A recent article published on Science Business summarises a statement read on behalf of EU Research Commissioner Mariya Gabriel at the European Innovation Summit held online this week. According to the article, Mariya Gabriel has outlined her ideas for the creation of a European Innovation Area (EIA), saying it should be decentralised and empower all innovators and entrepreneurs to realise their full potential, wherever they are in Europe.

EIA must be based on the five main principles of an effective local innovation system, Gabriel said in a statement read on her behalf at the European Innovation Summit being held online this week.

- It must form networks and facilitate communication between different stakeholders and start-ups.
- The ecosystem must ensure transparent, equal access to funding across Europe, and be designed to increase female participation.
- Start-ups must be able to easily submit tenders to any public authority in the EU. Regulation allowing this is already in place, but there are not see enough examples of entrepreneurs taking advantage of it.
- EIA must enable matchmaking opportunities between start-ups and larger established companies.
- EIA should have strong local innovator associations with connections to other stakeholders and authorities.

These measures need to be adopted on a European level to tackle the fragmentation of existing European start-up ecosystems. Though many of these are vibrant and successful, they are often disconnected from each other. Today, it is easier for an entrepreneur to contact an investor in Silicon Valley, California than another European region, Gabriel said.

The EIA should help change this. “We have a single European single space for researchers. And one for education. But we need to create one for innovators and entrepreneurs,” said Gabriel.

An EIA would also create stronger links between education and innovation. The path from research to innovation is well-established. Now, the EU should enable students to form and scale start-ups in Europe without passing through a research lab, Gabriel said.

For more, see

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