



Toulouse, July 10, 2018

The European Commission, under the leadership of Commissioner Carlos Moedas, has recently published its proposal for Horizon Europe, the upcoming European Research and Innovation Programme for the period from 2021 to 2027.

We, the undersigned scientists, concerned citizens, innovators welcome the general structure and ambition of the proposal for an increased European Research and Innovation budget – a significant increase in a difficult situation. However, we believe that it falls short of the effort required of Europe to face the growing geopolitical challenges as well as the very high level of competition now set notably by Asian countries: gross domestic spending on R&D in the EU in percentage of GDP, which is below 2% and lags behind Korea (4.2%) Japan (3.1%), USA (2.7%), China (3.3%). There is a serious danger that the situation will force many promising young scientists to leave Europe, and that Europe will become less attractive for foreign scientists.

As we are well aware, in the next decade Europe will have to rely more on its own forces to promote its values and its leadership. A cohesive Europe will need to invest in what counts for strengthening our societies, our economies, our security and our efforts in order to tackle the major global challenges of our planet. An ambitious research and innovation policy, engaging society as a whole, represents a large European added value, and will be decisive in increasing its cohesiveness.

Now is the time to make clear Europe's readiness to rise up to the challenge. Naturally, the European Union Member States have to share responsibility for action, but the European Union as a whole must take the lead by demonstrating that it is willing to play its role as a global leader.

We urge the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the European Commission to create the needed step change in budgetary commitment for Research and Innovation, by moving from the current 100 billion € target proposed for the next 7-year Financial Framework period to 160 billion €.

Such an increase will enable Europe not only to respond to the challenges and take the lead in innovative and interdisciplinary areas as well as in technology, but it will also allow more investment in life sciences, physical and engineering sciences and the social sciences and humanities, all fields that are indispensable for European societies to thrive. This budget will also allow Europe to foster major advances in emerging areas and forge new partnerships with Asia, Africa and Latin America as well as to further strengthen its areas of traditional strengths and its established partnerships.

Europe can, and Europe must take the lead! Member States must enable the EU to make this possible!

To sign the petition, please go to the website <https://double-ri.eu/>