



Latvian Trade Union of Education and Science Employees

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To: European Commission
Deputies of the European Parliament

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On research and development financing
in Latvia Recovery and Sustainability Plan 2021 – 2027

With this letter the Latvian Trade Union of Education and Science Employees (LIZDA) informs that LIZDA members – more than 22 000 representatives of education and science employees does not support the Latvian Ministry of Finance plan for Latvia's recovery and sustainability which was presented at the National Tripartite Cooperation Council meeting on 29.01.2021.

Distribution of financial resources (state budget and EU funding) of EUR 8 billion for reforms of recovery and sustainability does not provide sufficient funding for research and development. Climate, digital transformation, health, reducing social inequality, economic transformation and the rule of law are the components of the recovery plan. Most financial resources (20%-30% for each of the components) are planned for climate change, digital transformation and reduction of inequality. Detailed description of each activity under these components emphasizes the allocation of funding to public administration entities and public and private enterprises in order to solve problems connected with climate change, insufficient digitalization and prevention of inequality. LIZDA does not deny the importance of these components for the development of society and economy. At the same time we want to point out that proposals for allocation of funding do not show financing for research and development activities, including fundamental and applied research. LIZDA repeatedly emphasizes that research and development play a key role in economic recovery and economic development, particularly in the current context of the COVID-19 crisis.

The Ministry of Education and Science has requested EUR 453 million for the investment in recovery and development of education and science, and only EUR 132 million has been allocated, of which only EUR 5 million has been allocated for research and development for a period of seven years. The capacity and excellence of research and development cannot be developed without competitive financial resource. LIZDA recalls that European Commission country

recommendations for in recent years have indicated that investment in research and development in Latvia is limited, it is lower than the EU average.

LIZDA has repeatedly indicated that because of insufficient research and development funding, remuneration of science employees in Latvia is not competitive with other EU countries. For a long time researchers have been in a socially vulnerable position, because higher education and research institutions are unable to provide research staff with permanent, competitive remuneration, and salaries are mainly project-based.

LIZDA draws the attention of state executives, research organizations and other cooperation partners that Latvia's planning documents for the next seven years envisage high research and development performance indicators related to number of people employed in science, the average workload of researchers, the number of new doctoral degree holders, as well as scientific publications and other indicators. The Latvian research organizations and other cooperation partners have been asked to address public officials to increase research and development funding in Latvia.

LIZDA will appreciate European Commission's comprehension and support in this matter and would ask not to approve the Latvia Recovery and Sustainability Plan without sufficient allocation of funding for research and development.

Sincerely,
President



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