

QUESTION	ANSWER
Is there any possibility to rapidly re-direct work in on-going Horizon 2020 projects to help tackling the Covid-19 outbreak?	Amendments should in principle not imply changes to the project that would call into question the award decision. However, due to the current situation, if reorienting your project might contribute to tackling the Coronavirus crisis, this could be granted (via an amendment), upon request by beneficiaries (assessed case-by-case by the funding body).
What happens to costs in Horizon 2020 grants when there are difficulties in implementing the action due to the Covid-19 situation?	<p>For actual cost-based H2020 actions & MSCA actions Given this unprecedented pandemic situation, maximum flexibility will be given in relation to the action implementation.</p> <p>Whenever possible beneficiaries are encouraged to telework or to use other forms of remote working. Teleworking costs will be accepted as eligible under the confinement period even if it is not the beneficiary's usual practice to telework.</p> <p>Beneficiaries are also highly encouraged to shift their tasks whenever possible. For instance, tasks where physical presence is needed on the ground (e.g. experiments/lab work etc.) may be postponed after confinement measures are over and meanwhile remote work could be done instead (desk work, drafting of reports, etc.). Costs will still be eligible for the work carried out under the action even if such shifting entails deviations from the initial timing set out in Annex 1.</p> <p>Additional possibility for H2020 MSCA actions: Beneficiaries are reminded that periods in which a researcher was absent for 30 consecutive days or less (for reasons other than normal annual leave) can STILL be charged to the action and the costs will be eligible.</p> <p>Moreover, the budget is flexible on the use of the amounts received. Research, training and networking unit costs should be used primarily for the research, training and networking activities planned in Annex 1. Yet, beneficiaries may allocate some of these amounts to help maintaining the salary of the researchers that are prevented from implementing the action due to the Covid-19 situation.</p>
Is there any possibility to extend the project duration of Horizon 2020 grants due to the Covid-19 situation?	Yes, beneficiaries may request an amendment for an extension of up to 6 months of initial project duration due to the Covid-19 situation. Such requests will be handled favourably and in a speedy manner. Any request beyond the 6 month period mentioned before will be granted based on case-by-case assessment by the funding body. However, the maximum grant amount indicated in Article 5 H2020 MGA cannot be increased.
Expert contract in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak – Are evaluations and monitoring reviews still taking place?	<p>Call evaluations Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, until further notice, all evaluations are carried out remotely using video or web-conference facilities. All contracted experts will receive further instructions from the call coordinator or EU services. An amendment of their contract is not necessary.</p> <p>Expenses - conditions for reimbursing experts who have already bought travel tickets Force majeure (article 20) applies. Experts will be reimbursed non-refundable travel and hotel expenses regardless of whether or not they can participate remotely.</p> <p>Actual hotel costs will be reimbursed up to the agreed ceiling. Travel insurance costs (if purchased specifically for this trip) will also be reimbursed. If the amounts of the non-refundable travel and hotel expenses are covered by the travel insurance, these costs will not be reimbursed.</p> <p>Experts with non-refundable tickets and hotel bookings should not cancel these tickets/bookings until the day before travel, and should check with the EU services issuing the contract, REA.C4 for H2020, before cancelling them.</p> <p>Fees Experts who participate remotely will be paid professional fees as if they had attended the meeting in person as specified in article 4.</p> <p>Monitoring reviews Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and in line with Commission policy, these meetings will be delayed, or held via video or web conference.</p> <p>Contract amendment might be issued with a new date and location. You will be contacted by the project officer in charge of the review or by the EU service that issued the contract.</p> <p>Expenses The usual rules and procedures apply in this case in relation to reimbursement of expert expenses.</p>

<p>Can the clause on "force majeure" in the Horizon 2020 grant agreement be invoked in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak?</p>	<p>Article 51 of the H2020 MGA sets out the conditions in which the force majeure clause can be used. 'Force majeure' relates to an extraordinary and unforeseeable event or situation that is beyond the beneficiaries control and that prevents them from fulfilling their obligations under the action. If such a situation occurs, beneficiaries must immediately inform the Commission/Agency/Funding Body, which will examine on a case-by-case basis the possible application of the rules on force majeure. Moreover, beneficiaries must immediately take all the necessary steps to limit any damage due to force majeure (e.g. try to cancel the flight ticket, claim the reimbursement from the cancellation insurance (if applicable)). Costs will be eligible, if they fulfil the general eligibility conditions set out in Article 6 H2020 MGA like any other costs incurred under the action. For example, if a meeting/event cannot take place due to force majeure, travel and accommodation costs may still be charged to the H2020 action if they fulfil the cost eligibility conditions, even if the beneficiary did not travel and did not take part in the meeting/event. If force majeure entails extra costs for the implementation of the action, these costs may be eligible if necessary for the implementation for the action (e.g. a cancelled conference is reorganised at a later stage). However, the maximum grant amount cannot be increased.</p>
<p>Related to the Covid-19 outbreak, what happens in Horizon 2020 grants if beneficiaries cannot submit all/complete elements for their reports related to interim and final payments?</p>	<p>For interim payments: Given the Covid 19 situation, flexibility will be given regarding the completeness of reports submitted in relation to interim payments. Beneficiaries must still submit scientific and financial reports. However, given the Covid-19 situation, beneficiaries will be entitled to submit a shorter narrative part of their scientific report, e.g. focusing only on key explanation of work performed (e.g. key achievements; explanations on difficulties to perform tasks due to this situation etc.) The remaining documents may be submitted at the next reporting period.</p> <p>For final payments: Given the Covid 19 situation, the funding bodies will make the final payment even if the beneficiaries are unable to submit the Certificate on Financial Statements ('CFS') with their final reporting obligation (see Article 20.4 H2020 MGA). However, the amount of the payment for those beneficiaries who do not submit the CFS will be capped at the threshold required for CFS of EUR 324.999. Beneficiaries will receive a complementary payment once they submit the CFS for the remaining amount covered by the CFS.</p> <p>If a final report is not yet complete due to other aspects (e.g. because of some tasks are not fully accomplished), coordinators may request an amendment for an extension of the action duration, up to 6 months, to complete the tasks (see FAQ on 'project duration'. If so, beneficiaries will have still to submit their CFS with their final report later on.</p>
<p>Related to the Covid-19 outbreak, how will the funding bodies handle possible delays in submitting deliverables and reports in Horizon 2020 grants?</p>	<p>Given the COVID 19 situation, full flexibility will be given on scheduled due dates for deliverables, milestones and reports whose performance was impacted by the confinement measures. In particular, for reports linked to payments, the coordinator will still be able to submit the report at the due date set in the grant agreement, but flexibility will be allowed as regards the 60 days period for the submission of the report (see also FAQ on 'Interim and final payments' and 'possibility to extend the project duration'). However, any late report linked to payment will subsequently lead to later payment.</p>
<p>Related to the Covid-19 outbreak, is it possible in Horizon 2020 grants to postpone the starting date of the action?</p>	<p>Postponement of the starting date of the action is possible for grant agreements about to be signed (in Grant Agreement Preparation stage) and, via an amendment, for grant agreements already signed but with a starting date in the future (no work has started yet). A starting date fixed later in time will delay the pre-financing payment.</p> <p>If it is not possible to carry out any work under the action, beneficiaries may also request to suspend the implementation of the action (Article 49(1) H2020 MGA). However, costs incurred during action suspension cannot be charged.</p>
<p>Will the deadlines for Horizon 2020 calls be extended related to the COVID-19 outbreak?</p>	<p>The recent escalation of restrictions related to the COVID-19 outbreak may hamper applicants' ability to prepare and finalise high-quality proposals. For this reason, for Horizon 2020 calls with original deadlines between now and 15 April, extensions will be applied. The precise new deadlines for each call and topic will be published on the call and topic pages on the Funding and Tenders Portal.</p> <p>For the IMI2-2020-21-01 call, no extension of deadline/cutoff date will apply. The cutoff date for the EIC Accelerator part of call EIC-SMEInst-2018-2020 is extended by 48 hours, to Friday 20 March 2020 at 17:00:00 (CET).</p> <p>In all cases, potential applicants are advised to prepare themselves as necessary, especially by establishing effective communication links for remote collaborative work, also anticipating possible further restrictions in the coming weeks.</p>