



INESC
BRUSSELS
HUB

FP10 and the European Competitiveness Fund

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Overall structure

The budget for the whole programme has **doubled to EUR 175 billion** in current prices, for 2028-2034.



¹ Consistent with activities under the European Competitiveness Fund

Pillar I – Excellent Science

Pillar I aims to strengthen the EU's scientific base, attract top talents and promote excellent research in Europe.

Indicative budget: over **EUR 44 billion** (+82%), including:

- EUR 31,5 billion for an **extended and doubled ERC**



Pillar II – Competitiveness and Society

Pillar II aims to support collaborative research and innovation in areas of high societal impact.

Indicative budget : **EUR 75.9 billion** (+50%), of which:

- EUR 68.3 billion for 'Competitiveness':
 - EUR 25.3 billion for 'Clean Transition and Industrial Decarbonisation'
 - EUR 19.7 billion for 'Health, Biotech, Agriculture and Bioeconomy'
 - EUR 16.9 billion for 'Digital Leadership'
 - EUR 6.4 billion for 'Resilience and Security, Defence Industry and Space'
- EUR 7.6 billion for 'Society'



Pillar III - Innovation

Pillar III aims to support innovation in Europe, with a focus on promoting the development of new products, services and business models.

The EIC will be expanded to fund high-risk disruptive projects in stages and will introduce a strong focus for defence and dual-use startups.

Indicative budget : **EUR 38.8 billion**
(+191%)

EIC more than tripled to support innovative startups



Pillar IV - European Research Area (ERA)

Pillar IV aims to support the development of a unified ERA with a focus on promoting excellence, inclusiveness and impact.

A reformed support for research and technology infrastructures.

Indicative budget: **EUR 16.3 billion**
(+187%), of which

- EUR 5.4 billion for a reformed 'Widening Participation and Spreading Excellence'



Novelties

**Further
Simplification**

**Partnerships
Landscape**

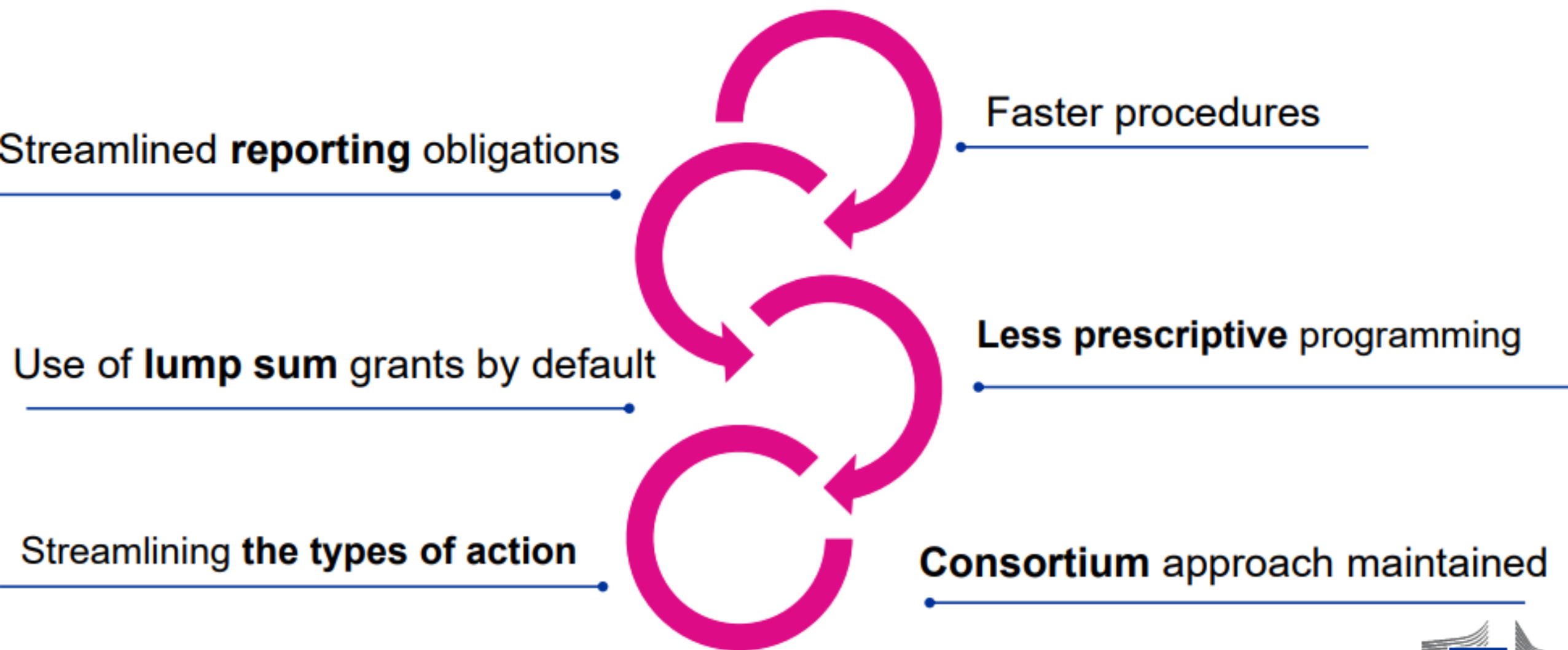
EIC

**Research and
Technology
Infrastructures**

Widening

**Dual-use
research**

Simplification for applicants



Partnerships

Partnerships will remain a key instrument of the programme and will work in synergy with the ECF

Partnerships will have a radically simplified landscape:

Key simplifications:

- Only **two forms** of partnerships (work programme based and Treaty-based)
- A **strategic and coherent** portfolio of a **limited number** of partnerships
- Participating private parties will be asked to contribute in cash
- For deployment activities, the ECF may contribute to the objectives of the partnerships



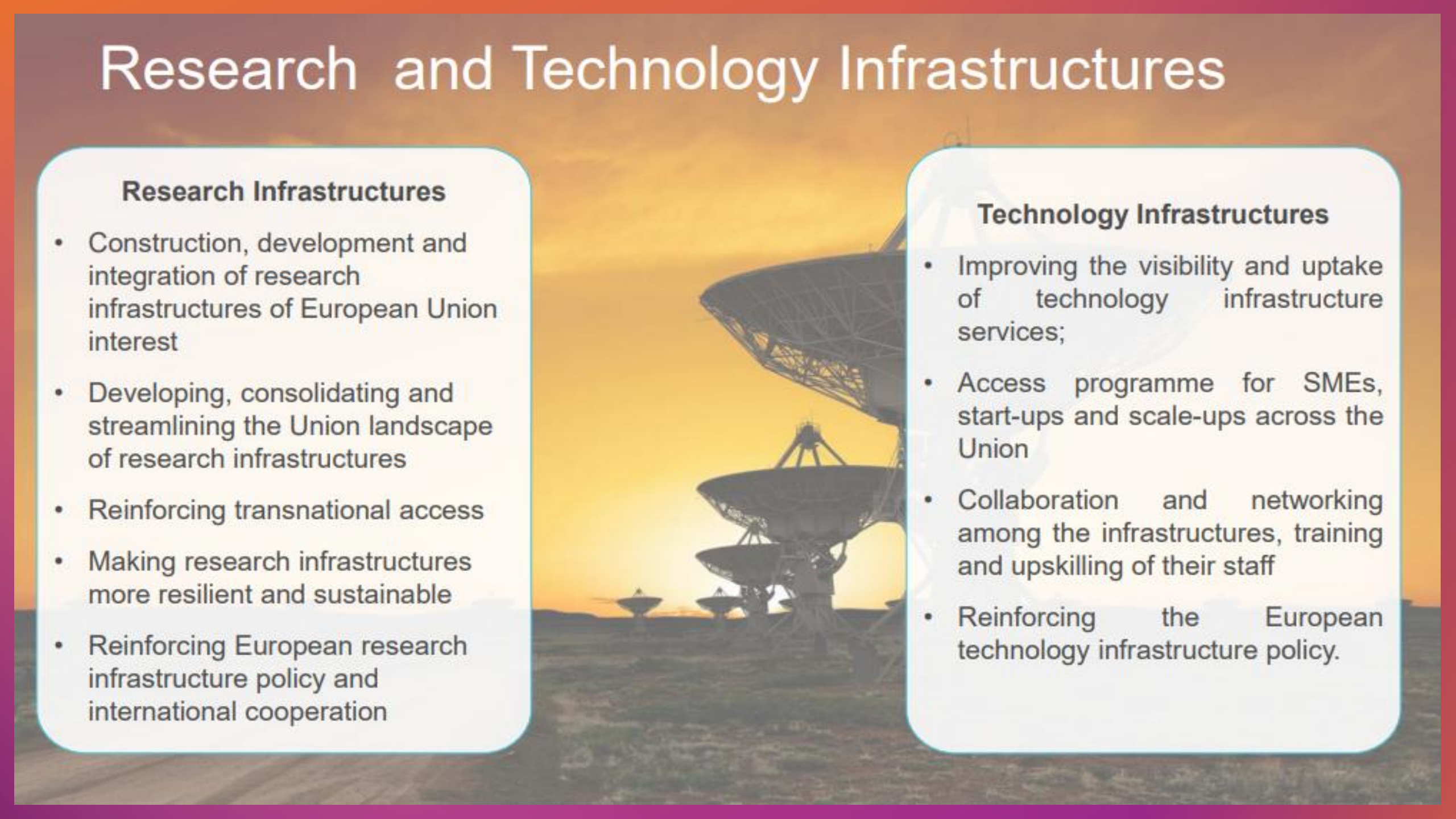
European Innovation Council

- The European Innovation Council (EIC) has already developed into the biggest European deep tech venture capital fund.
- The EIC will support innovative start-ups SMEs, with a focus on promoting disruptive innovation and entrepreneurship.
- To further improve its integrated model, the EIC will include:

more “**ARPA**” elements,
supporting high risk projects
assessed by Programme
Managers.

a “**DARPA**” approach
supporting defence and
dual use startups.

Research and Technology Infrastructures

The background of the slide features a photograph of several large radio telescope dishes, similar to those at the Arecibo Observatory, silhouetted against a bright orange and yellow sunset sky. The dishes are arranged in a line, receding into the distance.

Research Infrastructures

- Construction, development and integration of research infrastructures of European Union interest
- Developing, consolidating and streamlining the Union landscape of research infrastructures
- Reinforcing transnational access
- Making research infrastructures more resilient and sustainable
- Reinforcing European research infrastructure policy and international cooperation

Technology Infrastructures

- Improving the visibility and uptake of technology infrastructure services;
- Access programme for SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups across the Union
- Collaboration and networking among the infrastructures, training and upskilling of their staff
- Reinforcing the European technology infrastructure policy.

Widening – two categories of countries

Transition countries



Cyprus



Malta



Estonia



Portugal



Greece



Slovenia

- **Classification** based on innovation performance (EIS) in the last three years; and participation success under HE

- **Measures:**

a) Widening: capacity building and networking measures

b) Transition: networking, knowledge valorisation, countering brain drain and dedicated National Contact Points (NCP) support.

Widening countries



Bulgaria



Lithuania



Croatia



Poland



Czechia



Romania



Hungary



Slovakia



Latvia

Dual Use Research

- Like the ECF, **Horizon Europe will be open to dual use by default.**
- Defence activities, both in the area of research and deployment, will be covered under a specific programme for defence.
- Moreover, the European Innovation Council can also cover both dual use and defence applications.



Why ECF?

NOW

Complex and fragmented funding landscape

Lack of funding continuity on investment journey

Limited coordinated strategic focus

Untapped potential to mobilise private capital

High complexity for beneficiaries
Multiple entry points

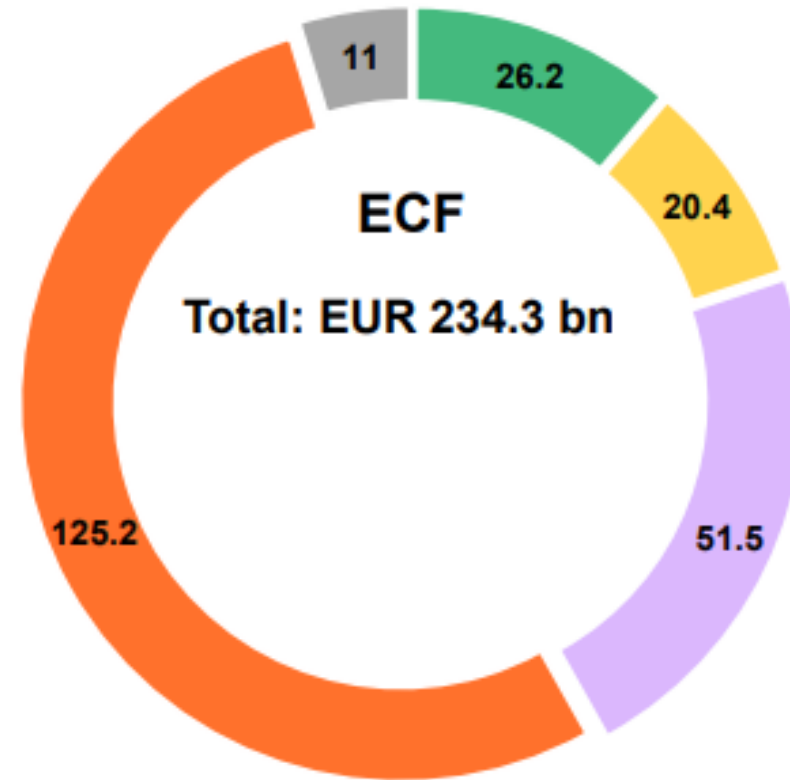


FUTURE

- Establish an investment capacity to support strategic technologies and manufacturing, including research and innovation, and IPCEIs
- Accompany projects along the entire investment journey (from research, through scale-up, industrial deployment, to manufacturing and deployment), support entire value chains (from critical raw materials to final products)
- Focus on a set of commonly agreed strategic funding priorities
- Improve coordination with MS via Competitiveness Coordination Tool
- Increase flexibility to adapt to new and emerging priorities
- Flexibly mobilise the full financial toolbox (grants, loans, equity and procurement)
- Improve access to funding for scaling-up companies and projects
- Simplify access to funding for businesses and beneficiaries

Budget**

- Indicative distribution
- Budgetary commitments for activities extending over 1 year can be broken down into several annual instalments
- The total financial envelope may be used for technical and administrative assistance for the ECF implementation



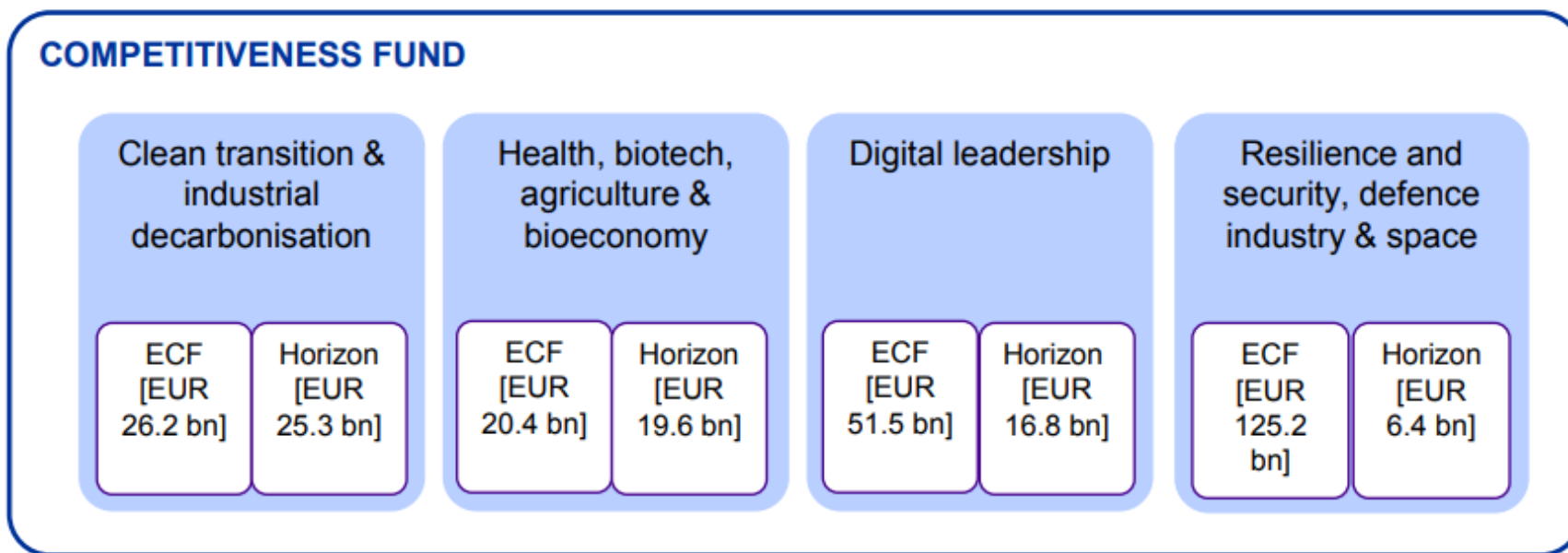
■ Clean transition and decarbonisation
■ Digital leadership
■ ECF InvestEU Instrument, Chapter III

■ Health, biotech, agri and bioeconomy
■ Resilience, security, defence industry, space

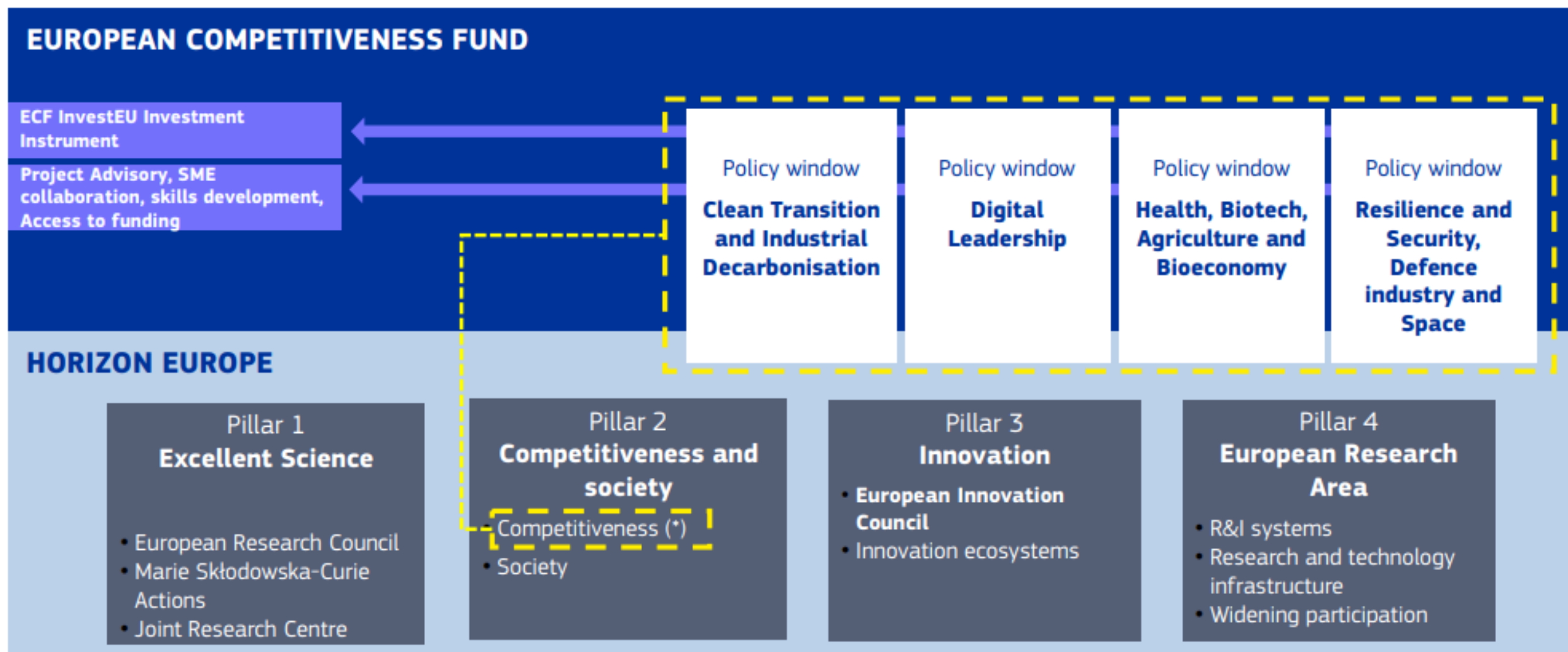
ECF Regulation in a nutshell

- **Chapter I:** General provisions - objectives, budget, single rulebook.
- **Chapter II:** ECF Toolbox
- **Chapter III:** Project Advisory services, support SME collaboration and streamlined access to funding
- **Chapter IV-VII:** Detailed provisions for the implementation of each of the four ECF policy windows
- **Chapter VIII:** Final provisions: procedural and administrative framework for implementing ECF

ECF window structure and budget



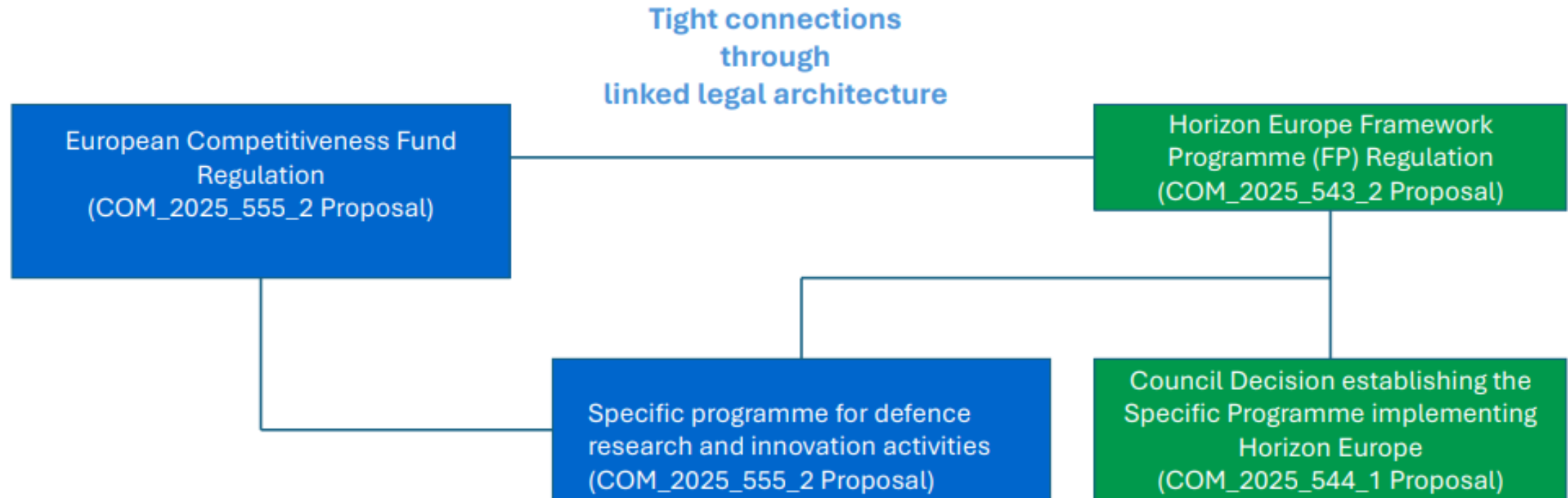
ECF & HE architecture



* Consistent with activities of the European Competitiveness Fund



Horizon Europe & ECF – legal architecture overview



Governance

European Competitiveness Fund Regulation (COM_2025_555_2 Proposal)

Strategic Stakeholder Board

- Advises on the overall direction for the ECF, long term competitiveness, market failures and the identification of strategic portfolios of projects
- Informed by the observatory on emerging technologies

Thematic platforms for windows

- To ensure that stakeholders are consulted in the development of the work programmes, one or several thematic platforms per window

Advisory Board for the Invest EU ECF Instrument

- Advise on the design of financial products and on the strategic and operational direction for budgetary guarantees/financial instruments
- Advise on the coordination with the EIC

ECF Comitology

- Provides an opinion on the draft work programmes and examines for the defence activities of the “resilience and security, defence industry and space” policy window.

Horizon Europe Framework Programme (FP) Regulation (COM_2025_543_2 Proposal)

ERC Scientific Council

- Establishes the Draft Work Programme

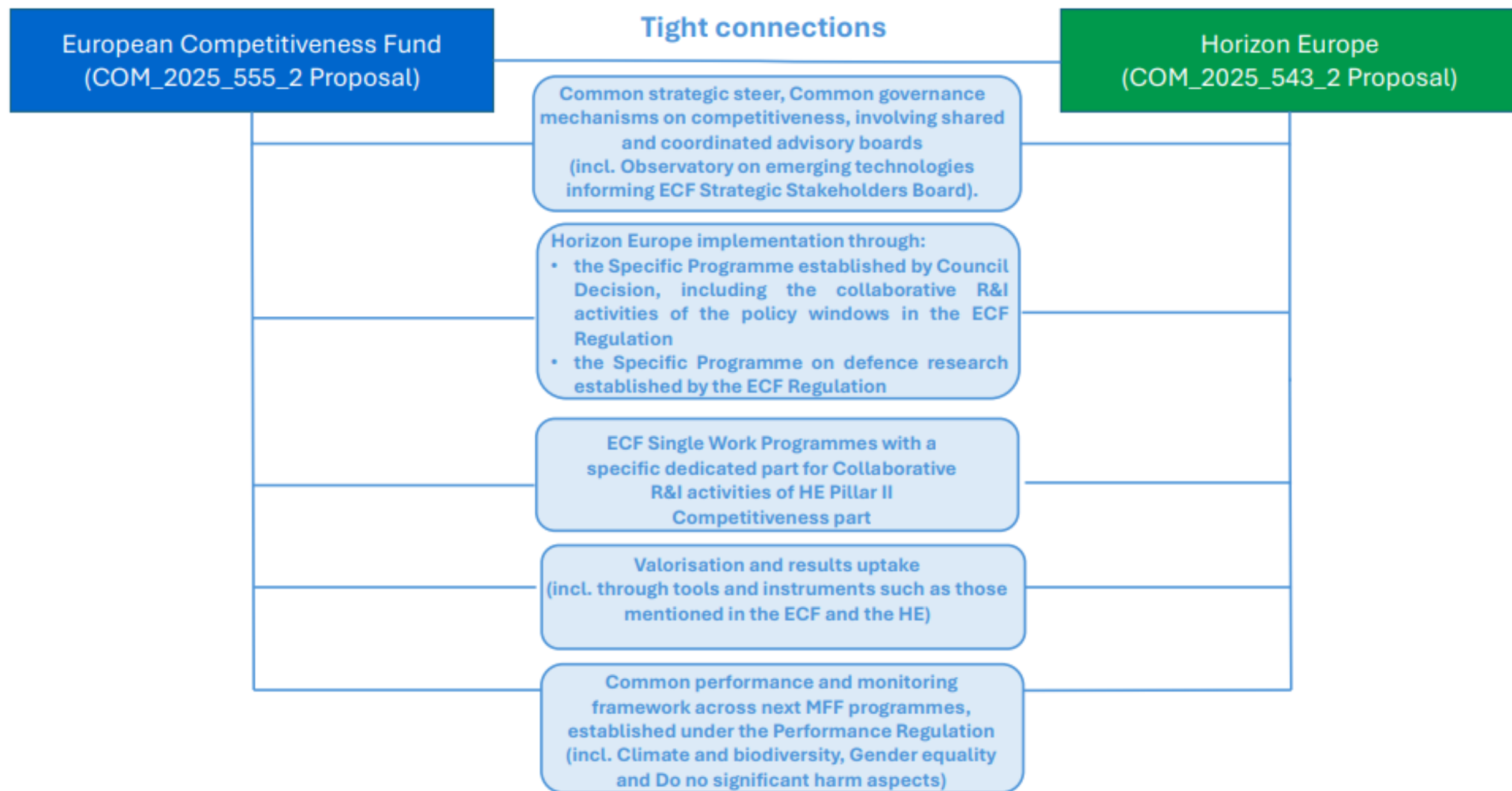
EIC Board

- Informs the Draft Work Programmes and sets up challenges

Horizon Europe Comitology

- Examines and provides an opinion on the Draft Work Programmes

Horizon Europe & ECF links – more detailed overview

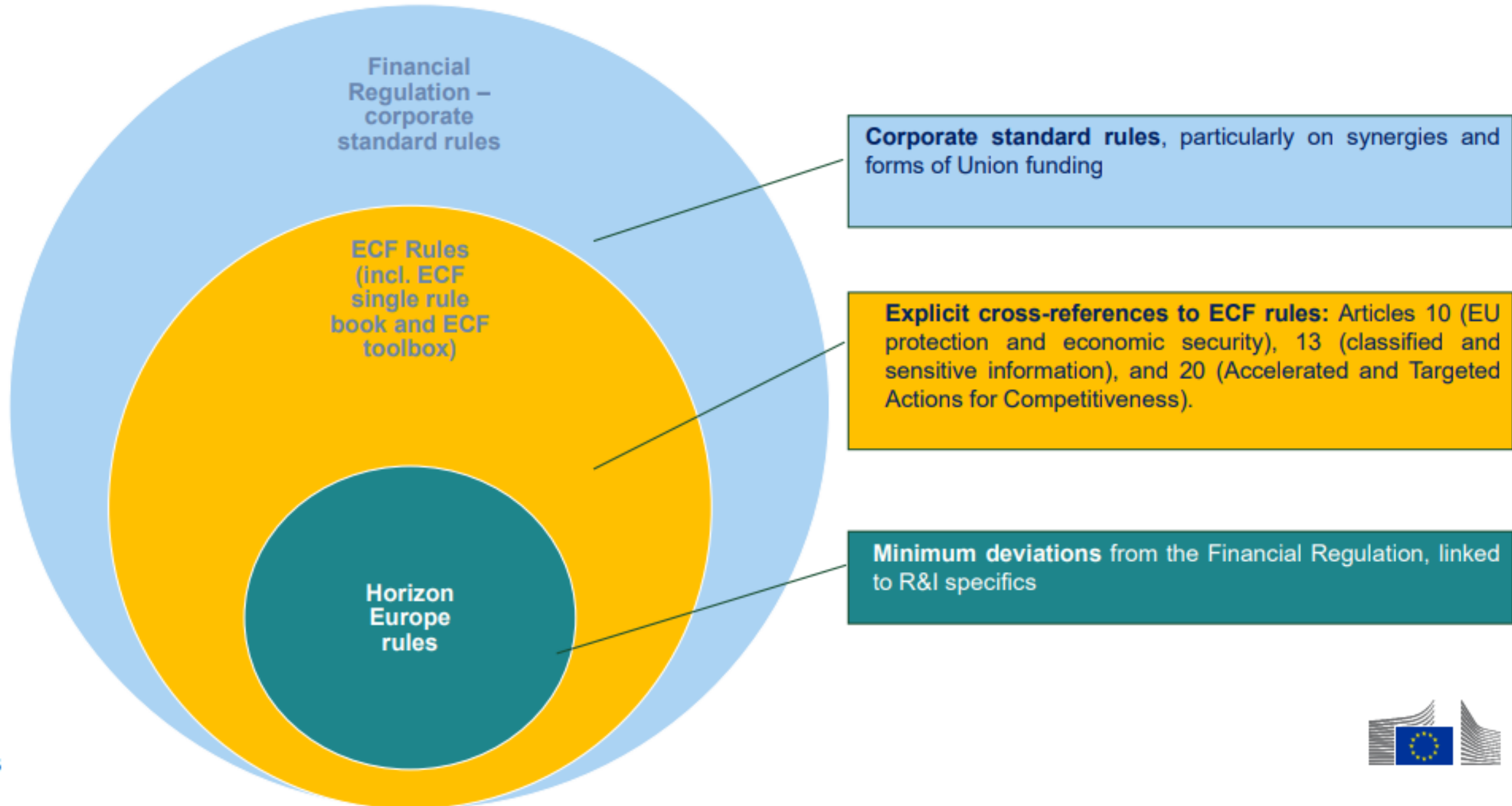


Horizon Europe & ECF – common rules overview

Tight connections
through:

European Competitiveness Fund Regulation (COM_2025_555_2 Proposal)	Single Rulebook approach	Horizon Europe FP Regulation (COM_2025_543_2 Proposal)
	Alternative, combined and cumulative funding - HE Article 8 + ECF Article 8 – Seal of Competitiveness	HE extra criterion for Seal of Competitiveness (i.e. budgetary constraints)
	ECF Articles 10(2), 10(3) (EU Preferences) (unless otherwise specified) - HE Article 20	
	ECF Article 13 (rules on classified information and sensitive information) - HE Article 20	
	ECF Article 20 (Accelerated and Targeted Actions for Competitiveness) (unless otherwise specified) - HE Article 20	
	ECF Comitology procedure for ECF WP, including for collaborative R&I activities integrated within a dedicated part in ECF WP – ECF Article 15(2) – HE Article 4(3)	
	EIC defence related activities – EIC under the HE can support defence (article 16 HE) and the entire HE can support dual- use activities only entities established in third countries associated with the European Competitiveness Fund for defence activities	

Horizon Europe – Rules based on Single Rulebook



ECF Architecture – tight connection with Horizon Europe

Single rulebook approach: common rules on alternative, combined and cumulative funding, EU Preference, Classified information, Accelerated and Targeted Actions for Competitiveness.

Common scope: ECF policy windows to ensure strategic focus.

ECF single work programmes: the work programmes of the ECF policy windows will include collaborative R&I activities in a specific dedicated part to ensure seamless investment journey from research to manufacturing and deployment. This might include contributions to European Partnerships, where necessary to meet the ECF objectives.

Common governance: including shared and coordinated advisory bodies. ECF Comitology procedure will apply to ECF WPs, including for collaborative R&I activities.

Common and coordinated toolbox:

- Exclusivity of the ECF InvestEU Instrument, with the exception of financial instruments under the EIC Fund.
- EIC: To be implemented in close coordination with ECF policy windows. ECF work programmes to set out priorities that will steer EIC challenges.
- Scale up: All scaleup financing under the MFF 2028-2034 to take place under the ECF.
- Competitiveness Seals with common basic characteristics between ECF and HE.

Defence: ECF is specific programme for defence research & innovation.

Questions?!