

To the President of the EU Council, the Taoiseach of Ireland, Hon. Enda Kenny, T.D

The 'Troika' Presidency members: H. E. the President of Cyprus, Dimitris Christofias and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, Algirdas Butkevicius

The President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy

The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso

Strasbourg, 21st January 2013

Subject: Open letter on Horizon 2020

Your Excellencies,

As Ireland starts its Presidency of the EU, we consider it important to place before you the case for full funding of the EU Horizon 2020 programme in research and innovation.

We write to you as the President and the Secretary-General of Euroscience, the main grassroots organisation for research professionals, teachers, students, science administrators, policy-makers, and to citizens interested in science and technology and its links with society in Europe. Euroscience represents not only European scientists of all ages, disciplines and nationalities but also the business sector and public institutions such as universities and research institutes.

The European Council, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, have all gone out of their way to stress that ***Europe can only find the path to recovery if it keeps investing in education, research and innovation.***

Some EU countries do, most don't.

And for the EU it once more threatens to be a matter of pure lip service now that the daggers are drawn for the final negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

The Innovation Union is one of the Flagship projects of the current EU policies. And yet, it is under threat as Member States seek to protect programmes of narrow sectoral interest and seek cuts to the overall EU budget proposals.

Euroscience endorses the appeal of European Nobel and Field medal laureates who warn about the disastrous implications of cuts in European budgets for research and innovation.

Up to now, more than 150.000 concerned citizens and scientists across Europe signed a petition to keep the EU research budget afloat. Together with them, Euroscience calls on Europe's political leaders to 'put their money where their mouth is' and honour their commitments first enunciated in Lisbon in 2000 to create the EU as one of the World's leading knowledge-based economies.

They should increase the 80 billion € budget proposed by the European Commission for Horizon 2020 with 5 billion € to 85 billion € and find this from the other EU budget lines..

The decrease of the Horizon 2020 budget, as proposed by President Rompuy, will move the EU in a negative direction to its recognised and ACCEPTED objectives. It is an evasion of the responsibility to lead the EU into new directions. Horizon 2020 holds many promises with its greater focus, but they will only be realised when the budget is commensurate with the ambitions.

The EU faces an uncertain World with the one certainty that only the knowledge-based economies will advance the prosperity of their citizens. The EU faces competition not only from its traditional competitor – the USA – but also from new challengers such as Korea in the Far East and Singapore in S E Asia which have really committed their policies AND budgets to support research and innovation with proven success.

The current proposal for a financial settlement is not a policy for knowledge-based growth and jobs. It is not the basis for excellence, or for industrial leadership or tackling society's major challenges.

European leaders should back their own declared ambition for a knowledge-based research and innovation-led economy and guarantee the budget for Research and Innovation at its original proposed level.

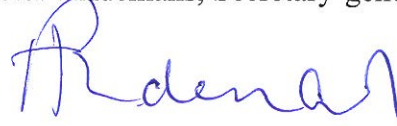
We look to your leadership during the Irish Presidency to secure the Horizon 2020 budget following on the example set by Ireland itself with its commitment to a knowledge-based economy.

Sincerely

Lauritz Holm-Nielsen, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lauritz Holm-Nielsen'.

Peter Tindemans, Secretary-general

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Tindemans'.