

PRESS RELEASE: ISE on Mariya Gabriel's resignation

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A week ago, on Monday 15 May, Mariya Gabriel, since 2019 EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, tendered her resignation. She accepted a mandate to form a new government in Bulgaria. ISE congratulates her and wishes her success. Undoubtedly, her experience and knowledge of the democratic processes of the EU, will be beneficial to Bulgaria, and thus to the EU as a whole.

ISE thanks Mariya Gabriel for her dedication and commitment to advance all parts of her large portfolio, **in particular for her engagement to improve the situation of early career researchers.** We urge the European Commission President and Vice-Presidents to guarantee continuity of R&I programmes and ambitions.

ISE welcomes Executive Vice Presidents, Margrethe Vestager and Margaritis Schinás, who have been appointed by President Ursula von der Leyen to take on the responsibility for innovation and research for the first, and education, culture and youth for the second. We encourage them to pursue the ambitions initiated by Ms. Gabriel to **set up a programme dedicated to a researchers' careers** in Framework Programme 10 and put in place an independent European Research & Innovation Careers Observatory to monitor research career paths and provide factual data allowing for evidence-based decisions. As soon as possible, a pilot programme should be implemented: the situation of early career researchers requires strong and urgent actions.

In addition, ISE wishes to highlight four other main concerns, on "pillar I" excellence research, on the role of academic research in the research and innovation cycle, on the "Widening participation" programme.

- Specific Widening participation funding schemes should be simplified and promoted in a better way; generally speaking, mechanisms should be put in place to help researchers from widening countries to participate in all HE pillars, without confining them to Widening's low-budget programmes alone.
- Collaborative academic basic research should be included as an intrinsic component of R&I Actions in all funding schemes and mechanisms, including public-private partnerships; it is indispensable for addressing Global Challenges.
- The MSCA and ERC programmes, essential to raising the levels of excellence in Europe and to pursue investigator-driven ground-breaking, high-risk/high-gain research must be sheltered from budgetary cuts.

On a more general level, while the goals of the Horizon Europe programmes are set by EU policy makers, the choice of the pathways to reach those goals should be left to the beneficiaries, who can be trusted to implement them effectively and be accountable for their actions.

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