



CONGRATULATORY LETTER

On the occasion of the 9th International scientific conference “TechSys 2020” – ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGIES AND SYSTEMS

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to all gathered today on the occasion of the 9th edition of the International scientific conference “TechSys 2020” - Engineering, Technologies and Systems.

I would like to thank the Technical University of Sofia – branch Plovdiv for hosting this important event, which in the past years, has contributed to the technological advancement of engineering solutions for industry.

In current times, we need engineers more than ever!

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Europe and the world with serious consequences for many thousands of people and has deeply affected our economy and the life of millions of workers and researchers. We will need the engineering creativity to help with solutions that address both the challenges of the crisis and the recovery process.

If we act together, we can come out of the crisis stronger!

The European Commission is taking robust action to tackle this crisis. We are at the forefront of supporting research and innovation and coordinating global research efforts.

On 4 May, President von der Leyen hosted the Coronavirus Global Response online pledging event to jump-start significant funding to ensure the collaborative development and universal deployment of diagnostics, treatments and vaccines against the coronavirus – the three priorities of the initiative. The Commission registered €7.4 billion in pledges from donors worldwide. My portfolio has made an unprecedented contribution - in total, EUR 1 billion is pledged under Horizon 2020.

The global pledging event was preceded by a number of other decisive actions at EU level. Let me give you some examples.

In April, we launched the ERAvsCorona Action Plan, consisting of ten key measures to coordinate, share and jointly increase support for research and innovation. I warmly welcome the support that all EU Research Ministers gave to the plan.

Manufacturing is part of the Action Plan. We need to work together with engineers on two challenges: access to research data as a matter of solidarity amongst all of us; and, address the most urgent research needs.

Also in April, I was glad to launch the European COVID-19 Data Platform to enable the rapid collection and sharing of available research data from European research projects. It is a very important concrete measure to support researchers in Europe and around the world in the fight against the coronavirus outbreak.

We need more for the future. We need engineers and scientists in manufacturing to undertake more research.

Manufacturing industry has been hurt greatly during the last weeks, firstly in terms of the disruption of the global supply chains, and then by the indispensable lockdown measures affecting work in factories.

Research and innovation activities dedicated to increasing the flexibility and resilience of European industry are clearly paramount to ensure a prompt response, quick recovery and preparedness of our society to shocks.

Europe has been a major player in supporting the manufacturing world and will continue to be so.

Under the EU R&I Programme Horizon 2020, we invested a total of €1.15 billion in the R&I activities of the Factories of the Future public-private partnership granting funding to more than 200 projects developing innovative production technologies, digitisation, automation, robotics solutions to pave the way to a greener, sustainable and competitive European manufacturing industry.

In 2021, the successor of R&I Programme Horizon Europe will be launched. More than ever, Europe needs the strong commitment from Member States to dedicate an appropriate budget to research and innovation.

I am sure that the Bulgarian scientific community will contribute even more under Horizon Europe, helping us make a competitive and sustainable European industry fit for the challenges of tomorrow.

Be part of this effort, making the most of the huge opportunities available at EU level!

I wish you all a very fruitful conference with many inspiring ideas.

Sincerely,

Mariya Gabriel

*Commissioner for innovation, research,
culture, education and youth*

*Brussels
14.05.2020*