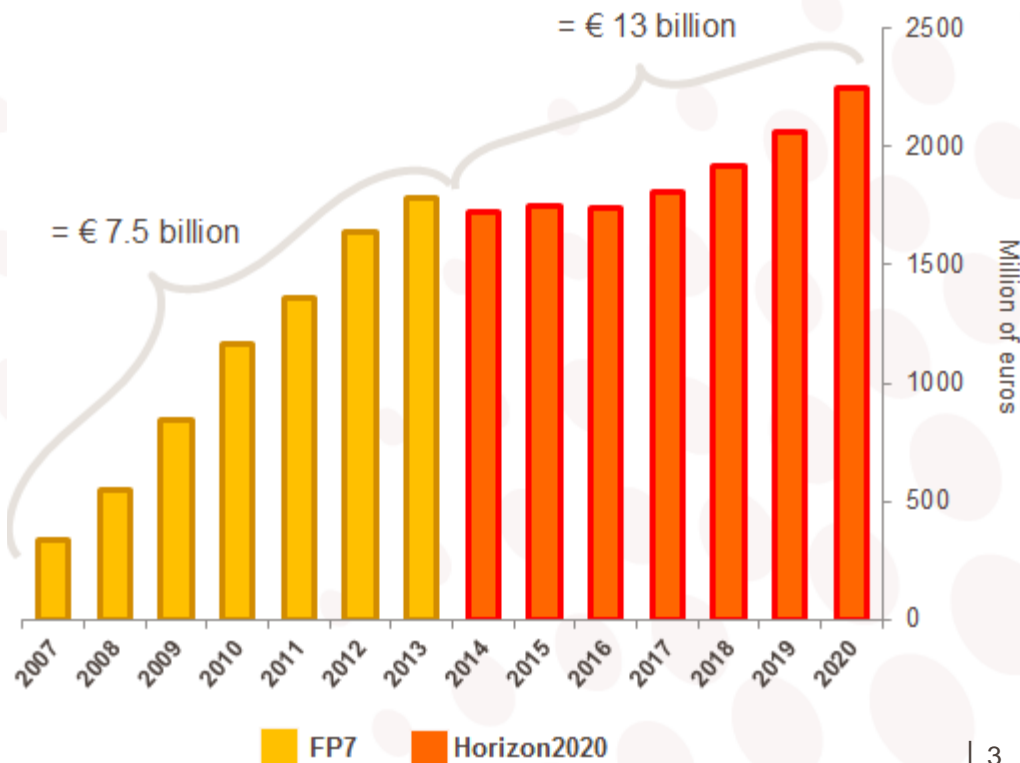


# ERC budget

## Horizon2020 budget distribution



## ERC budget per year





# ERC grant schemes

## Starting Grants

starters

*2-7 years after PhD*

up to €1.5 million  
for 5 years

## Consolidator Grants

consolidators

*7-12 years after PhD*

up to €2 million  
for 5 years

## Advanced Grants

track-record of  
significant research  
achievements

up to €2.5 million  
for 5 years

## Proof-of-Concept

gap between research - earliest stage  
of marketable innovation

up to €150,000 for ERC grant holders

## Synergy Grants

*(re-launched 2018)*

2 – 4 Principal Investigators  
up to €10 million for 6 years

# Creative Freedom to Individual Grantee



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## ERC offers independence, recognition & visibility

- to work on a research topic of **own choice**, with a team of **own choice**
- to gain true **financial autonomy** for 5 years
- to negotiate with the host institution the **best conditions** of work
- to attract **top team members** (EU and non-EU) **and collaborators**
- to move with the grant to any place in Europe if necessary (**portability of grants**)
- **to attract additional funding and gain recognition**; ERC is a quality label

# Evaluation Panel Structure (WP2018)



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## Life Sciences

- LS1 Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Structural Biology and Molecular Biophysics
- LS2 Genetics, 'Omics', Bioinformatics and Systems Biology
- LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology
- LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology
- LS5 Neurosciences and Neural Disorders
- LS6 Immunity and Infection
- LS7 Applied Medical Technologies, Diagnostics, Therapies and Public Health
- LS8 Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Biology
- LS9 Applied Life Sciences, Biotechnology and Molecular and Biosystems Engineering

## Physical Sciences & Engineering

- PE1 Mathematics
- PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
- PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
- PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences
- PE5 Synthetic Chemistry and Materials
- PE6 Computer Science and Informatics
- PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering
- PE8 Products and Process Engineering
- PE9 Universe Sciences
- PE10 Earth System Science

## Social Sciences and Humanities

- SH1 Individuals, Markets and Organisations
- SH2 Institutions, Values, Environment and Space
- SH3 The Social World, Diversity, Population
- SH4 The Human Mind and Its Complexity
- SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production
- SH6 The Study of the Human Past

# Some themes addressed on the Mediterranean region/sea/society...



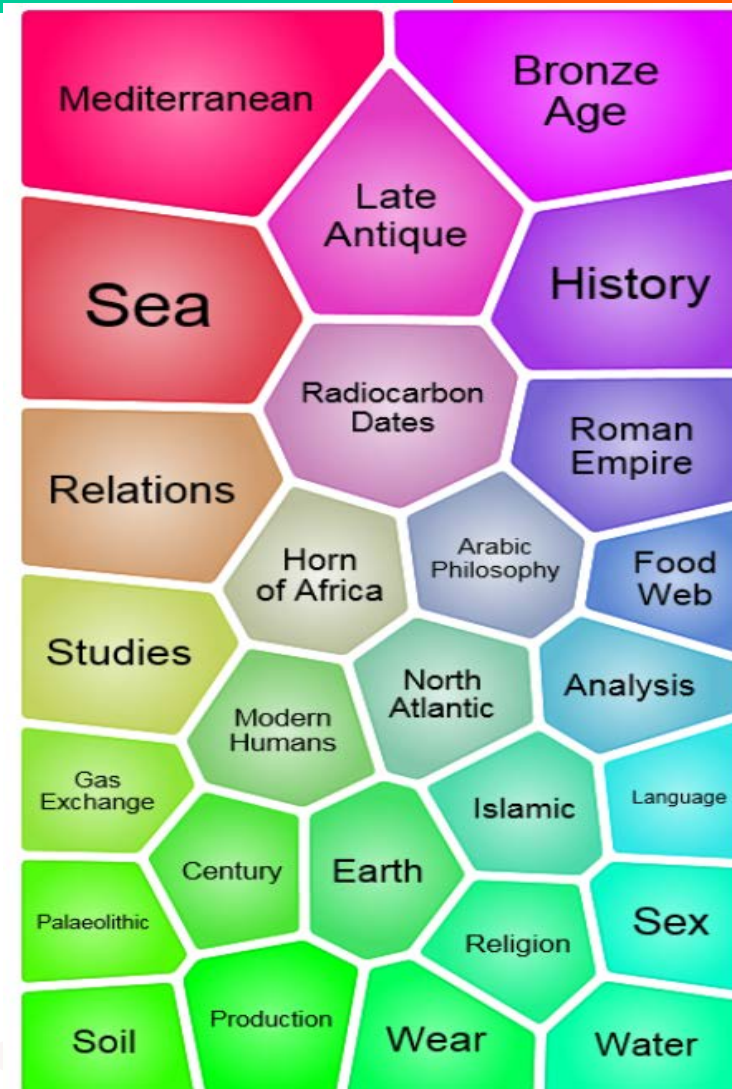
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\*Mediterranean

**9132** concepts retrieved from **179** projects

- ☐ **Funding Schema**
  - ☐ 63 | Advanced Grant
  - ☐ 35 | Consolidator Grant
  - ☐ 2 | Proof Of Concept
  - ☐ 78 | Starting Grant
  - ☐ 1 | Synergy Grant
- ☐ **Panel Structure**
  - ☐ 3 | 0
  - ☐ 3 | LS02\_REF
  - ☐ 1 | LS03\_REF
  - ☐ 1 | LS05\_REF
  - ☐ 1 | LS06\_REF
  - ☐ 4 | LS07\_REF
  - ☐ 10 | LS08\_REF
  - ☐ 2 | LS09\_REF
  - ☐ 1 | PE04\_REF
  - ☐ 1 | PE08\_REF
  - ☐ 27 | PE10\_REF
  - ☐ 11 | SH02\_REF
  - ☐ 7 | SH03\_REF
  - ☐ 31 | SH05\_REF
  - ☐ 76 | SH06\_REF



# International Researchers



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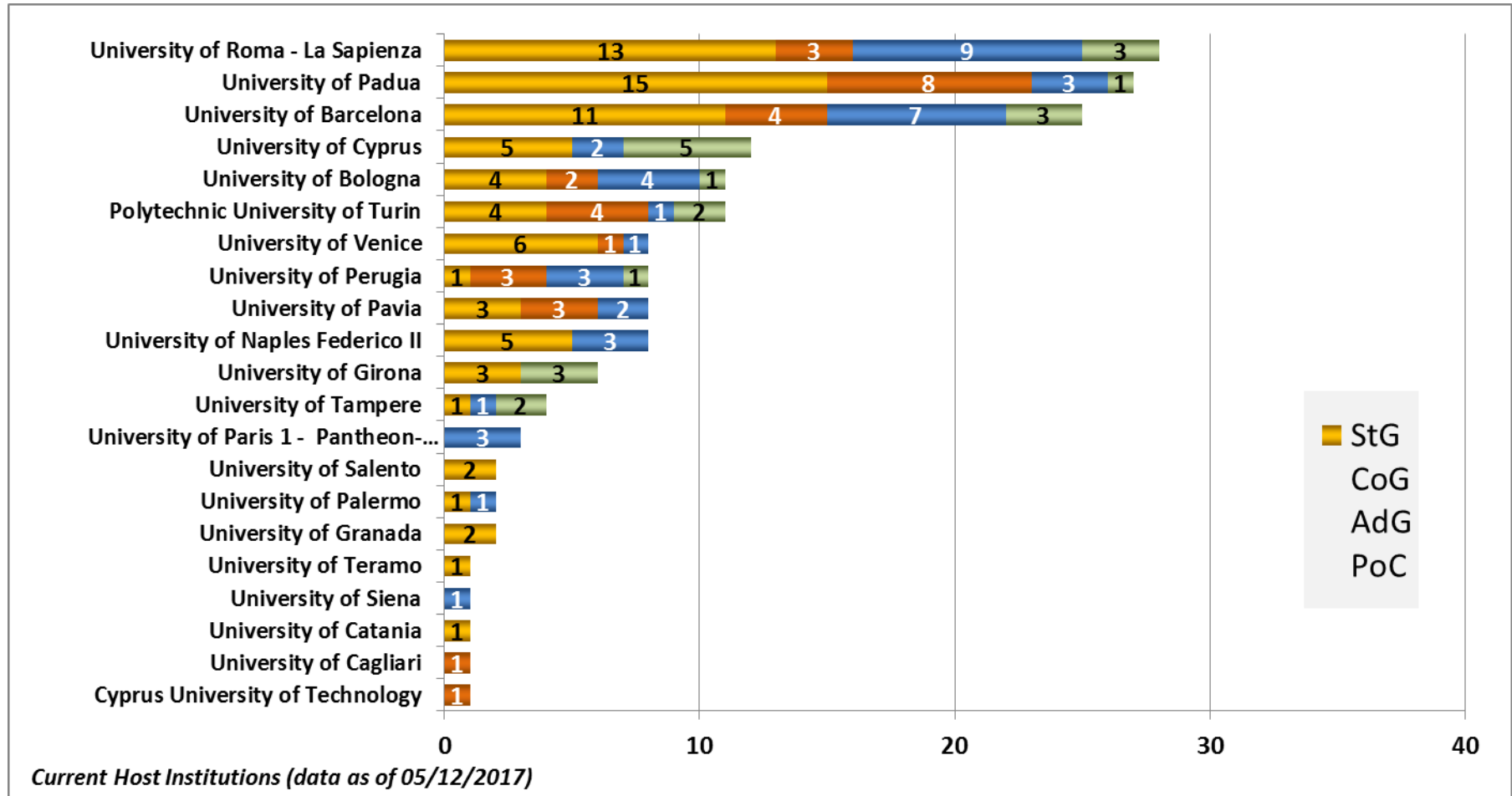
## Researchers from anywhere in the world can apply for ERC grants

ERC offers flexibility and accompanying measures:

- Additional “start-up” funding for scientists moving to Europe (EUR 500 000 for StG, EUR 750 000 for CoG and EUR 1 Million for AdG)
- Grantee can keep affiliation with home institute outside Europe (“significant part” of work time in Europe, at least 50%)
- Team members can be based outside Europe
- Grantee can move within Europe with the grant
- Several European countries/host institutions assist applicants and reward grantees with top-up funds



# ERC Grants in UNIMED members Universities

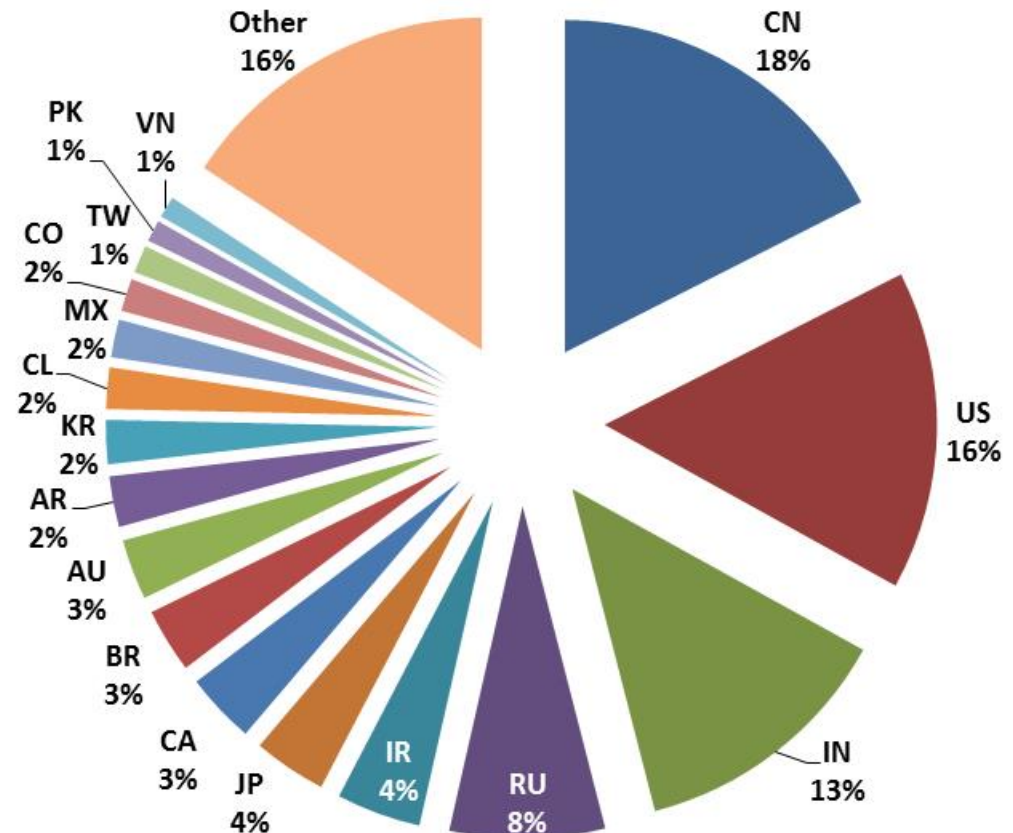


# Attracting Researchers to Europe

Nationality of ERC project teams (PIs not included)  
Analysis of **1,901** Starting and Advanced Grants

**EU: 71%**  
**Assoc. Countries: 10%**  
**non-EU/AC: 17%**  
unknown: 2%

In all ERC grants  
+ **9,000** non-ERA team members  
most from  
**China, US, India, and Russia**



# 38 Non-EU/AC Nationalities

Almost 8% of all ERC grants to principal investigators of non-EU/AC nationality

Non-EU/AC Principal Investigators	Starting and Consolidator grants	Advanced grants	Total grants
USA	162	93	255
Canada	60	10	70
Russia	40	9	49
India	43	2	45
Australia	37	6	43
Japan	23	6	29
China	27	0	27
New Zealand	10	6	16
Argentina	15	0	15
Other	64	8	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>621</b>

# Implementing Arrangements

- Opportunity for **non-European researchers** supported by foreign agencies to visit ERC research teams (unilateral approach)
  - The foreign researchers are supposed to be **excellent** ("national version" of the ERC grantee)
  - The **foreign scientist** is the one taking the **initiative** in the "matchmaking" (it is not the ERC/the ERC PI/the foreign agency...)
  - The **ERC does not intervene** in the selection of the foreign visitors
  - In general terms, costs of the visit are **mostly covered** by the foreign agency
- ### Implementing arrangements signed with the following countries:

  - USA (2012)
  - Republic of Korea (2013)
  - Argentina (2015)
  - China (2015)
  - Japan (2015)
  - South Africa (2015)
  - Mexico (2015)
  - Brazil (2016)
  - Canada (2016)
  - India (2017)

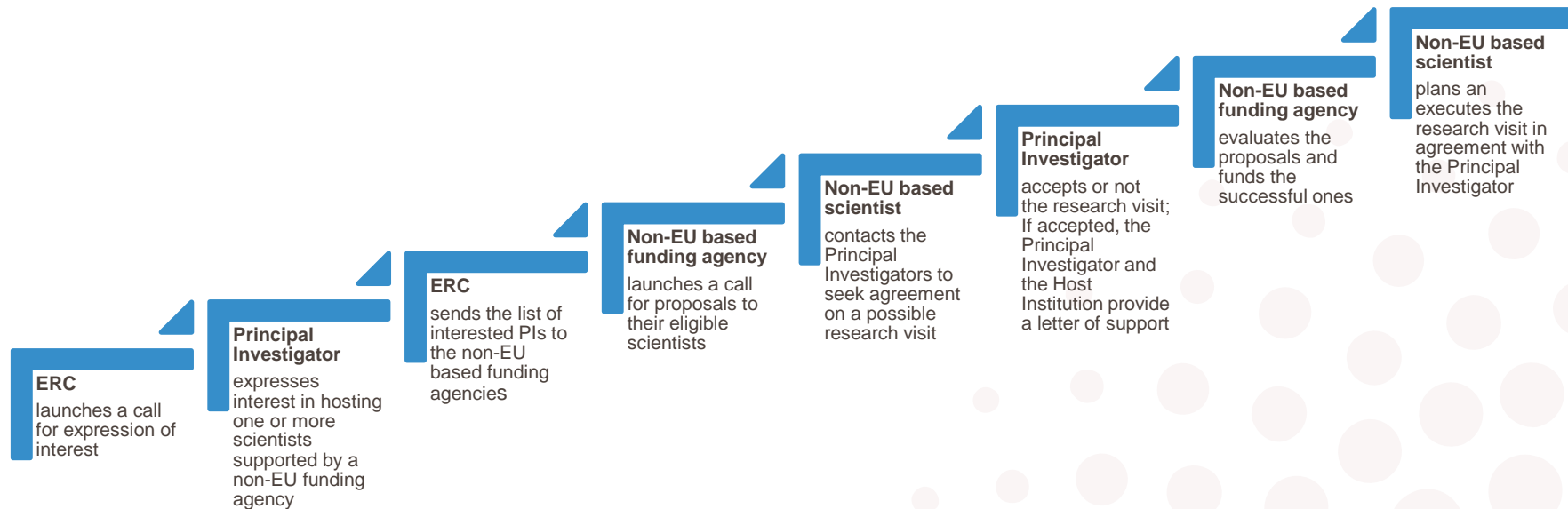


# Implementing Arrangements The Process



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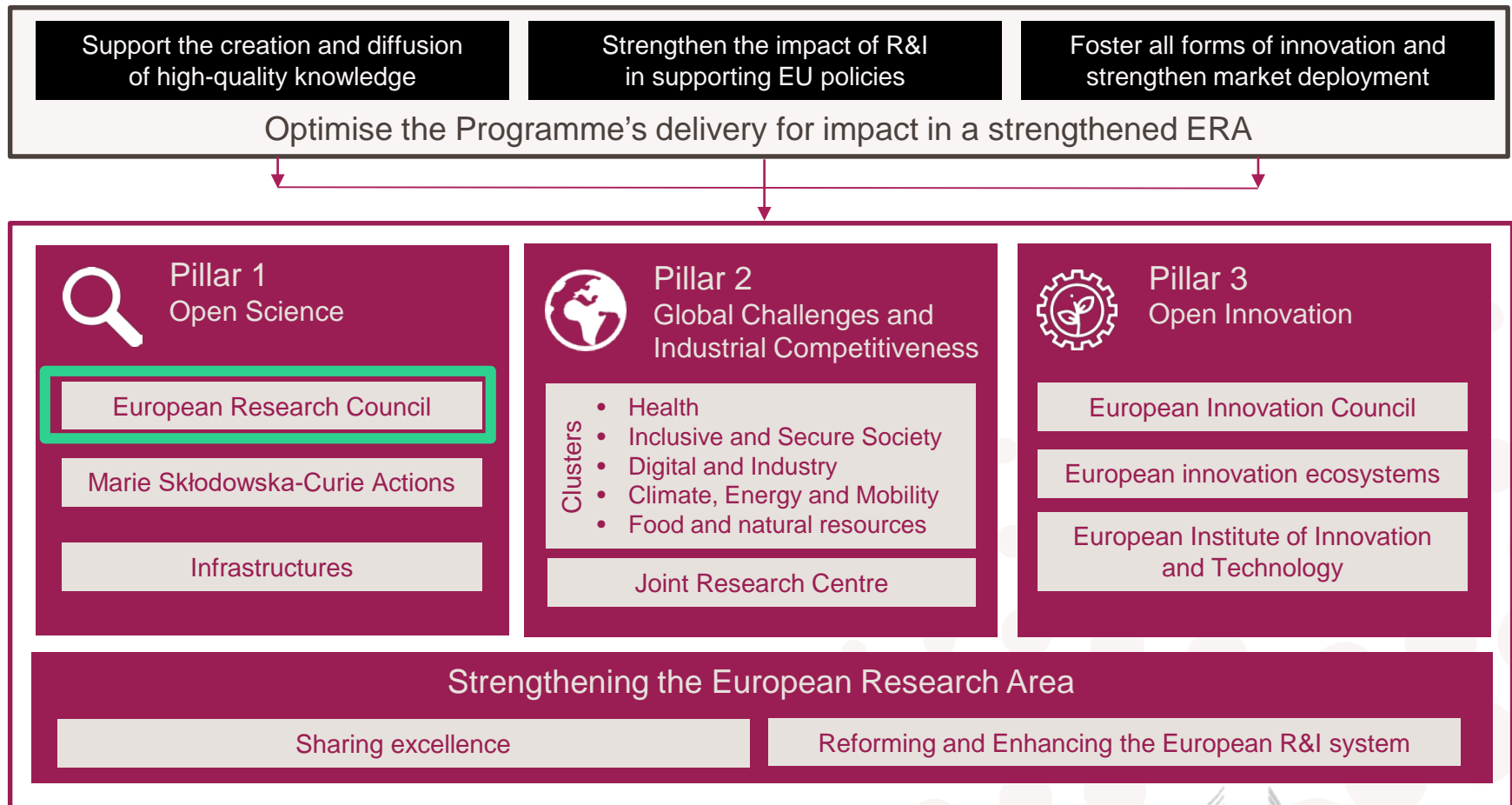
# Horizon Europe: Evolution not Revolution



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## Specific objectives of the Programme



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- More information: [erc.europa.eu](https://erc.europa.eu)
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