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Poland is close to launching a mechanism to transfer funds from cohesion policy to Horizon Europe. The plan involves redirecting **30 million euros from the national FENG programme to Horizon Europe** to finance additional, highly-rated projects from Polish applicants in European calls. The mechanism is intended to cover above all **ERC** grants and the **EIC Accelerator** instrument. The decision still requires approval from the European Commission. The PoSCA Office and representatives of the national research community have indicated the need to include MSCA individual fellowships in this mechanism.

The Fund Transfer is not about creating a new national programme or replacing Horizon Europe with national funding. Its essence lies in using a provision enshrined in EU regulations that allows a portion of the national allocation from the European Regional Development Fund to be transferred to another EU instrument. In practice, this means that a project still undergoes standard evaluation within Horizon Europe, and the funds can reach those applications that received a high score but were not funded due to the limited budget of a call. **This approach preserves the European character of the grant and its management by the European Commission.**

From recommendation to decision

The call to use fund transfers in order to increase Poland's participation in prestigious European calls had been part of the policy debate for some time. As early as January 2024, Forum Akademickie described a proposal to redirect a portion of ERDF funds to Horizon Europe, identifying possible instruments including ERC, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, and EIC. The same article cited the example of Lithuania, which was the first country to use this mechanism, allocating 18.5 million euros from the ERDF to support researchers' participation in international projects¹.

In December 2024, the PoSCA PAN Office in Brussels prepared a briefing note on fund transfers as a practical example of synergies between Horizon Europe and the ERDF². The document noted that Member States may voluntarily transfer up to 5% of their national allocation for example, from the ERDF to the Horizon Europe programme. The note stressed that the transfer may cover future budgetary commitments, and that funding should cover single-beneficiary projects that have passed evaluation within the framework programme.

¹Forum Akademickie, 11 stycznia 2024 r. „Więcej grantów ERC dzięki mechanizmowi transferu funduszy?”, [Więcej grantów ERC dzięki mechanizmowi transferu funduszy?](#)

²Notatka Zespołu PoSCA PAN w Brukseli nt. transferu funduszy jako przykładu synergii między programami Horyzont Europa i Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego, https://polsca.pan.pl/wp-content/uploads/20241219_notatka-Biura-PoSCA-transfer-funduszy-do-HE-1.pdf

In March 2026, the topic returned during a Brussels meeting between representatives of the Polish research community and Members of the European Parliament. Forum Akademickie report noted that the community had been calling for the possibility of funding ERC, EIC and MSCA projects that had received a recommendation for funding but had not received funds due to budgetary constraints. The article also reported that the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy had endorsed the idea and intended to test the mechanism through a pilot scheme³.

What Poland intends to do

According to information published by Forum Akademickie on 8 April 2026, the draft amendment to the FENG programme providing for the transfer of funds to Horizon Europe had already been approved by the FENG Monitoring Committee⁴. The next step is approval by the Council of Ministers, followed by submission to the European Commission. Only the Commission's approval will formally allow the transfer to proceed.

The planned amount is **30 million euros**. According to information provided by the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, the funds are to be allocated to ERC grants: in the Starting, Consolidator and Advanced categories and to the EIC Accelerator. From the research community's perspective, however, it is significant that the current proposal does not include individual Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions fellowships. This omission was highlighted by Dr Tomasz Poprawka, Director of the PolSCA PAN Office in Brussels, who noted that MSCA are an important tool for investing in talent, mobility and the development of early-career researchers.

The inclusion of EIC Accelerator means that the mechanism is designed to have not only a scientific dimension, but also an innovation and economic one. EIC Accelerator supports small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups developing breakthrough technologies or services ahead of the scaling stage. ERC, for its part, remains the most important European instrument for funding frontier scientific research⁵.

Why this mechanism matters for Poland

Poland has for many years performed below the level of the largest and best-funded research systems in Europe in ERC calls. Forum Akademickie cites data according to which Poland has to date received 106 ERC grants, with a success rate for Polish applications of around 4%, compared with a European average of around 11%⁶.

In this context, the fund transfer can operate on two levels. First, it allows additional projects that were rated very highly but fell "below the line" for funding to be financed. Second, the mere existence of such a mechanism may increase the motivation of researchers and institutions to submit applications to Horizon Europe. This matters because the number of applications and the quality of institutional support are part of a broader problem affecting Poland's participation in the European research funding system.

³Forum Akademickie, 27 marca 2026 r. „W Brukseli z europoślami o przyszłości polskiej nauki”, [W Brukseli z europoślami o przyszłości polskiej nauki](#)

⁴Forum Akademickie, 8 kwietnia 2026 r. „Będzie więcej europejskich grantów dla Polski!”, [Będzie więcej europejskich grantów dla Polski!](#)

⁵Forum Akademickie, 22 kwietnia 2026 r. „MNiSW: Z transferem funduszy byliśmy gotowi już rok temu”, [MNiSW: Z transferem funduszy byliśmy gotowi już rok temu](#)

⁶Widening excellence – Bridging the ERC gap for a truly pan-European Research Area – ERC Scientific Council White Paper, [Widening excellence - Bridging the ERC gap for a truly pan-European Research Area - ERC Scientific Council white paper.pdf](#)

From the perspective of the PolSCA Office, it is also significant that the transfer avoids the creation of separate national programmes to substitute for European grants. The PolSCA briefing noted that national support mechanisms for highly-rated applications (i.e. IDEAS Plus) do not fund ERC grants and are not counted in Poland's success statistics within the framework programme. Crucially, their beneficiaries are not regarded as ERC laureates and do not acquire experience in implementing Horizon-type projects. The fund transfer carries none of these limitations, since the funding remains part of the Horizon Europe logic.

Poland joins the group of countries testing synergies

Science|Business presents Poland's decision as joining a group of countries that have already used the fund transfer mechanism⁷. According to that source, similar solutions have previously been applied by Lithuania, Malta, and - this being a new development - the German region of Brandenburg. Lithuania initially allocated 18.5 million euros for 2023-2025 and subsequently added a further 5 million euros for the final years of Horizon Europe. Malta is transferring a total of 5 million euros, at 1 million euros per year for 2023-2027, while Brandenburg has allocated 2 million euros.

The experiences of these countries are significant because they demonstrate that the transfer is not purely a theoretical solution. At the same time, the experiences of Lithuania and Malta show that the mechanism requires effective administrative coordination. From Poland's perspective, the pilot in the closing stages of the current financial period may therefore serve not only as a means of securing additional grants, but also as an administrative test ahead of the next EU framework programme.

Significance for the next Framework Programme

The current decision has significance beyond the 30 million euros themselves. First, it may increase the number of Polish beneficiaries in the most prestigious European calls. Second, it may encourage researchers and institutions to become more active in ERC and EIC calls. Third, it allows procedures to be tested that may be needed in the next financial period, should the transfer mechanism be retained beyond 2027.

For these reasons, the Polish fund transfer can be seen as part of a broader policy of strengthening Poland's participation in the European Research Area. It will not on its own resolve systemic problems such as low levels of national research funding, limited institutional support for applicants, or the weak position of some Polish entities in international collaborative networks. **It can, however, create an additional pathway for the best applications and send a clear signal that participation in Horizon Europe is becoming one of the priorities of science and innovation policy.**

For PolSCA, the matter also has a practical and strategic dimension. **Our recommendations regarding the use of synergies between the ERDF and Horizon Europe have translated into an administrative decision that may now enter the implementation phase.** If the transfer is approved by the European Commission, Poland will for the first time make use of a tool that allows European calls to be reinforced with funds from the national cohesion policy envelope without compromising the quality of scientific evaluation and without creating a parallel national grant system.

⁷Science|Business, 22 kwietnia 2026 r. „Poland to transfer €30M of regional funds to boost Horizon Europe participation”, [Poland to transfer €30M of regional funds to boost Horizon Europe participation | Science|Business](#)