



MEET-UP OF COMMISSIONER MARIYA GABRIEL AND STARTUP VILLAGES

12 April 2022 (11:00 – 12:00 CEST)

CONCEPT

In the context of the Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas adopted by the Commission in June 2021, a flagship action on research and innovation for rural communities aims to help tackle the challenges and reap the opportunities for wellbeing and growth.

The annual Startup Village Forum is part of this flagship action. The Forum intends to promote knowledge exchange and cooperation activities and to work as an open space where institutions and stakeholders can meet, discuss and shape action for startup-driven innovation in rural areas. Furthermore, it aims to collect the commitment of public and especially private organisations to support Startup Villages. To achieve this goal, a call for pledges has been launched. This call is open for pledges that can offer financial but also in-kind support, such as provision of co-working spaces, IT infrastructure or expertise, coaching, mentoring or training, aiming at creating startups and job opportunities.

This one-hour virtual meeting follows the launch event of the Startup Village Forum in November 2021 and the first results of the call for pledges. It will provide a unique opportunity to connect startup villages across the EU with the heart of the EU policy making and to develop a dialogue between European Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, local authorities and entrepreneurs, on how innovation in rural areas can help tackle key challenges such as depopulation, food security (namely following Russia's unjustified and unprovoked military aggression against Ukraine) and energy autonomy.

Two questions will be discussed in particular:

What is the role and the potential of startup-driven innovation in rural areas in promoting the resilience and autonomy of the EU food and energy systems?

What are the enabling and blocking factors behind innovation and startup creation in rural areas, and how policy delivery at different levels (EU, national, regional and local) can best support?



PROGRAMME

[10.45 – 11.00 Online registration and virtual welcome]

11.00 – 11.05 Welcome: Mikel Landabaso, Director of Growth and Innovation, Joint Research Centre, European Commission

11.05 – 11.15 Introductory remarks: Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth: Expected role of Startup Villages as stimulators of rural innovation

11.15 – 11.50 Views from the ground: The Startup Villages introduce themselves and talk in groups of three, followed by comments of Commissioner Gabriel

First group

Claudia Pučić, Pazin, HR

Liam Cronin, Killorglin, IE

Enrique Guerra, Malpartida de Plasencia, ES

Second group

Andreas Halaus, Kitzbühel, AT

Linn Malmgren, Veberöd, SE

José Alberto Martín Piñas, Oliete, ES

Stewart Radovesta, BG

11.50 – 11.55 Concluding statement: Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

11:55 – 12:00 Next steps: Mikel Landabaso, Director of Growth and Innovation, Joint Research Centre, European Commission