

Press release

# Minister Harris meets Commissioner Gabriel to discuss higher education, research and innovation and conflict in Ukraine

From [Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science](#)

Published on 1 March 2022

Last updated on 1 March 2022

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris, has today met with Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.

The Minister raised the situation in Ukraine with the commissioner, particularly in relation to student mobility through the Erasmus+ Programme.

Speaking today Minister Harris said:

“I was delighted to welcome Commissioner Gabriel to Dublin today to discuss, among other things, the situation unfolding in Ukraine.

“We are united in the EU’s stance that Russia’s war is illegal, immoral and unjustified. Ireland’s support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity is unwavering.

“We remain conscious, however, that the actions of the Russian state are no reflection on its people, and we are determined that Russian and Ukrainian students studying in Ireland and the EU, as well as Irish students studying at third level institutions in Russia and Ukraine, will be given our support in these difficult times.

“My department has asked higher education institutions in Ireland to ensure that the appropriate pastoral care measures are in place to for their Ukrainian

and Russian students and we have been reassured that they are. We know there are 10 Russian students in Trinity College Dublin as part of Erasmus. Separately, there are 12 Ukrainian students in Trinity College Dublin and 27 Ukrainian students in UCD.

“It is essential that access to education is maintained, and I confirmed to the commissioner that Ireland is ready to support any actions proposed by the Commission to make sure that remains the case.”

Minister Harris and Commissioner Gabriel also discussed the European Universities Strategy and European Research Area strategy during their meeting this afternoon.

Among the goals of the European Universities Strategy is to facilitate the implementation of transnational educational programmes across the EU by pooling capacity and resources, or awarding joint degrees.

Ireland has already demonstrated its commitment to the strategy by making €3 million available to universities participating in seven partnerships.

Minister Harris also congratulated the commissioner for her continued work implementing the European Research Area (ERA) strategy to develop a single market for knowledge in Europe, as well as the implementation of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme.

Minister Harris said:

“The buy-in and contribution of stakeholders at European and national level will be vital to implement our ERA priority actions.

“It is up to us as policymakers to champion the contribution that research and innovation can make to wider policy objectives.

“We need to work closely with all of our stakeholders at European and national level to realise the potential that exists for research and innovation to transform our lives, our societies and our economies.”