



Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe

Brussels, 14 May 2018

To: Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Mr. Carlos Moedas

Cc: Director General, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Mr. Jean-Eric Paquet
Deputy Director General, Directorate -General for Research and Innovation, Mr. Wolfgang Burtscher
Acting Director, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Ms. Line Matthiessen

Dear Commissioner,

Re.: Health research should be a top priority in the Horizon Europe

The BioMed Alliance welcomes the European Commission's proposed budget for the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (Horizon Europe). We would like to take this opportunity to express our full support for an ambitious Horizon Europe, and to thank you for your commitment to promoting research as a main priority in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) budget. A strong Horizon Europe will continue the track record of Horizon 2020, and will foster scientific excellence in Europe.

The BioMed Alliance, while acknowledging the multiple societal challenges that Horizon Europe has to address, is convinced that in terms of value for money, health research should be a top funding priority considering its significance for the wellbeing of EU citizens and as a driver of economic growth.

The arguments for investing in health research are sound both from a public health and economic point of view, and can be easily explained to the wider EU now more than ever. A healthy population generates an important economic benefit as well as a better quality of life for individuals. Biomedical research advances diagnostics, therapeutics and technology, and has a major impact on life expectancy and healthy life years. It also offers a high return on investment - according to a recent analysis¹, medical research offers the equivalent of a 25% return every year, forever.

The advantages of EU research funding are most evident in health research, which is often too complex to be effectively supported or managed at the national level. Only 10.5% of Horizon 2020's initial budget of €80 billion was earmarked for biomedical and health-related research,

¹ <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/whats-it-worth-musculoskeletal-disease-research-januar-2018.pdf>



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amounting to an investment of only approximately €2-3 per EU resident per annum². Based on the European Commission's own assessment of the programme³, the allocated budget was not sufficient, and underfunding has been a challenge for policy-makers and researchers. Horizon 2020 had lower success rates than its predecessors, especially for high quality proposals. Thus, it is critical that a higher percentage of the research budget is dedicated to health research in order to ensure the European Commission's ambitions and the expectations of EU citizens are all met. 25-30% of the Horizon Europe budget dedicated to biomedical and health-related research will ensure a coherent, competitive European research landscape, and will generate societal benefits and long term positive economic impact⁴.

We are fully committed to continuing the collaboration with the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and we would like to thank you again for your support.

With kind regards,

Prof. Dr. Axel Pries
President, BioMed Alliance

BioMed Alliance - the Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe (www.biomedeuropa.org)

The Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe (BioMed Alliance) is a non-profit organization representing 29 leading European research and medical societies uniting more than 400,000 researchers and health professionals. The BioMed Alliance is committed to promoting excellence in European biomedical research and innovation with the goal of improving the health and wellbeing of all European citizens.

² https://www.biomedeuropa.org/images/eu-policy/Recommendations_of_the_BioMed_Alliance_for_the_FP9.pdf

³ https://www.biomedeuropa.org/images/pdf/events/2017-annual-meeting/1_2017-11-08_BioMedAlliance_SC1Evaluation_Dr_Cornelius_SCHMALTZ.pdf

⁴ Bouillon et al. 2015. Public investment in biomedical research in Europe. *Lancet* 386: 1335.