



*Ljubljana, 11 October 2021*

*Dear ERA stakeholders,*

*I would like to sincerely thank you for your open letter on ERA governance of 4 October. I am convinced that with your committed engagement in the governance and implementation of the ERA we can co-create a better functioning European Research Area that will be fit to take on the greatest societal challenges of the present and the future.*

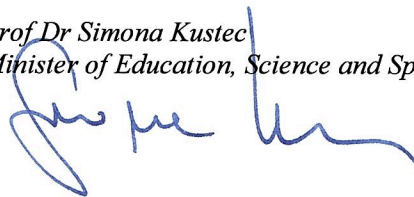
*In the role of the Presidency of the Council of the EU, we fully recognise the need and added value for all of stakeholder direct involvement in future ERA governance and we were very happy to receive such a positive and spontaneous response from you.*

*The ministerial open exchange of views during the September Competitiveness Council has proven that closer collaboration with the stakeholders as a principle is politically supported by all, including the Commission, while the exact transposition of this principle into governance modalities remains a task to be completed until the next Competitiveness Council, when the Council Conclusions on ERA governance are to be adopted. As Council Presidency, our task will be to formulate a solution that is acceptable to all Member States.*

*We are however taking this overwhelming support by you, the stakeholders, for our concrete first proposal and our responsibility to invest our best efforts into working with all Member States and the Commission to build consensus along the lines of justified stakeholder expectations. I am firmly convinced that we are stronger together.*

*With assurances of my highest consideration,*

*Prof Dr Simona Kustec  
Minister of Education, Science and Sport*



*Cc: Mrs Mariya GABRIEL  
Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth*