

H.E. Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner for Education and Youth

Address to the Danube Rectors' Conference

Video Message



Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very happy to address your conference today. Networks like yours are important in creating the cooperation and links that make Europe stronger.

And cooperation is essential, because the higher education landscape has changed utterly. Record levels of students graduate from our universities. This is a great achievement, but it makes it even more important that they leave university with the right skills and knowledge to lead fulfilling lives and help our societies and economies grow stronger.

There are other changes too. Digital technologies are changing student expectations and creating new opportunities. Global competition is increasing, so we have to work harder to maintain Europe as a centre of educational excellence, research and innovation.

Higher education institutions, which operate at the interface between education, research and innovation, are key players. We want to offer them every possible support.

How to do this will be our priority when we review our modernisation agenda for higher education. Initial ideas for future work include quality and relevance, regional innovation and internationalisation. We will consult soon, and I look forward to hearing your suggestions.

Another initiative which can make a key contribution is the European Fund for Strategic Investments, a €315 billion package that will mobilise private and public investment. This will also fund projects in education, research and innovation, which can be developed by individual institutions or through partnerships. Now is the time for you to approach your policy-makers with ideas.

Finally, I would like to highlight the potential of the Erasmus+ programme. It is a great tool to foster student and staff mobility within the Danube region and with other European countries. It also funds cooperation projects that support higher education institutions and other actors to strengthen regional collaboration and exchange of good practice.

These European instruments are there to help you develop your cooperation; strengthen your partnerships; and consolidate the growth of higher education in the Danube Region. I invite you to make the very best use of them. And I wish you a productive and enjoyable meeting.

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