



BioMed Alliance

12th of December, Brussels

It is time to go big on health research!

The BioMed Alliance supports the European Parliament ITRE (Industry, Research, Energy) Committee proposal to establish a Steering Board for Health under Horizon Europe and to increase the research programme budget to €120 billion. We welcome the Partial General Approach, reached by the Competitiveness Council on 30 November as well.

The BioMed Alliance encourages the members of the European Parliament to reach an agreement as soon as possible and to vote on the rapporteurs' reports on Horizon Europe, the flagship programme of research and innovation at the European Union level. Therefore, the research community calls on EU policymakers to initiate triologue inter- institutional negotiations without delay and to establish a Steering Board for health to maximize the European potential in research and innovation.

Horizon Europe must build on its predecessors and increase the coherence and visibility of European health research.

In light of the increasing societal challenges¹, EU policymakers should work hand in hand with the research community, patient representatives, industry and stakeholders involved in health research to ensure that outstanding basic research leads to the necessary translational impact in the real-world setting and has an impact on patients' lives. In addition, Europe is progressively falling behind as global competition in research becomes stronger².

Thus, a sound mechanism – the Steering Board for Health – is needed to ensure deeper and longer-term collaborative and transnational initiatives that address the current gaps in the 'innovation cycle' and strengthen cross-fertilisation and collaboration across all relevant disciplines. This should create synergy between health research programmes and break down the silo approaches in the innovation cycle. The Steering Board for Health should be science-led and composed of

¹https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/policies/docs/2017_chronic_framingdoc_en.pdf

Non-communicable diseases take an immense toll on patients, their families and the economy. Europe's ageing population means that today more than one-third of EU citizens suffer from a chronic disease, including cancer and mental disorders. This includes about 23 per cent of the working population.

² https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en



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stakeholders from biomedical research and innovation, other relevant sectors of research and industry and with strong participation of patient representatives.

The Steering Board for Health under Horizon Europe should:

- ✓ make research governance more structured, harmonized, transparent and effective;
- ✓ increase clarity and transparency through establishing a 'blueprint' of existing funding mechanisms (such as Horizon Europe, European Social Fund, Digital Europe, structural funds and national funds) and a 'One Stop Shop' for health research;
- ✓ help close the dissemination and coordination gap between the EU and national level by ensuring complementarity of funding programmes and by streamlining the coordination of national and European funding mechanisms;
- ✓ help optimize ROI (getting the best value for EU R&I funding);
- ✓ assess the funded health research programmes and track the translational impact of outcomes in the real-world setting across the larger innovation ecosystem;
- ✓ provide a framework for involving patients in research governance;
- ✓ coordinate with medical societies to improve the recruitment of expert evaluators;
- ✓ accelerate translational biomedical health research;
- ✓ support bottom-up approaches through existing mechanisms such as fast-track to innovation programmes for health research;
- ✓ boost the visibility and effectiveness of European health research through integrated and coordinated communication;

The Steering Board for Health should be considered as a pilot and a first step towards the establishment of a European Council for Health Research³. Health research in Europe needs an inclusive and long-term policy to achieve better health and well-being of citizens and to create societal and economic value for Europe.

³ https://www.biomedeuropa.org/images/eu-policy/Building_the_future_of_health_research_SPH_22052018_final.pdf