

## EuropaBio response to the EGE report 'Ethics of Genome Editing'

### PRESS RELEASE

**Brussels, 31 March 2021** - EuropaBio welcomes the in-depth opinion of the European Group on Ethics on the uses of genome editing and thanks the Group for raising the awareness of a technology which will enable the development of many solutions for healthy people and planet.

We strongly support the Group's call to apply genome editing on the basis of appropriate and proportionate control, with core values of diversity, respect and responsibility. Genome editing in key applications are promising next step in research towards beneficial uses in medicine, agriculture and the bioeconomy aimed at addressing some of society's grand challenges.

#### For a sustainable and competitive Europe

Within industrial processes, genome editing is an important tool for improving microorganisms used as products themselves or used to produce fermentation products used in sectors such as food and feed, agriculture, fuels and chemicals, and thereby enable the circular bioeconomy. These products are a major alternative to ingredients derived through petro-chemical sources or processes and hold the key to Europe achieving a bio-circular economy.

#### For a healthy Europe

Within medicine, genome editing offers the prospect of saving lives and addressing some of the most devastating genetic diseases. Clinical research with genome editing of human non-heritable (somatic) cells is currently seeking to develop treatments for HIV, leukaemia, haemophilia, Leber's congenital amaurosis 10, mucopolysaccharidosis, sickle cell disease and cystic fibrosis, amongst others.

Pre-clinical and human clinical testing by EuropaBio member companies that uses genome editing for the treatment of genetically based diseases, is undertaken on non-heritable (somatic) cells, setting the standard for responsible innovation. EuropaBio encourages the EU to engage with the global community, involving government, academia, industry and society, to discuss the research, clinical, legal, societal, and ethical issues associated with genome editing of human germline cells and embryos, to establish a responsible and responsive global governance framework. The recommended creation of a European Platform for information sharing and inclusive debate on germline genome editing will greatly facilitate that process.

An established governance framework will allow clinical research in genome editing of human germline cells and embryos, carried out only with the intention to prevent and/or provide therapies to serious and unmet patient needs. EuropaBio does not support the conduct of research in germline genome editing aimed at achieving human enhancement.

**ENDS**



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## About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, promotes an innovative and dynamic European biotechnology industry. EuropaBio and its members are committed to the socially responsible use of biotechnology to improve quality of life, to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure diseases, to improve the quality and quantity of food and feedstuffs and to move towards a biobased and zero-waste economy. EuropaBio represents corporate and associate members across sectors, plus national and regional biotechnology associations which, in turn, represent over 1800 biotech SMEs. Read more about our work at [www.europabio.org](http://www.europabio.org).

