

The Guild welcomes the appointment of Iliana Ivanova as Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

The Guild praises the European Parliament's vote on 12 September 2023 to appoint Iliana Ivanova as Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth. It is of crucial importance that the position previously held by Mariya Gabriel is now taken over by a dedicated Commissioner-designate who will demonstrate political ownership and leadership in EU policies in research, innovation, and education.

The present and coming months will be critical for these policy areas, not least because of the ongoing mid-term review of Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe and the preparatory phase of their respective successor programmes. We call upon Commissioner-designate Ivanova to keep up Mariya Gabriel's commitment to strengthening the European Research Area (ERA), and to lay the grounds for the tenth Framework Programme for research and innovation (FP10) that will hold the promise of strengthening further Europe's scientific excellence. We also welcome the Commissioner-designate's efforts to work on completing the European Education Area (EEA) by safeguarding the Erasmus+ budget and implementing key initiatives that are in the pipeline.

We especially endorse Commissioner-designate Ivanova's priority of giving R&I a key role in the EU growth model. We highlight that the European Commission must identify the boosting of Europe's scientific leadership as a political priority and ensure that Horizon Europe and FP10 focus on the creation of new knowledge for the benefit of European citizens. This implies increasing investment in instruments such as the European Research Council and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and creating urgently needed opportunities for collaborative fundamental research in Horizon Europe's Pillar 2, to fulfil the commitment for ensuring a balance between research and innovation, as stated in Horizon Europe's legislative basis.

During her hearing, Commissioner-designate Ivanova highlighted the importance of fostering synergies between Horizon Europe and other EU funding programmes. Whilst we acknowledge the need for flexibility in addressing emerging challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, it is crucial that new EU policy priorities do not shift the focus of Horizon Europe away from its initial objectives. We therefore call on her to take a firm stance that any emerging priorities that Horizon Europe will address will need to be met with additional resources to its existing budget. We also welcome her upcoming efforts in attracting Cohesion policy funding to support capacity-building in the R&I sector.

We look forward to engaging with Commissioner-designate Ivanova and her team to contribute to the objectives of EEA and ERA as well as to the success of the EU in driving ambitious and forward-looking research, innovation and education policies.