

GLOHRA Steering Committee Explores Avenues to Strengthen Global Health Research in the EU



GLOHRA Delegation and Network Partners at KoWi in Brussels © KoWi / GLOHRA

1. Background

A delegation from the German Alliance for Global Health Research (GLOHRA), composed mainly of Steering Committee (SC) members, travelled to Brussels from 17–20 November 2025 to explore how the European Union’s policy and funding landscape can support global health research, now and in the future. Over three days of dialogue with key institutions and partners, the delegation identified new opportunities for engagement and gained insight into developments surrounding the upcoming Framework Programme (FP10) – whose priorities and budget will shape future global health programmes and financing. The fact-finding mission also examined where coordinated action from the research community can contribute to forthcoming programmes.

“Before this, I never thought that we had the power to influence [the EU] programming policies”

- Member of the GLOHRA Delegation

This visit builds on GLOHRA’s recent efforts to bring researcher perspectives into policy, including two advocacy trainings for SC members over the past year and a GLOHRA-hosted event in the German Parliament highlighting the importance of global health research.

2. Key Learnings

How global health research is supported by the EU

During the Brussels excursion, the GLOHRA delegation met with a range of European Commission Directorates-General and funding bodies that together shape opportunities for global health research. **DG RTD**, responsible for research and innovation, oversees major programmes – including Horizon Europe – that fund a wide spectrum of EU and international research projects. **DG INTPA**, tasked with the EU’s external cooperation and development policy, offers opportunities for health-related external cooperation and global health partnerships under EU external aid instruments. **DG HERA** works on Europe’s preparedness and response to cross-border health threats, supporting research, development, manufacturing, procurement and stockpiling of medical countermeasures and related health security initiatives. Complementing these, the **European Research Council (ERC)** provides competitive, investigator-driven grants across fields, enabling frontier research under European research funding frameworks; and **EDCTP3** serves as a central platform for clinical trials, vaccines and therapeutics development, and Europe–Africa cooperation focusing on infectious and neglected diseases – strengthening global health research capacity and collaboration beyond the EU. Together, these institutions and mechanisms form a diverse but complementary ecosystem through which global health research and cooperation can be supported in Europe and beyond.

Across discussions, the delegation gained a clearer understanding of how global health research is positioned within the European Commission’s policy and funding landscape, where the FP10 proposal is currently being discussed, and which strategic entry points offer the strongest opportunities for GLOHRA to engage, contribute expertise, and reinforce the impact of its research community, while shaping FP10.

Stakeholder perspectives on Europe’s role in the future of global health research

A policy-oriented breakfast debate at the Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU, co-organized by GLOHRA and Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW), gathered voices from across the science, health, and policy communities. Every seat was taken for this event, where more than 40 participants discussed what Europe must do to remain globally competitive and scientifically relevant while contributing meaningfully to global health.

The event opened with a panel featuring insights from Lisa Görnitz (DSW), Dr. Stefan Mengel (Permanent



Breakfast debate panel and participants © Geiger / GLOHRA



Representation of Germany to the EU), Dr. Timothy Yeung (CEPS), Dr. Michael Makanga (EDCTP) and Prof. Dr. Manuela De Allegri (GLOHRA Steering Committee, Heidelberg Institute of Global Health). The conversation opened up as audience members joined the discussion.

Discussions emphasised 2026 as a decisive year for shaping FP10 and the broader European Competitiveness Fund (ECF). Stefan Mengel, Head of Division at the Permanent Representation, highlighted “competitiveness, sovereignty and security” as the key priorities guiding EU policymaking and noted that the emerging European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) offers an important opportunity to position health and health research as contributors to Europe’s prosperity and security. He encouraged the research community to consider how different strands of the ECF could be linked to create meaningful synergies.

Participants highlighted the many ways in which global health initiatives have contributed to scientific excellence, generated breakthroughs that have improved health outcomes in Europe and globally, delivered strong returns on investment, and strengthened international partnerships essential for responding effectively to rapidly emerging health threats. EDCTP was repeatedly recognised as a model mechanism for Europe – valued for its agility, deep global partnerships, contributions to digital health and data systems, and its commitment to human rights.

The debate reinforced that researchers have an important role in shaping political narratives – especially through compelling examples, evidence of impact, and clear articulation of how global health research strengthens Europe itself.

“It’s up to us to just say how successful we’ve been and why it’s important to keep funding [global health initiatives]. But if we are already saying that we just want to protect what we have – we aren’t making enough of these successes.”

- Willo Brock, CEPI

EU policymaking and advocacy pathways

Across meetings with the European Liaison Office of the German Research Organizations (Kooperationsstelle EU der Wissenschaftsorganisationen – KoWi) and DSW – complemented by insights from the POLITICO Health Care Summit – the delegation gained a detailed understanding of how EU research policy is shaped, both through formal decision-making structures and through the broader advocacy ecosystem that influences political priorities. KoWi and DSW provided an accessible overview of the EU’s legislative and programming processes, how multiannual research frameworks are developed and negotiated, and the emerging orientation of FP10. While FP10 is designed as an independent research and innovation (R&I) programme, the current proposal is closely linked to the ECF. How exactly that relationship will unfold is yet to be determined. As visible in the proposal, competitiveness, security and sovereignty seem to have become central guiding principles in the Commission’s thinking. Members of the European Parliament have furthermore stressed the need to address two long-term challenges during the current



negotiations: securing a larger R&I budget for FP10, and simplifying administrative procedures for beneficiaries. Competition for EU funding continues to rise, requiring researchers to read calls strategically – paying close attention to budget allocations, expected project volumes, geographic scope and emerging trends toward more open topics and knowledge valorization.

DSW offered further insight into advocacy processes in Brussels. With Germany’s strong support of research initiatives, German researchers and institutions are encouraged to actively engage in these discussions. GLOHRA members were reminded of the importance of communicating success stories from research projects so that policy-makers are equipped with evidence demonstrating the value of their funding.

3. Looking ahead

The GLOHRA delegation is returning from Brussels with a clearer understanding of where global health research fits within the EU landscape and where targeted engagement will matter most in the months ahead.

The to-do list is long, but work is already underway. The delegation leaves Brussels with renewed motivation and a clearer view of the opportunities to help shape the future of global health research in Europe.

4. Contact

German Alliance for Global Health Research (GLOHRA)

Dr. Rebecca Ingenhoff
Secretariat c/o Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin
Charitéplatz 1, 10117 Berlin, Germany
e: rebecca.ingenhoff@charite.de
e: secretariat@globalhealth.de
t: +49 30 450 572 100
globalhealth.de | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#)

With funding from the:



Federal Ministry
of Research, Technology
and Space

Last updated: 11/12/2025

File name: 251127_GLOHRA in BXL_public report.docx