Council of the EU

PRESS
EN

PRESS RELEASE
765/25
30/09/2025

Council calls for a leading role of the EU in life sciences

Today, the Council approved conclusions on life sciences for the Union's competitiveness. The Council welcomes the ambition of making the EU the world's most attractive place for life sciences by 2030, as outlined in the Commission's recent strategy, and provides guidance to unlock the Union's full potential for competitiveness. The Council encourages support throughout the whole value chain from fundamental research and uptake to stronger research in advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs), a leading EU role in clinical trials and a broad approach to biotechnology. It also calls for the use of advanced technologies — such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing — in life sciences, while stressing the importance of developing skills, and attracting and retaining talent. At the same time, it underlines the importance of a business-friendly regulatory framework, that reduces administrative burden and supports innovative SMEs and sustainable manufacturing capacities. Finally, in the conclusions is highlighted the need for a coordinated governance framework on life sciences and for swift implementation of the proposed actions.

> Today's Council conclusions send a clear message: the EU should lead the global race for life sciences. To get there, we must act with urgency and determination with a coordinated strategy that turns ambition into action.
>
> *Christina Egelund, Danish Minister for Higher Education and Science*

Leading world role on life sciences

Life sciences are vital for advancing fundamental knowledge and driving innovation in strategic areas such as health, food, and the environment. The EU faces fierce global competition in this area, where the innovation gap, a fragmented ecosystem, and other structural barriers demand immediate action. The Council calls for a holistic approach to research and innovation, building on existing capacities across the entire value chain. In particular, the conclusions encourage the development of ATMPs and welcome the creation of a network of centres of excellence in this field.

Clinical trials and health data

The Council stresses the urgent need to address the EU's declining share and reduced global impact in clinical trials. It calls on the Commission to improve the ecosystem for multi-country and multi-centre clinical trials, including by updating the regulatory framework and establishing an investment plan for clinical research. It also underlines the challenges of using health data for research and innovation, insisting on the need to overcome remaining hurdles to strengthen disease prevention and deliver high-quality healthcare. Measures include better coordination among existing clinical trial projects, further digitalisation of health systems, and using artificial intelligence.

Seizing opportunities and building skills

In the conclusions approved today, the Council calls for an ecosystem that boosts R&I, strengthens support for innovative SMEs, and preserves Europe's manufacturing capacity. A business-friendly regulatory framework that reduces administrative burdens and fosters innovation will be key. The Council looks forward to forthcoming Commission proposals — including the Innovation Act and the Biotech Act — to cut fragmentation, simplify rules, improve transparency, and shorten the time needed for research-

intensive biotech innovations to reach the market. The announced R&I Agenda for Food Systems and the Bioeconomy Strategy are also expected to play an important role in agriculture, food, and environmental systems, ensuring food security, safeguarding human and animal health, and protecting the environment.

Time to act

The Council also calls on EU Member States and the Commission to coordinate efforts to build and connect research infrastructures, innovation hubs, and centres of excellence in life sciences, in order to secure the Union's R&I autonomy and technological leadership in this strategic area.

Background

Life sciences were previously addressed in two sets of Council conclusions in 2003: first, on the 'Roadmap for a strategy on life sciences and biotechnology', and second, on 'Life sciences and biotechnology – a strategy for Europe'. These conclusions emphasised the potential of life sciences and biotechnology across multiple sectors (such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, food, or energy) and highlighted the risks of growing global competition.

The Competitiveness Compass, presented in January 2025, identified life sciences and biotechnology as key growth engines. It also announced a European Biotech Act, a Bioeconomy strategy and a Life sciences strategy. On 2 July 2025, the Commission unveiled a strategy aimed at positioning the EU as the world's most attractive place for life sciences by 2030.

- Council conclusions on Life Science
- Strategy to position the EU as the world's most attractive place for life sciences by 2030
- Council conclusions and roadmap for a strategy on life sciences and biotechnology
- Council Conclusions on: "Life sciences and biotechnology - a strategy for Europe"

Press office - General Secretariat of the Council of the EU
Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319
press@consilium.europa.eu - www.consilium.europa.eu/press