

Minister for Higher Education and Science



Mariya Gabriel  
Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth  
European Commission

Dear Commissioner Mariya Gabriel

Please accept my warmest congratulations on your appointment as Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.

The main challenge that our societies face in the coming years is addressing climate change. Our education, research and innovation systems are of critical importance in order to address the challenges, and create a more sustainable and prosperous EU.

The EU has a global position in the area of green and sustainable solutions that can strengthen our competitiveness, and at the same time contribute to fulfilling the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **A green Horizon Europe**

Ambitious investments in green research and innovation are crucial for reaching the EU's climate target, and both the current and the next EU-framework programme for research and innovation, Horizon Europe are central to this.

Horizon Europe rightly reflects the urgency of solving the grave climate related challenge. The Danish Government has high expectations to the European Green Deal and hope that it will set a strong green agenda for the next five years.

Nationally, we have committed ourselves to a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions with 70 percent by 2030 (compared to 1990 levels).

We meet our 3 percent objective in terms of research and innovation investments, including 1 percent from the public sector. Within this budget, the Government will invest additional 1 billion Danish kroner - around 134 million euros – next year on green research and innovation compared to what we invest today.

### **Arctic research and innovation**

In order to address climate change, we must pay particular attention to research and innovation related to the Arctic. This is an overarching European interest and a crucial focus area, not only to counter local climate developments, but because the Arctic region is an indicator of global climate change. Horizon Europe should have a strong focus on Arctic research and innovation – both in relation to

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mitigating climate changes, exploitation of natural resources in a sustainable way, and connectivity, monitoring and infrastructure.

### **Stronger links between higher education, research and innovation**

It was with great pleasure that I learned about your portfolio covering both education, research and innovation. This gives you a unique opportunity to create stronger links and synergies between these closely related policy areas. Creating closer ties between Horizon Europe and the next Erasmus+ programme is instrumental in this regard.

The new European Universities initiative brings a burning platform to both reinvigorate European cooperation in Higher Education as well as truly bring elements from both Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe together in one initiative. The European Universities can hopefully lead to increased quality, excellence and international competitiveness for European higher education and research institutions, and I look forward to collaborating with you to bring these ambitions into reality.

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### **High quality education with Erasmus+**

The Erasmus+ programme has never been more important than now, and there are high expectations for what the programme should accomplish. The next programme should build on past successes, but be more accessible and simple with reduced bureaucratic procedures.

Erasmus+ should increase the quality and international outlook of European Education systems by fostering mobility and cooperation not just within Europe but also beyond.

Within Erasmus+, we should focus on initiatives that bring EU added value, and contribute to high quality education. This is not the case for DiscoverEU which is an idea that should be abandoned.

I look very much forward to working actively with you and the new Commission with the aim of creating a prosperous and integrated European Research Area and European Education Area that will help preparing Europe for the next decade.

Yours sincerely



Ane Halsboe-Jørgensen