



Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe

The proposed budget for collaborative health research is insufficient to address the current societal challenges.

The European Commission published its proposal for funding research and innovation through the Horizon Europe program from 2021 to 2027.

The overall program totals €94.1 billion in inflation-adjusted prices and is distributed between three funding streams. The first pillar supports fundamental and university-led research, has a budget of €25.8 billion — of which €16.6 billion will go to the European Research Council (ERC). The second pillar, funding collaborative research between academia and industry, has a budget of €52.7 billion split between five priority topics: health (€7.7 billion); security (€2.8 billion); digital and industry (€15 billion); climate, energy and mobility (€15 billion); and food research (€10 billion). The third funding will support innovation on a €10.5 billion investment in a new European Innovation Council, within a total envelope of €13.5 billion.

We are concerned that health research cluster lacks the funding to meet its goals. From H2020's lessons, the proposed budget of €7.7 billion for health research is inadequate to ensure the European Commission's objectives, and researchers will have to face the same issues such as oversubscription and lower success rates.

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. Based on the European Commission's own assessment of the programme¹, 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.

It is critical that a higher percentage of the research budget is dedicated to health research in order to address the various societal challenges and the expectations of EU citizens are all met. **The BioMed Alliance therefore calls on the European Commission, European Parliament, and the Council of the EU to redistribute the budget and increase the funding for collaborative health research.** This would ensure a coherent and competitive research landscape, capable of generating benefits for individuals and economies.

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