

Statement by Commissioner Tibor Navracsics: 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Marie Skłodowska-Curie – A timeless Source of Inspiration

On 7 November 2017, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Marie Skłodowska-Curie's birth. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the only female scientist who was awarded the Prize twice, in both physics and chemistry. She discovered two new elements, polonium and radium, which led to the founding of the discipline of atomic physics. Marie Skłodowska-Curie succeeded in studying abroad when almost all universities were closed to women. She excelled in her scientific studies and research in male-dominated fields and travelled the world to acquire more knowledge. Long before the concept of a work-life balance existed in our minds, Marie Skłodowska-Curie managed to combine ground-breaking scientific achievements with raising a family.

So I admire her not only for her scientific achievements but equally for her courage in breaking barriers and helping to redefine the role of women in science and society.

The successful EU programme for researchers named after Marie Skłodowska-Curie takes her example as inspiration, by supporting highly-skilled researchers, boosting their careers and helping to bring about major scientific discoveries. Over the past 20 years, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions have supported more than 100 000 researchers with EUR 11 billion, at all stages of their careers, irrespective of nationality. I am delighted that around 40% of them are women. I am proud that nine researchers involved in the programme have subsequently been awarded the Nobel Prize. Most recently, in October 2017, Richard Henderson, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions project coordinator, shared the award for Chemistry; and the EU funded project GraWIToN, which contributed to the prize for Physics with its findings*, involved 9 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions fellows.

The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions are renowned for setting standards for quality training, attractive working conditions and open recruitment throughout the European Research Area. I am convinced that this programme will continue to deliver outstanding results for the benefit of society. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions play an eminent role in making Europe the leading hub for a new generation of global talent. Europe can surely count on its next generation of researchers to tackle societal challenges, following in the footsteps of Marie Skłodowska-Curie.

[MSCA Work Programme 2018-2020](#)

[Novelties in the MSCA Work Programme 2018-2020](#)

[MSCA Factsheet](#)

[MSCA](#) on [Facebook](#)

* modified 07/11/2017, 14:20