

Europe needs long-term, reliable and adequate funding for excellent research by the EU to deliver sustainable growth and jobs and improve the health of people living in Europe. In response to the European Commission's [proposal](#) for the European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI), we are urging UK MEPs and the UK Government to swiftly and assertively take steps to protect investment in Horizon 2020 and so in UK research.

The European Commission proposes to cut €2.7 billion from Horizon 2020 to finance EFSI. This equals a cut of 3.5% to an EU programme that already has one of the smallest budgets - yet research has a vital part to play in keeping Europe healthy and competitive. Investment in the European Research Council (ERC), one of the most important funders of excellent basic research, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, that support early-career researchers, and researchers' access to infrastructure across Europe would all be cut.

We note the European Commission's intention is for EFSI to also fund research projects. However, there is no formal obligation in place to ensure money taken from Horizon 2020 is channelled back into research and innovation and we are concerned that many organisations that conduct research - including universities, research funders, research performing organisations, charities and health services - may not be eligible for EFSI funding under the proposed wording. There is therefore a real danger of funding agreed to be for research being diverted to other purposes.

EFSI is supposed to be of great benefit to the real economy. However, research is a prerequisite for innovation, without research the pipeline to innovation is cut off. Research must be publicly funded in an appropriate way and any cuts to Horizon 2020 will result in a performance loss for the whole European research and innovation system.

We therefore urge UK MEPs to support:

- A reversal in the cuts to Horizon 2020.
- A formal guarantee that adequate funding in EFSI is channelled directly into research and innovation to ensure that money committed to fund research is not diverted to other purposes.
- A prerequisite that funding to research and innovation projects will be allocated competitively and on the basis of excellence.

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