

EN
P-001946/2025
Answer given by Ms Zaharieva
on behalf of the European Commission
(18.8.2025)

The European Research Council (ERC) promotes top-tier scientific research in Europe by offering competitive funding opportunities, supporting frontier research across all disciplines, to enhance innovative breakthroughs in all fields of science. The ERC has funded since 2007 more than 17 000 projects and over 10 000 researchers, across physical sciences and engineering, life sciences, social sciences and humanities¹. This led to over 2 200 patents and other Intellectual Property Rights applications. More than 200 000 articles were published in scientific journals and the ERC grantees have been awarded with 14 Nobel Prizes, 7 Fields Medals, 11 Wolf Prizes and dozens of important prizes.

The mentioned projects, addressing Muslim cultures and societies, explore topics like minority inclusion in democracies and changes in Islamic law². These projects are world-class scholarly undertakings that advance the frontiers of knowledge.

The ERC employs a rigorous evaluation process to assess all research proposals. Through a comprehensive, independent peer review process, proposals are examined for scientific merit and feasibility. In addition, the ERC maintains the highest standard of oversight and ensures that funded projects adhere to all relevant legislation and ethical standards. Proposals undergo a detailed ethics review by independent ethics experts and receive ethics clearance before grants are signed³.

The ERC funds projects that push the frontiers of knowledge, aligned with the values of academic freedom and scientific inquiry. Projects are selected for funding by independent scientific panels in the respective fields of research, via transparent, competitive evaluations, based solely on scientific excellence.

¹ Within the social sciences and humanities projects which represent around a fourth of ERC grants, topics span an extensive range of disciplines, including economics and finance, law and political science, sociology, psychology and linguistics, literature and philosophy, history and archaeology, geography and environmental studies, anthropology, arts and cultural and religious studies – the category in which falls the mentioned project.

² Comprehensive information regarding the scientific methodologies and outcomes of the referenced projects is available through the following links:

Nativism, Islamophobia and Islamism in the Age of Populism: Culturalisation and Religionisation of what is Social, Economic and Political in Europe ISLAM-OPOB-ISM <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/785934>;

Openings to the Inclusion of Muslim Minorities in Today's Democracies INCLUDE

<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101001133>;

Mapping Change in Islamic Law, Rules and Practices MCILRaP <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101141682>;

Animals in Philosophy of the Islamic World |Mizan, Culture in Muslim societies and throughout the Islamic world: [https://mizanproject.org/animals-in-philosophy-of-the-islamic-world/#:~:text=Scholars%20have%20explored%20ancient%20Greek%20and%20Indian%20discussions,and%20on%20the%20types%20and%20uses%20of%20animals](https://mizanproject.org/animals-in-philosophy-of-the-islamic-world/#:~:text=Scholars%20have%20explored%20ancient%20Greek%20and%20Indian%20discussions,and%20on%20the%20types%20and%20uses%20of%20animals;);

Beyond Sharia: The Role of Sufism in Shaping Islam PIETY <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101020403>.

³ 'Annex A: The ethics review process', Commission Decision C(2017)4750 amending Decision C(2014)2454 on the ERC rules for submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures relevant to the specific programme of Horizon 2020

https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/sgl/erc/h2020-erc-se-rules-amended2_en.pdf and

'Annex A: Ethics review process', The ERC Rules of Submission, and the related methods & procedures for peer review and proposal evaluation relevant to the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/guidance/erc-rules-for-submission-and-evaluation_he-erc_v1.0_en.pdf.