

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002691/24
to the Commission**

Christian Ehler (PPE), Thomas Pellerin-Carlin (S&D), Ondřej Krutílek (ECR), Lina Gálvez (S&D), Ivars Ijabs (Renew)

(27 November 2024)

Subject: Horizon Europe: efficient grant agreements

The template for proposals under Horizon Europe is relatively complex, leading to a somewhat complicated grant agreement (GA) preparation process. Furthermore, the requirement to have the consortium agreement (CA) signed before the GA leads some coordinators to insist on signing the CA in advance. Experienced beneficiaries, however, prefer to review the GA and its annexes first. While the Commission acknowledges that this rule cannot be strictly enforced, some new coordinators still interpret it rigidly. This means that the GA is felt to be overly complex. Against this background, can the Commission answer the following questions?

1. Is there a significant difference in the number of exceptions and special cases mentioned in the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement compared with the Horizon 2020 Model Grant Agreement, and if so what is the reason for this increased complexity?
2. Does the Commission have any plans to simplify the proposal template in order to simplify the GA process?
3. Is the Commission planning any additional communication to make clear to coordinators and policy officers that the CA can be signed after the GA is finalised?

Submitted: 27.11.2024

Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission

(12 February 2025)

1. Compared to Horizon 2020, there is no increased complexity in the Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement ⁽¹⁾. Provisions have been further simplified and harmonised, a data sheet included, and the number of Articles, Annexes and the types of grant agreements reduced.

The Horizon Europe Model Grant Agreement is based on a corporate model, with streamlined common provisions to all directly and indirectly managed EU funded programmes, to simplify implementation and facilitate synergies. The number of exceptions and special cases stems from specific rules applicable to different EU programmes.

Specific provisions for different types of actions are detailed in Annex 5. The type of Model Grant Agreement is included in the documents published with a call for proposals. These measures overall help beneficiaries anticipating the applicable grant agreement provisions and further address them, where necessary, in the consortium agreement in a timely manner.

2. The Commission is planning to progressively simplify the proposal application template by removing the request to provide information on various non-financial obligations. This simplification will be mirrored in the related reporting requirements.
3. While not being a legal obligation, the Commission advises consortia to prepare and sign consortium agreements before the beginning of the grant implementation, in order to have a solid basis for the internal arrangements and avoid conflicts. This explanation is part of the training events that the Commission regularly organises.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/agr-contr/unit-mga_he_en.pdf