

Annual Conference of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences



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ERC as a Building Block of the European Research Policy

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Outline



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- Introduction
- Priorities and programmes of the European Commission
- Horizon 2020
- European Research Council (ERC)
- Budget allocations
- ERC international strategy
- Conclusion

Research and Innovation within Priorities of the European Commission



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- **Jobs, growth and investment**
- **Digital single market**
- **Energy union and climate**
- **Internal market**
- A deeper and fairer economic and monetary union
- A balanced and progressive trade policy to harness globalisation
- **Justice and fundamental rights**
- **Migration**
- **A stronger global actor**
- Democratic change

Funding Opportunities in Research and Innovation



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- Funding programmes and open calls
- Fellowships and individual research grants
 - ERC grants for frontier research
 - Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions
- Prizes
- EU Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS)
- Seal of Excellence

Horizon 2020

- Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020) – in addition to the private investment that this money attracts
- It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market

Horizon 2020 Sections

- Excellent Science
 - **European Research Council (ERC)**
 - Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)
 - Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions
 - Research Infrastructures, including e-Infrastructures
- Industrial Leadership
- Societal Challenges
- Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation
- Science with and for Society
- European Innovation Council (EIC) Pilot
- Focus Areas
- European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)
- Euratom

ERC Mission

ERC created
in 2007



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To raise the level, dynamism and creativity of the whole European research system by:

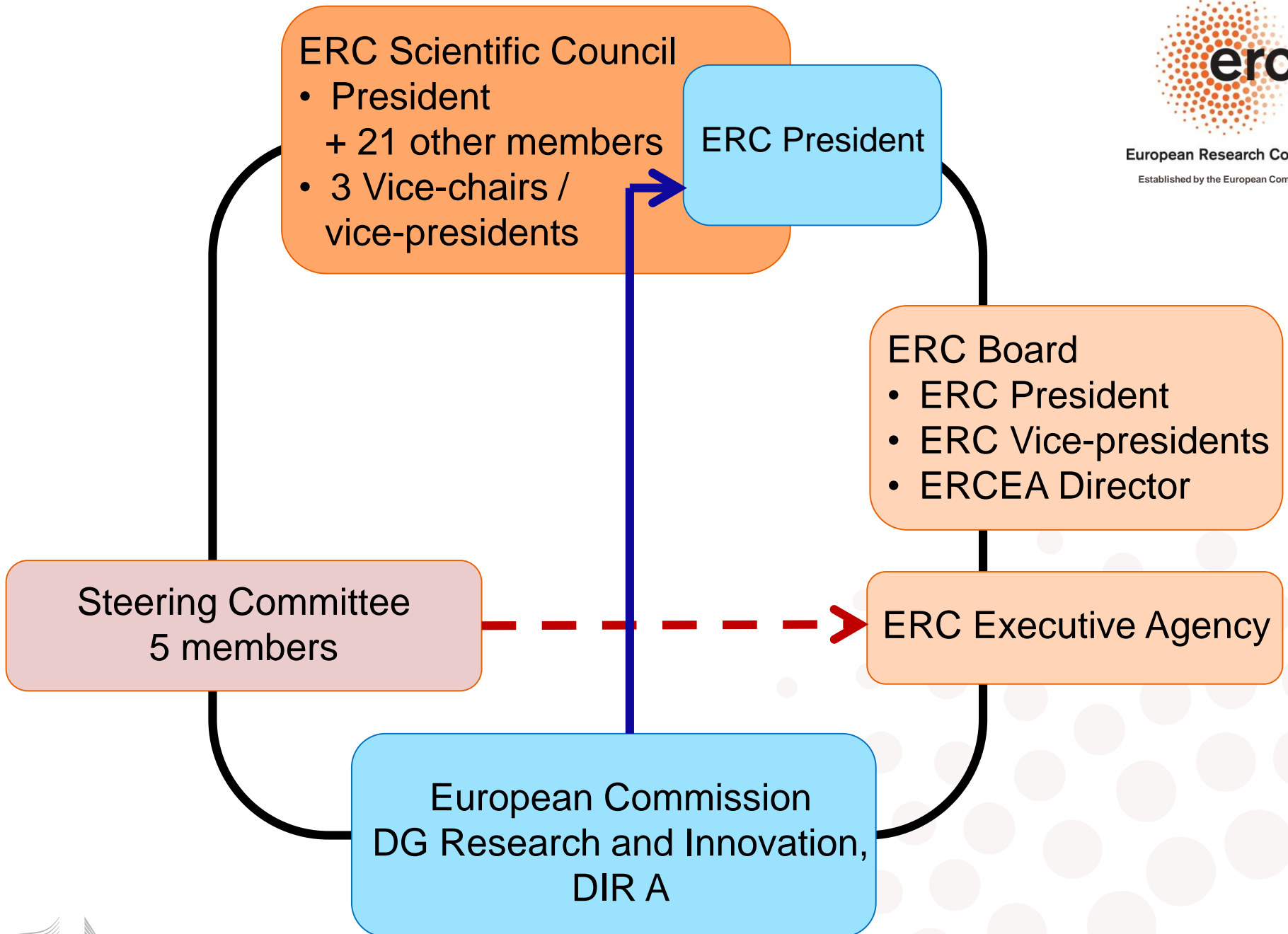
- Supporting the emergence of research leaders in Europe capable of opening new avenues in their disciplines and of training and inspiring others
- Improving the career prospects of early stage researchers in Europe so as to reduce brain drain and promote institutional change
- Providing a benchmark for all of Europe's national research authorities and individual institutions encouraging further efforts, reforms and investments, thereby sustaining structural reforms across Europe

ERC Support to Frontier Research

- ERC supports frontier research across all fields, cross disciplinary proposals and pioneering ideas in new and emerging fields which introduce unconventional and innovative approaches
 - Frontier research stands at the forefront of creating new knowledge and understanding
 - Frontier research is an intrinsically risky endeavour
 - Frontier research pursues questions irrespective of established disciplinary boundaries
 - There are no barriers between basic and applied research

ERC Selection Process

- The core of the ERC intervention lies in the peer review-based selection process and the features of the grants awarded, both designed by an independent Scientific Council to be simple and flexible
- The selection process is highly competitive, based on the sole criterion of excellence, organised on a pan-European scale and fully bottom-up in terms of research areas and project objectives
- The grants awarded are long-term, generous and awarded only to host institutions that commit to provide the selected Principal Investigator with the conditions to independently manage the funding



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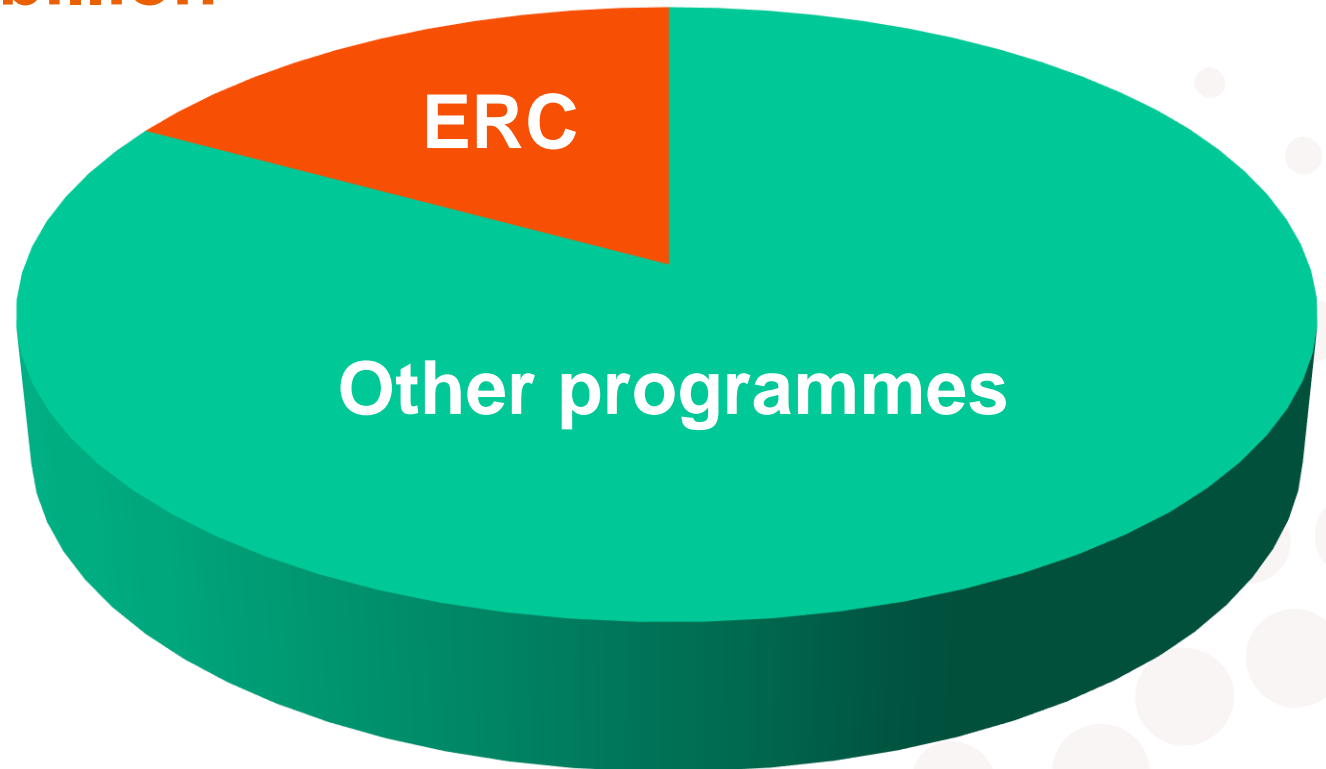
ERC vs. European Commission

- A critical feature of the ERC is its autonomy in defining the scientific strategy
- However, the Scientific Council continuously has to defend its autonomy
- Some constraints
 - the need to report against H2020 policy-oriented impact indicators (climate change, sustainability)
 - the request for ERC to harmonize its IT system with that used by the Commission

Horizon 2020 Budget

Total: ~ €80 billion (FP 9, *Horizon Europe*, €100 billion)

ERC: ~ €13 billion



Budget Allocation to ERC

- The EU budget for research is decided every 7 years as part of the total EU long-term budget
- This is a complex decision making process involving the European Commission, the European Council, and the European Parliament
- The amount of the EU budget going to research is the result of the negotiation among the priorities and political agendas of all actors, including Member States
- The same applies for the research budget distribution among different components (excellent science, innovation, industrial research, support to research infrastructures, widening participation, etc.)

Allocation of the ERC Budget to Areas of Knowledge



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- The Scientific Council adopts a demand-driven approach
- For the Starting, Consolidator, Advanced and Synergy Grant calls, ERC allocates an indicative budget to each panel in proportion to the number of proposals received and the budgetary demand of its assigned proposals
- Potential risk: artificial oversubscription in some areas (negligible risk for the ERC)

ERC International Strategy

- The ERC operates on a bottom-up basis without predetermined priorities. Researchers from anywhere in the world can apply for ERC grants provided that the research they undertake will be carried out in an EU Member State or Associated Country
- Overall, among the over 7,000 ERC-funded researchers, 621 are non-ERA nationals (from 38 countries), which represent 8% of all ERC grantees

ERC International Strategy (2)

- Additional funding is available to cover 'start-up' costs for scientists moving to Europe
 - up to €500 000 for Starting grantees
 - up to €750 000 for Consolidator grantees
 - up to €1 000 000 for Advanced grantees
- Dual affiliation is possible: ERC grantees are required to spend 50% of their time in Europe

ERC Cooperation with Brazil

- Until now, the ERC evaluated 118 applications submitted by researchers of Brazilian nationality
 - 79 proposals under Starting Grants ERC calls
 - 18 under Consolidator Grants ERC calls
 - 14 under Advanced Grants ERC calls
- With regard to the scientific domain
 - 33 in Life Sciences,
 - 55 in Physical Sciences and Engineering
 - 23 in Social Sciences and Humanities
- 7 PI's of Brazilian nationality obtained an ERC grant:
6 starting and 1 consolidator grantees;
1 in the LS, 4 in the PE, and 2 in the SH domain

EC–Brazil Implementing Arrangement

- "Implementing Arrangements" were launched to boost opportunities for scientists supported by non-European funding agencies to come to European Union and Associated Countries to temporarily join a research team run by an ERC grantee
- The Implementing Agreement between EC and the Brazilian National Council of the State funding agencies (CONFAP) was signed on 13 Oct 2016
- Until now, 11 Brazilian scientists were selected

Conclusion: EC Key Messages on FP9



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Invest more ambitiously

Continue simplification

Support breakthrough innovation

Create more impact through mission-orientation and citizens' involvement

Increase synergies with other EU funding programmes and EU Policies

Strengthen international cooperation

Reinforce openness

Rationalise the funding landscape

← With Brexit looming EU Commissioners have not signalled intention to consider a budget below current levels

← ERC, EIC

← Missions

Source: COM(2018) 2 Final of 11.1.2018, "Horizon 2020 interim evaluation: maximising the impact of EU research and innovation"

← Mainly via missions and EIC



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**Thank you
very much
for your
attention!**

