

Good afternoon,

Ladies and gentlemen,

## 0) *Preamble*

I should like to begin by thanking the organisers for their kind invitation.

Before going further let say a few words about myself and my work. I have been a member of the EPP group in the European Parliament since the 14<sup>th</sup> July of 2009 and am a full member of the ITRE – Industry, Research and Energy Committee – and substitute member of the Budgets Committee. In this capacity, I have been the rapporteur for the simplification of the EU research and innovation programmes and I am also the EPP permanent

rapporteur for the research area in the Budget Committee.

Against this background, I should like to speak briefly about three main areas.

~ Firstly, I shall outline the simplification process in broad terms.

~ Secondly, I shall emphasise, the need for increased funding in the future budgets for EU research and innovation programmes.

~ Finally, I shall sketch in the major guidelines for Horizon 2020 in general and in particular the area of Food Security.

## **1) *Simplification and the contribution of EU Parliament for the Horizon 2020***

Simplification is at the basis of our reforms and will supply the foundations upon which we can build better future programmes.

It is necessary to simplify the mechanisms involved in the Framework Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration Activities and all the European Commission Science and Innovation programmes.

The reduction of the complexity and simplification of the EU research funding landscape should have a positive impact mainly on the stakeholders. In furthering this goal, the current system should be replaced by a system that places greater trust in the

applicants, providing greater stability and legal certainty.

It is also necessary to develop Administrative and Financial simplification, to improve quality, accessibility and transparency and to enhance synergy between programmes and instruments.

To this end, as rapporteur for the Simplification report, I proposed:

~ On the one hand, reinforcing the technical and scientific assessment process. This meant a process of peer review and, with it, the application of excellence-based criteria for assessment.

~ On the other hand, simplifying the administrative and the financial aspects of funded projects.

It was gratifying to see that the report was adopted with the support of all the political groups without exception. However, this development is only the beginning of a long and difficult road ahead. Now we must make sure that our recommendations are properly implemented. At the moment, we are actively monitoring 72 different aspects of the process and we are optimistic that at the outset of Horizon 2020, all 72 aspects will have been implemented.

## **2) *The Budget***

Research and innovation are two central pillars in economic development and job creation in Europe. It is therefore essential to increase the portion of the

funding that is allocated to research and innovation within the overall EU budget.

In the European Parliament, are struggling to achieve a doubling of the Budget for the next European Programme for Research and Innovation as compared with the present programme. Hopefully, this will represent an increase from €50 billion to €100 billion. This figure was included in an amendment that I introduced and has recently been adopted by the European Parliament.

Since then, the European Commission has advanced an alternative figure of €80 billion as part of the post- 2013 7-year budget package. The next step will involve tough negotiations between the main three European Institutions, Parliament, Council and the Commission.

But it is not only about doubling the budget directly attributed to the Framework Programme. To this end, it is also necessary to increase the share of the funding that is attributed to research and innovation within the overall EU budget. This can be done in a combination of an increase in funding *for the framework programme* and increasing the share devoted to research and innovation *within the structural funds*.

If it is important to encourage synergy between the two, it is equally as important to maintain a clear distinction *between* the Framework Programme FP *and* the Structural Funds.

In this respect, on the one hand, *the Framework Programme FP* should above all be concerned with **Excellence**.

At the same time, it is also important that we encourage the participation of small units of embryonic excellence, such as small research groups and highly innovative start within the new programme. This involves the **Stairway to excellence**.

On the other hand, *the Structural Funds SP* should be above all devoted to **Capacity building**. This supposes creating the necessary infrastructure and human resources required by research and innovation across Europe as a whole.

### 3) *Horizon 2020*

As I see it, there are 5 key principles the Horizon 2020 programme:



~ Firstly, a trust based funding system. A simpler FP with fewer instruments alongside a radical overhaul of the administration of the FP.

~ Secondly, a chain from frontier research, to technological development, demonstration, valorisation of results and innovation. A programme that will contribute to the competitiveness of Europe. Enhanced participation of industry, with special emphasis on SME's.

~ Thirdly, substantial increase of budget for research and innovation.

~ Fourthly, excellence based criteria for the FP in co-ordination with the structural funds for research capacity building. Inclusion of the concept "stairway for excellence".

~ And finally, enhanced participation of young scientists.

Horizon should strike a balance between bottom up and top down research. Top down research should focus on areas related to the "great challenges" agenda.

In particular, the area of *Food security, sustainable agriculture and the bio-economy* is of particular importance as it has a significant impact on human health and the total ecosystem. This includes support for policies empowering rural areas and promoting informed consumer choices. It is important to address consumer needs for safe, healthy and affordable food.

The Commission specific objective is to secure sufficient supplies of safe and high quality food and other bio-based products. This can be done by developing productive and resource-efficient primary production systems with related ecosystem services, alongside competitive and low carbon industries. This will accelerate the transition to a sustainable European bioeconomy

The possibility of including *Food security, sustainable agriculture and the bio-economy* in the list of areas of new KICs - "Knowledge Innovation Communities" of EIT should be discussed.

#### 4) *Conclusion*

This brings me to the end but let me conclude by summing up the main points of what I have said and the actions that I believe that we should take:

1) Firstly considerable progress has been made in the task of simplifying access to EU funds and cutting unnecessary red tape. However, the recent simplification report is only the beginning of a long and difficult road ahead. The task is now to see that these reforms are actually implemented. Success in this domain will, moreover, provide a solid foundation on which the future programmes must be built.

2) Secondly, we cannot but admit that European research is chronically underfunded and that, in my opinion at least, funding in Horizon 2020 should be

doubled and synergies between the Framework Programme and the Structural Funds should be improved.

3) Finally, if Horizon 2020 is a comprehensive and well thought out programme, we need more trust, simplicity, flexibility, and excellence based criteria. This should be accompanied, in my opinion, by a reform of the mass of existing programmes and instruments into a clearly defined three pillar structure.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.