



Open Letter

Sustaining science funding in Europe: an open letter from the Directors-General of Europe's eight largest research infrastructures

Grenoble, 21 November 2012: We, the Directors-General and senior representatives of Europe's eight world-leading European intergovernmental research organisations (EIROs), urge the institutions and member states of the EU to ensure that the budget for science remains strong. At a time when a return to growth is the most pressing policy priority across Europe, it is absolutely vital that investment in our scientific resources (both human and technical) is sustained.

Research and innovation – the creation and exploitation of new scientific knowledge – must be at the heart of Europe's strategy to build a strong and sustainable economy that benefits all citizens. The world research infrastructures that we lead support frontier research across diverse fields – from the origins of the universe to life beyond the Milky Way; from understanding the molecules that govern human biology to developing the materials that will provide tomorrow's technologies for cleaner energy and faster computers.

At last week's General Assembly of EIROforum, the partnership of the EIROs, we discussed the future of funding for science in Europe and the impact it will have on European innovation, productivity and competitiveness. The EIROforum Council noted the pressure on the EU budget but also the focus of the European Commission and the Member States on measures to promote economic growth.

In this context, it is important to recognise the clear evidence of the positive effects on long-term growth that arise from public investment in scientific education, training, research and development. Science also underpins the creation of the technically skilled workforce that is essential for the future sustainability of Europe's economic health and social wellbeing.

We call on the heads of state or government of the Member States and the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission to reconfirm their collective support for science so that it can continue to make a significant contribution to Europe's economic recovery and beyond.

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