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Sent by e-mail

Dear Ms Arantza Arechederra Urrestarazu,

Dear Ms Manuela González Suárez,

Dear Ms Esperanza Manzano Piedras,

Dear Mr Francisco Miranda Castro,

Dear Ms Violeta Muñoz Fuentes,

Dear Mr David Roiz Pereda,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 29 October 2012 concerning the situation the Spanish research and scientific community is currently facing. As you know, I am the first to express concern over the risk of a weakening in the Spanish and European research systems. At European level a target of 3% of GDP invested in R&D by 2020 has been agreed by all EU Member States. The same target - 3% of GDP invested in R&D - has also been set up at national level in your country. This is an ambitious target for Spain and I am glad that the national authorities have made such a commitment. I am indeed convinced that this objective is essential for the future recovery of the economy, in Spain, as in the rest of Europe. Economic growth and job creation require several elements, but investment in Research & Innovation and knowledge accumulation are in any case crucial for a knowledge-based economy that will be competitive and provide qualified jobs in the future.

For this reason, the European Commission called in its Annual Growth Survey 2012 and 2013 for a smart fiscal consolidation, where growth-enhancing areas are prioritised and protected whenever possible. If increased investments are not possible in some countries given the current macro-economic situation, then, at least, R&D budgets should be protected.

In the case of Spain, the European Commission reacted to the large cuts in the R&D budget for 2012 and presented a 'Country-specific recommendation', which after adoption by the Council of the EU in July 2012 recommended that Spain should "review spending priorities and reallocate funds to support access to finance for SMEs, research, innovation and young people". The Commission will carefully monitor the Spanish government's response to this recommendation.

Without protecting and enhancing public investments in R&D and accelerating pro-growth policy reforms at the EU and national levels we risk endangering the growth and jobs we need so much and losing the confidence of researchers in Europe and investors across the world.

These are tough battles we have to win at national and EU levels. I will continue to strongly make the case in this regard and I count on your support.

I take the opportunity to encourage you to persevere in your important work pushing the knowledge frontier further ahead.

Yours sincerely,



Máire Geoghegan-Quinn

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