

## Dear Friends and colleagues

This time has shown the great importance of research and investment in health. The budget of the upcoming Horizon Europe programme – the European Research Programme – has been agreed together with all other European programmes in July for the years 2021-2027. The Biomedical Alliance, together with other stakeholders within the EU Health Coalition call on the European Heads of State, the European Parliament and the Commission to retain a long-term strategic approach concerning health and research and innovation in Europe, building on lessons we have learnt from the current crisis, and to argue for an improved budget allocation for the EU4Health programme and Horizon Europe. You can read the statement [here](#).

As shown by these negotiations, it is important to continuously demonstrate to European policymakers and administration the importance of research in our field. [The first UEG White Book](#), published in 2014, has been an important achievement, defining and describing the burden of digestive diseases in Europe and assessing breadth and quality of current service provision. Its results are used until today to call for policy and funding actions at the European level. It is now time to update the survey, and therefore a new analysis focusing on the socioeconomic burden of digestive diseases and identification of relevant research gaps in the field of digestive health will start in October. This research project will be led by Tanith Rose and Benjamin Barr from the University of Liverpool.

We launched the [UEG Research Switchboard on COVID-19](#) in June. The COVID-19 pandemic is revolutionizing the landscape of worldwide medical care and research and it is essential to gather European researchers in digestive health and to establish new ways of transnational collaboration. Moreover, digestive diseases are influenced, directly or indirectly by the virus, and most professionals have been focusing on COVID-19 in the last few months. We now have several research projects & proposals visible. Please continue to submit studies.

Last but not least, [UEG Week Virtual 2020](#) and [Best of Postgraduate Teaching from UEG Week](#) will take place digitally. They remain the premier venue for researchers from across the globe to present their latest findings. Especially in the face of the current COVID-19 situation, sharing science is more important than ever. I would be pleased to meet you in the several offers for researchers at the week: celebrate with us the new [Research Prize winner Stefan Schreiber](#), listen to our session on Horizon Europe and UEG research support, and chat with Horizon 2020's grant holders in our interactive Research sessions to be held on the virtual congress platform. Watch out for further announcements with more details.