

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000204/26
to the Commission
Maria Grapini (S&D)
(20 January 2026)**

Subject: Use of public funds at CERN and transparency of funding

After being petitioned several times on this matter in my capacity as a member of the CONT Committee, can the Commission state:

1. Whether it has checked if money is being wasted at CERN, as the people petitioning claim?
2. They specify that CERN's attachment to FPGA architecture has led to a cycle of 'construction-failure-reconstruction'. It is in the public interest for there to be transparency and accountability in respect of research facilities funded by EU Member States. Given that CERN has repeatedly implemented FPGA-based systems that were subsequently abandoned, meaning that money was wasted, will the Commission change the way in which funding is provided for research facilities and make this more transparent?

Submitted: 20.1.2026

**Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(7 April 2026)**

The EU is not a member of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) ⁽¹⁾ and not part of the CERN governance.

The Commission can only comment on EU funds under its remit such as from Horizon Europe ⁽²⁾, with competitive open calls for proposals e.g. for research activities, technology development, and knowledge valorisation.

The selection process involves independent experts and is based on pre-defined and transparent criteria (excellence, impact and implementation).

The implementation is controlled through reporting, monitoring, and auditing, with specific procedures depending on the fund used for a specific call.

As such, CERN has applied and been awarded funding for projects under different parts of the Horizon Europe Programme, including European Research Council grants, Marie-Sklodowska-Curie fellowships, Pillar 2 collaborative projects and research infrastructures.

This is carried out in full transparency and all the information on the projects and awarded funding can be freely accessed in the Horizon Europe dashboard.

The Commission is accountable for the EU funding and ensures that the procedures for allocating and monitoring this funding follow the highest standards of excellence including transparency.

EU funding for research infrastructures opens national facilities to researchers from all over Europe through support to transnational access and supports technology development needed by European facilities to remain state-of-the-art.

The importance of complementary EU funding of research infrastructures was highlighted in the Letta ⁽³⁾, Draghi ⁽⁴⁾ and Heitor reports ⁽⁵⁾ of 2024, and the Commission's 2025 proposal for Horizon Europe under the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework ⁽⁶⁾ includes an ambitious support to research infrastructures.

⁽¹⁾ An intergovernmental organisation essentially funded by its members. Currently, 25 countries, including 20 EU Member States, are members of CERN.
⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/695/oj/eng>.
⁽³⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/ny3j24sm/much-more-than-a-market-report-by-enrico-letta.pdf>.
⁽⁴⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/draghi-report_en.
⁽⁵⁾ <https://op.europa.eu/publication-detail/-/publication/2f9fc221-86bb-11ef-a67d-01aa75ed71a1>.
⁽⁶⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/horizon-europe-2028-2034-twice-bigger-simpler-faster-and-more-impactful-2025-07-16_en.