

A stronger Europe through research & innovation

Joint statement dated 12 February 2025

Achieving the vision to “put research and innovation at the heart of our economy” is essential for addressing Europe’s most pressing challenges. These include closing the innovation gap, advancing competitiveness while enabling the green and digital transitions, and strengthening resilience, security, and defence. These objectives were underscored in the ‘Europe’s Choice’ political guidelines of the European Commission, endorsed by the European Council and the European Parliament, and further elaborated in the Competitiveness Compass.

Recent landmark reports highlight the urgency of enhanced European collaboration in research, development and innovation for all these objectives. The Letta report on the future of the Single Market, the Draghi report on European competitiveness, the Heitor report on research, technology and innovation, and the Niinistö report on civilian and military preparedness collectively underline the critical need for a strengthened European approach. Action at the EU level is essential for boosting excellence in research, development and innovation through continent-wide competition and for leveraging the collective strength of all actors—through collaboration—across the research, development and innovation landscape. This is key to bolstering the research, development and innovation continuum while cultivating the talent, expertise, skills, and capabilities that drive these advancements.

Europe must act boldly to compete globally. To strengthen Europe’s leadership, the undersigned representatives of the research, development and innovation sector recognise the urgency of the challenge and the need to step up efforts. Seizing this opportunity requires a decisive step change in ambition and support at the European level.

To achieve these ambitions, we call for the following:

1. **A robust and dedicated European framework programme for research, development and innovation:** This should support the full research, development and innovation continuum, from fundamental research to market-ready innovative solutions, including through technology maturation, as well as effective deployment and scaling. It should promote cross-sectoral, cross-disciplinary and cross-continental collaboration and the continuous development of the European research area and innovation ecosystem. Comprehensive support across the entire research, development and innovation continuum is essential to driving excellence and delivering impactful results.
2. **A substantially increased budget reserved for research, development and innovation:** This requires a stable and predictable funding framework, ensuring that more than €200 billion is allocated to research, development and innovation under the EU’s 2028–2034 long-term budget. Strengthening research, development and innovation should not be perceived as competing with other priorities, but rather as the foundation for addressing Europe’s challenges and seizing opportunities.
3. **Simplifying for beneficiaries and ensuring an attractive programme:** Improved regulatory frameworks and processes are needed to reduce transaction costs, enhance collaboration, and empower researchers and innovators of all kinds to focus on advancing excellent and innovative ideas that create solutions and impact.

The undersigned organisations issue this joint statement and stand ready to collaborate with the European Commission, the Council, and the Parliament to ensure that research, development and innovation remain central to Europe’s strategic priorities. We invite other organisations to endorse and join this effort.