

Aftrap EPSA Awards, Gouvernement aan de Maas, 21 maart 2024

Welcome, to all of you!

It is a pleasure to host this wonderful event here today.

Since 2009, your organization and mine have been partners and we are happy to be so.

Today promises to be a festive and interesting day.

With engaging keynotes.

Great conversations.

And hopefully more than enough inspiration to take home at the end.

You will be speaking to each other in what I can surely call a Province Full of Knowledge.

An innovation leader.

With, from north to south our four Brightlands campuses.

Groundbreaking research is conducted here, in powerful public and private cooperation.

In the southernmost tip of our Province, we are working hard on the possible arrival of the Einstein Telescope.

What a first it would be if we succeed in being allowed to build the telescope.

We will see!

Dear friends,

I believe the public sector is under pressure.

As is democracy.

The support base under our institutions is suffering at times.

That worries me.

Meeting people like you again offers extra hope and optimism.

Experts like you who study the public sector, obviously know its relevance and importance.

By your work and through EPSA, you try to make sure there is more attention given to innovation in the public sector in Europe.

A contemporary, modern European public sector is an important asset, in the success of our continent.

Sure, the precise machinery of the public sector remains a niche for an average resident of our countries.

But a connected, united and future-proof Europe has nevertheless become a priority in the minds of that average European, over the last 2 years.

It is now the Defense of Europe that is a major priority.

But there is every reason to keep developing and sharing knowledge about developments in all those European countries, in other areas as well.

From healthcare to climate, and from education to finance.

Dear experts,

Keep up your good work.

Because innovation and learning are the engines of our progress.

So inspire each other, to bring out the best in each other.

Have a great stay here at the 'Gouvernement'.

And for those who walk out the door as winners here at the end of the day: feel proud and don't forget to enjoy the moment!

Thank you.