

WISG

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SHAPING THE FUTURE OF EU SECURITY RESEARCH: HORIZON EUROPE AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Ralph HAMMER

The Safety Pin –
Coordinated Security and
Defense Research for Austria
and Europe

Three Programmes



arma et scientia
ex officio



One Mission

- ✓ The **strategic goal** of the Safety Pin aims at **funding** (primarily) **Austrian companies and research institutions in the research and development** of new technologies and the creation of the necessary knowledge to **increase the security** of Austria and to **generate added value** in Austria
- ✓ **Financed by public funds Safety Pin projects aim at creating scientific results with a high TRL for security practitioners** (end-users like first responders, law enforcement and the military as well as Critical Infrastructure providers like public transport, airports and electricity or water suppliers, leading in a next step to products and services waiting to be offered to security practitioners for procurement (Ø-duration from project submittal to market entrance of results is 5 -7 years)
- ✓ The civil security research program **KIRAS** and the defense research program **FORTE** jointly form the "**Austrian Safety Pin**", which concentrates all federal security research funding to maximize efficiency and minimize processing costs. A new programme on Cyber security, **Kybernet-Pass (K-PASS)** joined the safety pin in 2023.
- ✓ The safety pin has one joint **budget** (16m f. the 2025 calls), which is split between the programs every year. To this date, **545 projects were successfully funded with € 209 M** by the Safety Pin

The Safety Pin – Programme Similarities

- ✓ The Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF) is in charge of the program ownership (financing, organization and political responsibility), the program management rests with the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (**FFG**)
- ✓ All cooperative R&I-project consortia must consist of at least one end-user, one company, one research institution, and (mandatorily for KIRAS and K-PASS), one expert from SSH (social sciences and humanities)
- ✓ For tendering, various FFG-financing instruments are to be used for financing rates of up to 85% (exception: Instrument F & E-DL: 100% financing)
- ✓ Average project duration lasts (depending on the chosen financing instrument) from 1 to 2 years, average funding amounts from € 150k to € 600k for research results from TRL 4 to 6
- ✓ KIRAS, FORTE and Kybernet-Pass (K-PASS) calls are opened in parallel to maximize budgetary impact and minimize administrative burden
- ✓ Funding of non-Austrian participants is generally possible at KIRAS, K-PASS and FORTE



KIRAS, K-PASS & FORTE – Specifics

- ✓ **Research Focus KIRAS/K-PASS**: Civil security issues incl. **Dual-use**, identified by end-user/practitioner (Ministries, Provinces, Critical Infrastructure operators).
- ✓ A **successful KIRAS/K-PASS-consortium** for a project must consist of at least one end-user/practitioner, researchers, companies and SSH experts.
- ✓ KIRAS has been in operation since 2006 (**453 projects funded with est. € 161 M**), K-PASS since 2023 (**24 projects funded with est. € 13 M**)
- ✓ The European security research program started in 2007 (currently Civil Security for Society in Horizon Europe with a total Budget of around € 1.6 Bn)
- ✓ **Research Focus FORTE**: Defence related issues (**not dual-use!**) identified by BMLV for future military challenges (FORTE = FORschung & Technologie).
- ✓ A **successful FORTE consortium** for a project must at least consist of a researcher, a company and the BMLV / ÖBH user.
- ✓ FORTE is operational since 2018 (**81 projects funded with est. €35 M**)
- ✓ The European Defence Fund started in 2021 (Budget of est. € 2,65 Bn)



We created Innovation, what now?

- ✓ **Reaching TRL 6** (prototype/demonstrator) **funding intensity** of the various FFG funding instruments **drops consistently** due to the EU subsidy regulation regime
- ✓ **To avoid/mitigate the „Valley of Death“-effect** on innovations between TRL 6 and TRL 9 (market readiness) BMF and FFG introduced **in 2023 the funding instrument Innovation AKUT** (based on F & E-DL: **100% financing!**)
- ✓ Innovation AKUT **funds the deployment of prototypes/demonstrators** at practitioners/end-users (consortium requirement: 1 practitioner und 1 AT-company) **for max one year with max € 100 k**
- ✓ Innovation AKUT launches **calls at least thrice a year** and employs a **simplified evaluation procedure** for impact optimisation und zur Wirkungsoptimierung des Instruments



Concluding Thoughts

- ✓ The Austrian Safety Pin („Österreichische Sicherheitsklammer“) is a unique coordination mechanism for security & defence research in Europe
- ✓ The Safety Pin brings together defence & security research funding under one civil authority – the Federal Ministry of Finance (BMF)
- ✓ Civil oversight of Austrian security & defence research allows for transparency and humanitarian oversight – easier engagement by Universities and civil society
- ✓ The Safety Pin has a strong emphasis on implementation of innovations – reduction of Valley-of-Death experiences
- ✓ The safety pin is closely aligned with its EU-counterparts „Civil Security for Society“ in Horizon Europe and the European Defence Fund – national experience leads to higher success rates on European level



Thank you very much for your attention!

Contact BMF:

Ralph HAMMER

Staff Department for Security Research and
Technology Transfer

Federal Ministry of Finance, Vienna

ralph.hammer@bmf.gv.at

Further information: www.kiras.at/en/

Contact FFG:

Sabine KREMNIETZER f. KIRAS and FORTE

Sabine.kremnitzer@ffg.at

Polina WILHELM f. Kybernet-Pass

polina.wilhelm@ffg.at

Jeannette KLONK f. EU Security Research

jeannette.klonk@ffg.at