

## **Contingency measures for applicants from candidate associated countries facing delayed association to Horizon Europe and Euratom R&T**

The association process of several countries to Horizon Europe and Euratom R&T has not been completed yet. As described in the General Annexes to the work programme, applicants established in a country in the process of associating to Horizon Europe are treated as entities established in an associated country, if the Horizon Europe association agreement with the third country concerned applies at the time of signature of the grant agreement.

For some candidate associated countries, this condition may not be met at the expected date of signature of grant agreements stemming from the first calls of Horizon Europe and the Euratom Research and Training (R&T) programme. If an imminent association is not expected at the time of planned signature of the grant agreements, the Commission will inform applicants concerned of the situation during the grant preparation stage, allowing reasonable time for rearranging their proposals where this is possible. Available options depend on the nature of the call and on whether the country concerned has been included in the list of low- or middle-income countries in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide<sup>1</sup> or is a high-income country.<sup>2</sup>

### **Mono-beneficiary grants for which the entity must be established in a Member State or an associated country**

Proposals concerned have to be rejected based on ineligibility of the applicant. However, in cases where grant portability is foreseen, such as with the European Research Council's frontier research actions, applicants may be offered a reasonable time to exercise their right to portability towards an entity established in a Member State or an associated country.

### **Multi-beneficiary grants**

- If the country concerned has been included in the list of low- or middle-income countries<sup>3</sup> in the Horizon Europe Programme Guide, applicants from this country are automatically eligible for funding irrespective of the association status, as provided for in the General Annexes. The only action needed relates to cases where, as a result of the association not being established yet, the consortium will fail to meet the minimum eligibility conditions in terms of number of participants from Member States and associated countries. In such cases, the consortium may be offered a reasonable time to replace the applicant(s) concerned or add new applicants in order to fulfil the minimum eligibility conditions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide\\_horizon\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/programme-guide_horizon_en.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Article 23(2) of the Horizon Europe Regulation.

<sup>3</sup> Until now none of the candidate associated countries were included in the list of low- or middle-income countries in the Programme Guide in view of their expected association. The Commission however, may amend this list in early 2022.

<sup>4</sup> This option does not apply to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) due to the specific nature of these actions.

- If the country concerned is a high-income country, applicants from this country are not eligible for funding if association is not yet applicable.<sup>5</sup> In such cases, the consortium may be offered a reasonable time to rearrange their proposal, with one or several of the following options:
  - a) Allow the consortium to replace the ineligible applicant(s), in particular if necessary to ensure eligibility of the consortium;<sup>4</sup>
  - b) Allow the remaining applicants to implement the action without replacement if the eligibility conditions remain fulfilled without participation of the entity;
  - c) Allow the consortium to change the status of the entity to associated partner, unless excluded by the call conditions or grant agreement provisions. The entity concerned may later be re-established as a beneficiary through a grant amendment if the association agreement becomes applicable after the grant signature and if requested by the consortium. Associated partners cannot receive funding. However, if the association agreement foresees a date of retroactive application which is prior to the start of the action, and if their status changes to beneficiary, they may be reimbursed for the costs incurred from the beginning of the action.

The redistribution of the budget and tasks will be accepted as non-substantial change unless these changes would put into question the results of the evaluation.

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<sup>5</sup> Rare exceptions exist if this is set out in the work programme or if deemed essential for the implementation of the action.