

# HORIZON 2020 GEOSCIENCE SURVEY

## key facts

### Research & innovation: Europe's future

The EU's research framework programmes have evolved and expanded over the years and the Horizon 2020 Programme is no exception.

Due to its thematic diversity and its size, the geoscience community has a significant representation within Europe's research programmes. The European Geosciences Union (EGU) and the European Federation of Geologists (EFG) have conducted the Horizon 2020 Geoscience Survey to collect feedback on areas of Horizon 2020 which the geoscience community felt should be continued or extended and those which could be improved upon in the upcoming Horizon Europe.

The results showed here focus on the geoscientific community and highlight insights from those who are applying for and participating in EU-funded projects. Because of its distinct target group, the Horizon 2020 Geoscience Survey was able to ask specific questions and obtain detailed feedback. This document summarises the survey's qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

We are confident that the gathered insights and presented findings in this report will be of interest to both the geoscience community and those working on the implementation of Horizon 2020 and design of the forthcoming Horizon Europe.

The full survey report may also be viewed at: <https://egu.eu/1H2020/>

A survey conducted by:  
European Geosciences Union (EGU) &  
European Federation of Geologists (EFG)



### About the respondents



271  
answers

46 countries



78%  
from EU countries

60%



40%



### Horizon 2020 geoscience projects

- Survey participants were involved in **102 different Horizon 2020 projects**.
- **10%** of respondents with completed projects stated that their **projects' outcomes were exceeded**.
- Only **3%** of respondents stated that the outcomes of their now completed project(s) were **not achieved**.
- Societal challenges addressed by these projects varied widely, from **climate change** to **sustainable mining** to **flood** and **drought management**.

Some concerns with project longevity:

*"The project achieved substantial outcomes: the main issue is how to maintain these achievements in the short intermediate term and how to consolidate these."*

*"[...] the main problem is that everything grinds to a halt after the last report/deliverable."*

Tapering funding to extend the life of EU funded projects in Horizon Europe could enable the maintenance of platforms, increase the long-term impact of projects and minimise future overlap.

# Application process and evaluations

Is the application process for Horizon 2020 funding straightforward?



*"The drive for simplification should continue: for the EU budget overall, for the EU R&I programme, as well as for programmes at national level. Call documents should become much simpler, easy to find, easy to read and easy to respond to."*

**64%** The majority of respondents (64%) who had received Horizon 2020 funding thought that the methods and criteria used to evaluate the Horizon 2020 projects were sufficient and fair.

## Opportunities for collaboration

Survey respondents were generally very positive about the collaboration that Horizon 2020 had achieved.

**82%** ...felt that Horizon 2020 had increased collaboration **between different scientific disciplines** either somewhat or to a large extent.

**79%** ...perceived that Horizon 2020 had increased collaboration **across multiple sectors** either somewhat or to a large extent.

**87%** ...thought that Horizon 2020 had increased **communication, collaboration and networking across European countries** either somewhat or to a large extent.

Some suggestions from the geoscience community to further encourage collaboration between different scientific disciplines in the upcoming Horizon Europe Programme, included:

- Increase the number of geoscience relevant "cross-disciplinary calls"
- "Fund small interdisciplinary teams [rather than] large inefficient ones"
- Increase access to open data, allowing scientists to use a wider variety of data in their modelling
- Encourage "universities and research institutes ... to embrace and support [collaboration]"

## Distribution of fundamental and applied research

The distribution of Horizon 2020 funding between applied and fundamental research was an issue that many survey participants were concerned with.

**24%** ...of survey respondents felt that the distribution between applied and fundamental science was not distributed fairly at all.

Furthermore, the **need for more projects focusing on fundamental research** was commented on **20 different occasions** throughout the survey.

Despite the presence of some fundamental research-focused projects, survey respondents still feel that more are needed. It is hoped that the first pillar of Horizon Europe, Open Science, will have a large focus on excellent science and a bottom-up, investigative approach.

## Geoscience representation in Horizon 2020 projects

Only **8%** of respondents felt that there were a **sufficient number of geoscience-related Horizon 2020 projects**.

Top 3 areas highlighted by respondents as being underrepresented in Horizon 2020 projects:



### Overall feedback

**38%** of survey participants rated the Horizon 2020 Programme's support for the geosciences as either **excellent or good** while **29%** rated the Horizon 2020's effectiveness as either **poor or very poor**.

For more information about this report or the Horizon 2020 Geoscience Survey, please email [policy@egu.eu](mailto:policy@egu.eu).

Issued in September 2018: European Federation of Geologists ([www.eurogeologists.eu](http://www.eurogeologists.eu)) & European Geosciences Union ([www.egu.eu](http://www.egu.eu)).

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