

Friday, 8 October 2021



Realizing the European Innovation Area

Launch of the UAS4EUROPE Innovation Action Plan for Europe

Kindly hosted by the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU

On Friday 8 October 2021, UAS4EUROPE, the leading network of European Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS), will hand over its Action Plan for Innovation to EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel. The Innovation Action Plan will make concrete applied research recommendations for the realization of the European Innovation Area (EIA).

The Action Plan for Innovation is part of Commissioner Gabriel's initiative for the new European Innovation Area (EIA), which will complete the knowledge triangle by complementing the European Education Area (EEA) and the European Research Area (ERA).

The European Commission sees UAS as important actors and stakeholders in regional innovation ecosystems and beyond, as they not only focus on rapid market and societal impact, but also work closely with private and public sector actors to seek applicable solutions.

Based on these assets of UAS, the European Commission entrusted the UAS4EUROPE network with the creation of an Action Plan for European Innovation. The action plan is the result of a consultation process of an [expert group](#) composed of high-level UAS leaders with extensive experience in innovation and will make concrete applied research recommendations for the realization of the European Innovation Area (EIA).

The event will also provide an opportunity for R&I and industry stakeholders to engage with the European Commission on the role of applied research in securing European leadership in the next innovation wave.

The Action Plan for Innovation in Europe will further initiate a closer dialogue between UAS4EUROPE and the Commission services on how to implement the proposals of the applied research and innovation communities.

Presentation of the UAS4EUROPE Innovation Action Plan



Marjolijn Brussaard

UAS4EUROPE Co-Chairwoman;
President of the Executive Board, ArtEZ
University of the Arts;
Board Member, Netherlands Association
of Universities of Applied Sciences

Marjolijn works at ArtEZ which was awarded best UAS in the Netherlands 2018. She is a member of the board of the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences and represents the Netherlands in UAS4EUROPE. She has worked around the world, in curriculum & management development. She has been involved in international boards in Art & Design and funded several international networks. Last post held was Dean of Art & Design at Nottingham Trent University.

“Crossing the boundaries of our discipline and cultures is needed to find ways to develop new leadership and new paradigms for a fairer world with more equality for cultures and gender which is so desperately needed.”

Political reaction



Mariya Gabriel

Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, Youth and Sport

Mariya Gabriel is the Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, Youth and Sport. Under her leadership, the new Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and the cultural strand of Creative Europe programmes will be defined and implemented.

Her main priorities are excellence in research, innovation and education (ERA, EEA, EIA); tackling the R&I divide in Europe; Europe as a leader in strategic innovation areas through the digital and green transition, with a particular attention for young people and regions.

"No one left behind" and "Think out of the box" are her mottos.

Political reaction



Simona Kustec

Minister of Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia

Minister Simona Kustec, born in 1976, has been a full professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences in the Department of Political Science at the University of Ljubljana. She has also been a researcher with a rich and diverse body of work and was involved in several research project groups in Slovenia and abroad .

In the 2014-2018 term, she was elected deputy to the Slovenian National Assembly and headed the Party of Modern Centre (SMC) Deputy Group, while acting as Vice-President of the SMC Party.

Panel Discussion



Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva Director for Innovation, Digital Education and International Cooperation, DG EAC, European Commission

Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva has been Director at DG EAC since 2016. She is currently Director for Innovation, Digital Education and International Cooperation. She is responsible for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), which are key components of the Horizon Programme. Under her supervision is also the coordination of the EU Digital Education Action Plan. The international cooperation covers all policy areas of DG EAC, including the international dimension of programmes, such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe, European Solidarity Corps.

Antoaneta joined the European Commission in 2008. She has occupied various management and expert positions across the Commission and dealt with a wide range of topics such as external relations and enlargement, internal security and police cooperation, cyber security, stakeholder relations and international affairs.

Antoaneta has also worked as a diplomat to the Permanent Representation of Bulgaria to the EU in Brussels for five years. She is a graduate in political science of Sofia University, with training and qualifications in European studies from Germany (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung) and the UK (Sussex University).

Panel Discussion



Maria da Graça Carvalho, MEP Member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, European Parliament

Maria da Graça Carvalho is currently a member of the European Parliament. She is actively engaged in ITRE, IMCO, FEMM, PECH and AIDA committees, while she is also co-chairing the parliamentary intergroup on Long-term, Sustainable Investments and Competitive European Industry.

She was a senior advisor of Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, from November 2014 to December 2015. Previously, she was a member of the European Parliament between July 2009 and May 2014 and in that capacity, she was one of the rapporteurs of Horizon 2020. From 2006 to 2009 she was also Principal Adviser to President Barroso in the fields of Science, Higher Education, Innovation, Research Policy, Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

She served as a Minister of Science and Higher Education of the XV Constitutional Government of Portugal and Minister of Science, Innovation and Higher Education of the XVI Constitutional Government. She is a Full Professor at the Instituto Superior Técnico (University of Lisbon).

Panel Discussion



Sabine Herlitschka CEO & CTO, Infineon Technologies Austria AG

Sabine Herlitschka is Chief Executive Officer and Chief Technology Officer of Infineon Technologies Austria AG.

Her professional career includes industrial biotechnology research, international cooperation and financing in technology and innovation, Internships at leading organizations in the USA, Fulbright Scholarship at George Washington University and Johns Hopkins University, as well as founding Vice-Rector for Research Management and International Cooperation at the Medical University of Graz, Austria.

Herlitschka was Director of European and International Programmes in the Austrian Research Promotion Agency. For almost 25 years she has been frequently involved in European Research as advisor, project coordinator and evaluator, as well as participant and Chairperson in strategic European & international expert groups. Amongst others, she has been elected Chair of the Governing Board of the 5 bn euro European Public Private Partnership ECSEL-Electronic Components and Systems for Electronic Leadership, she is Vice-Chair of the Austrian Council for Research & Technology Cooperation, as well as member of the Senate of the German Fraunhofer Society.

Herlitschka holds a Ph.D. in Food- and Biotechnology.

Panel Discussion



Luciana Vaccaro

Chairwoman, UAS4EUROPE Governing Board; Rector, HES-SO University of Applied Sciences

Dr. Luciana Vaccaro began her university studies in her hometown of Naples, Italy. She started her career at CERN, in Switzerland, before receiving her Ph.D. at EPFL, and being appointed senior lecturer at the Institute of Microengineering, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

In 2006, she became director of postgraduate programmes in Health Economics and Management at University of Lausanne, Switzerland. In 2009, she went back to EPFL in order to set up and manage the Grants office whose mission focused mainly on Swiss and European research funding.

Appointed Rector of HES-SO on October 1st, 2013, she leads the largest university of applied sciences and arts in Switzerland with more than 21'000 students and 28 schools, active in six academic fields.

From 2015 to 2021, she was a member of the Foundation Council and Executive Committee of the Swiss National Science Foundation.

In 2019, she was elected Vice President of Innosuisse, the Swiss Innovation Agency, and since August 1st 2021, she is President of the Chamber of universities of applied sciences and arts of swissuniversities, which unites the Rectors of the nine Swiss universities of applied Sciences and arts.