

EBC External Environmental Report

Week of 20 January

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Our strategy paper is meant to reinforce the process of rebalancing our relationship with China"

Markus J. Beyrer, Director General of BusinessEurope, commented on a recent report covering the EU's economic relationship with China. The report underlines, amongst other issues, the need to increase the Horizon Europe budget to €120 billion.

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HORIZON EUROPE

Companies call for more R&D funding to help Europe keep up with China (*Science|Business*)

European companies say the EU will not be able to compete with China unless Horizon Europe gets a budget of at least €120 billion and member states commit to investing three per cent of their GDP in national R&D programmes. In a new report, BusinessEurope, the EU's most influential corporate lobby group, says anything below the proposed R&D spending targets is not enough to address the EU's innovation deficit and to compete with China.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Germany joins the 1+Million Genomes Initiative (*European Commission*)

On 16 January, Germany signed the Declaration “Towards access to at least 1 million sequenced genomes in the EU by 2022”. The Declaration, launched in 2018, established a collaboration mechanism on human genome data aiming to improve disease prevention, allow for more personalised treatments and provide a sufficient scale for new clinically impactful research. Germany is the 21st EU Member State to join this initiative.

A European Commission perspective on digital transformation in healthcare (*Open Access Government*)

The European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2019 press point on 3rd October 2019 explored the theme “The human touch in a digital world”, after which I spoke to Marco Marsella, who is Head of Unit, Directorate-General Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG Connect) at the European Commission. Following this press point, I discovered that digital transformation raises crucial questions about human relationships, a debate that is particularly important for the health sector, which is by definition dependent on human interaction.

European science cloud will uncover ‘hidden treasure’ (*Science|Business*)

The European Open Science Cloud, an enormous repository of research results that is due to go live later this year, will add new value to vast stores of unused data, Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission president pledged on Wednesday. Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, von der Leyen said the multi-billion euro project will transform research, with scientists having a vast collection of resources on tap. “Data is a renewable resource as much as sun and wind. Every 18 months we double the amount of data we produce, 85 per cent of which is never used,” she told delegates.

Crackdown on scientists from China is Trump-led ‘intimidation’, says leading Chinese academic (*Science|Business*)

The head of Beijing’s Capital Medical University has taken direct aim at Donald Trump, accusing the US President of “persecuting Chinese scientists” and damaging global science collaboration. Speaking at the annual World Economic Forum in Davos on Wednesday, Rao Yi called Trump a “unique and strange liar” who is hurting science “exchanges that would benefit human kind”. In an angry address, Rao broadened his attack to include the director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Francis Collins. Rao alleged that along with Trump, Collins is, “institut[ing] policies specifically targeting scientists of Chinese origin in biomedical science.”

Croatian EU presidency to back equal pay pilot for Marie Curie researchers (*Science|Business*)

The Croatian presidency of the EU council is to back plans by the European Commission to give equal pay to researchers working within the Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions, Croatian minister for science and education Blaženka Divjak has told MEPs. Speaking at a meeting of the industry and research committee in the European Parliament on Wednesday, Divjak argued equal salaries for researchers working on Marie Curie projects in Horizon Europe would be one way the EU could limit brain drain from poorer parts of Europe. “We can plan pilots in [the Marie Curie programme] for equal pay for equal jobs for researchers,” Divjak said. “That could give us some information about what other instruments we can apply to other parts of Horizon Europe.”

Efficacy of Digital Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for the Treatment of Insomnia Symptoms Among Pregnant Women (*JAMA Psychiatry*)

Insomnia symptoms are prevalent during pregnancy, with as many as 1 in 7 pregnant women reporting moderate to severe symptoms. Although sleep disturbance during pregnancy may be viewed as normative and innocuous, research indicates that it is associated with an increased risk of adverse maternal outcomes, including depression and preterm birth. Limited research is available on interventions to improve insomnia symptoms during pregnancy. A robust body of literature documents the efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) across a variety of populations, and it is recommended as the first line treatment by the American College of Physicians.

Policy Makers’ Tough Choices for Psychological Interventions in Global Mental Health (*JAMA Psychiatry*)

More governments around the world are recognizing the importance of mental health in their national health, social welfare, development, and education plans. At the 2019 second global interministerial meeting held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 35 countries and organizations signed a declaration to integrate mental health and psychosocial support services in crisis situations. However, policy makers are left with the challenge of what psychological services to select and how to implement them.

FOR YOUR AGENDA

EBC Meetings:

18 March 2020 - **Brain & Cancer: exploring the mysteries of their connection**, Brussels

18 - 19 May 2020 - **Board Meeting and General Assembly**, Brussels

24 May 2020 - **EBC Special Session at the EAN Congress**, Paris

24 May 2020 - **EBRA and RethinkingMS - Scientific Theatre**, Paris

25 May 2020 - **6th Academy Meeting of National Brain Councils**, Paris

14 July 2020 - **EBC Special Interest Event: Global Research Collaboration at FENS Forum 2020**, Glasgow

23 - 24 September 2020 - **Board Meeting and Strategic Workshop**, Brussels

Events of Interest:

3 February 2020, Human Brain Project Open Day 2020, Athens

4 February 2020, Towards outcomes-based healthcare in Europe: How can the State of Health in the EU show the way? Brussels

13 February 2020 - 3rd triMS.online conference

13 February 2020 - Horizon Europe: A practical insight, Budapest

18 February 2020 - Brain Health as a Global Priority - time for the EU to act now, Brussels

16 - 22 March 2020 - Brain Awareness Week

26 - 28 March 2020 - EANS Annual Meeting & Research Course of Young Neurosurgeons, Zurich

28 - 31 March 2020 - 28th European Congress of Psychiatry, Madrid

4 - 5 May 2020 - EU Health Summit, Brussels

23 - 26 May 2020 - 6th Congress of the European Academy of Neurology, Paris

26 - 28 May 2020 - HIMSS & Health 2.0 European Conference, Helsinki

11 - 15 July 2020 - 12th FENS Forum of Neuroscience, Glasgow

12 - 15 September 2020 - 33rd ECNP Congress, Vienna

22 - 24 September 2020 - European Research and Innovation Days 2020, Brussels

18 - 22 October 2020 - EANS2020, Belgrade



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