

**Urgent request to the European Parliament**

**to reconsider the allocation of research funding**

To: David Maria Sassoli, President European Parliament

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Europe and the whole world are emerging from possibly the worst emergency since the end of the Second World War. The health emergency has turned into a serious economic and social crisis and should have taught the importance of scientific research in the field of biomedical sciences and disruptive high technologies. The countries that are following science recommendation are indeed emerging earlier and better from the pandemic. In spite of all that however, for the first time in the history of Europe, the funding proposed by the European Parliament and the Commission for the 2021-2027 framework program is drastically cut by the European Council with a reduction of 13.5 billion euros, about 25% of the total. We go back to the levels of the previous work-program established in 2014. It is important that European people are aware of the fact that the research funding in 2021 and 2022 will decrease compared to the 2020 level.

According to initial estimates, the consequences of these cuts are equivalent to the elimination of support for 22,500 researchers, a loss of 400 patents for 110 inventions and a loss of 220 clinical tests. All that in a context where Europe spends only 2.2% of GDP against 2.8% of the USA, 3.2% of Japan, 4.3% of Korea.

The message for the new generations, the hardest hit by the consequences of the crisis, is devastating: Europe does not intend to invest in their future.

Without research and innovation, we are condemned to be marginal in the world scenario without supporting the development of our societies. How can we think of having sustainable development according to the Green New Deal, of developing skills in Artificial Intelligence, also in order to build-up an innovative public health response to a pandemic, to produce clean energy, to have more efficient buildings and means of transport, to fight dangerous and even devastating diseases, to encourage the development of businesses, if we do not invest in research and innovation?

It is a fact that in the discussion at the European Council, none of the Member States defended Research and Innovation, nobody thought about health, the environment, the creation of wealth, everyone forgot about the new challenges of the digital agenda.

We urge the European Parliament to reconsider the allocation of research funding, likewise described in the original proposal. We must be aware of the fact that, without research a future of prosperity and well-being is not possible for the peoples of Europe.

Lettera150

*Lettera150 is a group that spontaneously formed in Italy during the worst period of the pandemics to advocate a rational approach to the emergency. After the pandemics the group, which brings together 250 professors belonging to all kind of academic sectors -scientists, jurists, historians, economists etc., and some judges- has stayed together recognizing the need for a competence and knowledge based reform of the Italian governance and economic system.*

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