

12%... 10%... 8%...

Counting down to zero

Towards a future with underfunded health research?

We, as representatives of the undersigned organisations, welcome the current European Commission's proposal for a new Framework Programme for Research & Innovation, "Horizon Europe". We acknowledge the budget increase — in spite of the currently challenging financial context — and applaud the many important improvements introduced based on the thorough analysis of the Horizon 2020 Programme.

Nevertheless, we firmly believe that the proposed budget as it stands is well below what would be necessary to tackle Europe's challenges head on, secure global competitiveness, maintain technological and industrial leadership, as well as safeguard economic growth and societal progress. The current proposal also fails to address the historically low success rate seen in the current Framework Programme, which is a major bottleneck for fostering research excellence.

Ensuring increased European leadership undeniably requires bolder decisions. The EU's investment into research currently amounts to between 5% and 10% of all R&D investments across Europe, whilst in the United States, federal funding of R&D represents more than 50%.

To this end, we would like to join the voices within the European Parliament, Pascal Lamy's High Level group recommendations and many other stakeholders to **call on the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Council of the EU to increase the future budget of "Horizon Europe" to a minimum of €120 billion.**

We are highly concerned about the budget of €7.7 billion provisionally allocated to the "health" cluster under Pillar II. This amount is not commensurate with the total budget increase and will clearly be insufficient to effectively address the societal challenges associated with health research. Moreover, this budget confirms a steady decrease of funding over time and across Framework Programmes, as health was previously allocated 12% under the 7th Framework Programme, 10% under Horizon 2020 and now 8% in the Horizon Europe proposal. For continued success in European research, we find it imperative that this downward trend is stopped and reverted.

EU health research, which is often too complex to be exclusively managed by individual member states, has an inestimable value for the lives of European citizens. Furthermore, the health challenges that we face are enormous and the sustainability of healthcare systems across Europe is under serious threat. The World Economic Forum and the Harvard School of Public Health predict that noncommunicable diseases alone will result in a cumulative loss in global economic output of \$47 trillion, or 5% of GDP, by 2030, principally through heart disease, stroke, alcohol misuse and depression in high and upper-middle income countries.

To ensure continued improvement in the lives of all EU citizens, **it is essential that a much higher proportion of the research budget is allocated to the “health” cluster.** This would contribute to continued support to basic and clinical research and empower EU governments to respond to pressing health-related problems.

We believe that the “Horizon Europe” proposal, upon appropriate planning and execution, holds the promise of having a real and lasting impact on European society. We offer our support to making this a reality, in turn working toward reinforcing the trust of European citizens in EU projects.

Signatories:*



Belgian Brain Council (BBC)

The Belgian Brain Council wants to improve the treatment for persons with neurological and psychiatric diseases, make people more aware of this subject, stimulate research and exchange between the different disciplines and associations, and lobbying at the government for enhancing the reimbursement of research and treatments.



European Academy of Neurology (EAN)

EAN provides a go-to resource for everyone working in the fields of neurology and neuroscience. We bring together national societies, institutions, clinicians and researchers and offer a forum for research, learning, networking and best practice for our patients.



EUFAMI

EUFAMI is a democratic organisation, registered in Belgium as an international non-profit organisation. We have an ongoing commitment to improving care and welfare for people affected by mental illness. We also enable our member organisations to act jointly at a European Level, combining their efforts and sharing experience.



European Brain Council (EBC)

The European Brain Council (EBC) is a non-profit organisation gathering patient associations, major brain-related societies as well as industries. Established in March 2002, its mission is to promote brain research in order to improve the quality of life of those living with brain disorders in Europe.



European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA)

The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) brings together European umbrella organisations of neurological patient advocacy groups, to work with other associations in the field of neurology.



European Psychiatric Association (EPA)

With active individual members in as many as 88 countries and 43 National Psychiatric Association Members that represent more than 80,000 European psychiatrists, the European Psychiatric Association is the main association representing psychiatry in Europe. The EPA's activities address the interests of psychiatrists in academia, research and practice throughout all stages of career development.



Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS)

FENS is the voice of European neuroscience. With 43 neuroscience member societies across 33 European countries, FENS as an organisation represents 24,000 European neuroscientists with a mission to advance European neuroscience education and research.



GAMIAN-Europe

GAMIAN-Europe was established in 1998 as a representative coalition of patient organisations. Putting the patient at the centre of all issues of the EU healthcare debate, the organisation aims to bring together and support the development and policy influencing capacity of local, regional and national organisations active in the field of mental health.

*The statement is also supported by the following national brain councils and industry partners:

- Luxembourg Brain Council (LBC)
- Portuguese Brain Council (PBC)
- UCB Biopharma SPRL