Nexus — summary of approach and main findings

Nexus maps 400 CORDIS projects (Horizon Europe, Horizon 2020 and FP7) to the SDG taxonomy, with the evidence behind every link. Each link answers one question: which activity, in which phase and scope, supports which part of which goal, according to which evidence and which rule. Interactive map: **nexus.foaap.app**.

Approach

- **Official data, fingerprinted.** The three CORDIS project datasets from the EU Open Data Portal, each recorded with its retrieval time and SHA-256.
- **The project's own work first.** Each objective is split into numbered, hashed passages. A local open-weight model writes down what the project itself does (its activities, separated from background, earlier work and later phases) before any SDG is shown.
- **Written rules decide.** Each candidate goal or target is checked against that record with one of 186 written rules (80 authored by hand): a purpose test, a scope test and the leaps that are not allowed. Code verifies every quote, can only lower a verdict, and records one of four states. *No justified mapping* is a result, not a gap.
- **Proven, not asserted.** The published map rebuilds byte for byte from the official archives and the recorded answers, with zero model calls.

Main findings

- **307 of 400 projects (77%)** have at least one justified SDG; **70** have no supported or open link among assessed candidates (64 still have pending candidates), 18 have only open links (uncertain or insufficient evidence), and 5 are not yet assessed.
- **915 supported links**, 46% at target level (the most precise concept the text supports).
- **Most represented:** Industry and innovation (SDG 9, 133 projects), Good health (SDG 3, 68), Climate action (SDG 13, 57), Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12, 53). **Least represented:** No poverty (SDG 1, 6), Gender equality (SDG 5, 9), Life below water (SDG 14, 12).
- **By programme:** 78% of Horizon Europe projects have a justified SDG, 75% of Horizon 2020 and 62% of FP7.
- **EUR 856.9 million of the EUR 965.6 million** of EU funding in the collection (89%) sits in projects with at least one justified SDG.
- **911 of 915 links are planned contributions.** CORDIS objectives describe what projects set out to do; reported results live in separate report fields.

Validation

- On **20 untouched projects** drawn after the method was frozen, reviewed blind: **97%** of supported links are on a goal the reviewer also found and **79%** on the exact goal or target.
- An independent review of **80** random published links verified **every quoted passage** (80/80).

Scope

Built in seven days (24–30 September 2026). The plan was all 23,451 Horizon Europe projects; the time allowed 400 across the three programmes. All 84,625 CORDIS projects is a question of compute, not a new method.

Where to look: the interactive map (nexus.foaap.app), the methodology notebook, the mapping table (Excel and CSV) and the description document.

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