



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION

The Director-General

Brussels,
rtd.ddg2.e.5(2018) 7148070

Dr Marco Cappato
Science for Democracy
Rue Ducale 41
B-1000 Brussels
info@sciencefordemocracy.org
[Sent by e-mail]

Dear Dr Cappato,

I would like to thank you for your interest in our programmes and for your message addressed to the Cabinet of Commissioner Bieńkowska regarding the possibility to support research on therapeutic correction in germlines in Horizon Europe. Commissioner Bieńkowska asked me to answer to you on her behalf.

The EU supports research and innovation in the area of health along the ethical principles outlined in Article 19 of Horizon 2020. These principles clearly rule out any research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings, which could make such changes heritable (except for the cancer treatment of the gonads). These provisions have been the result of inter-institutional negotiations between the Commission, the Council and the Parliament. On this basis, the Commission published in 2013, a statement¹ outlining further details on the implementation of Article 19.

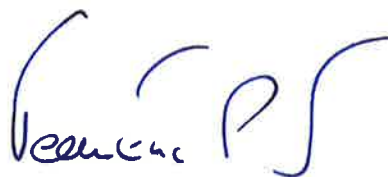
The proposal for Horizon Europe set forward by the Commission includes similar provisions for ethical principles (Articles 14 and 15). The Commission has proposed the continuation of the Horizon 2020 ethics framework. Indeed, it is a responsible approach to an area of science that has proved to work satisfactorily in a research programme supporting researchers who are established in countries with diverse regulatory situations. The proposal for Horizon Europe is currently being discussed at the Council and the Parliament. The agreement on a Partial General Approach reached at the Competitiveness Council on 30 November has not brought any substantial modifications to these provisions. The spirit being that no funding shall be granted for research activities that is forbidden in all the Member States, and that no activity shall be funded in a Member State where such activity is forbidden.

¹ 2013/C 373/02

Therefore, the Commission proposes to keep the same approach that has been pursued since the 7th Framework Programme and continued under Horizon 2020.

However, I would like to underline that such research can be programmed and funded at the level of the Member States. In this regard, please keep in mind that the majority of public resources dedicated to research and innovation in the European Union lies in the hands of the Member States and not the European Union.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jean-Eric Paquet' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jean-Eric Paquet