

Good afternoon,

Ladies and Gentleman

Let me begin by welcoming you to the European Parliament and by saying that it is a great honour for me to have been invited to host this lunch time discussion. I would also like to express my gratitude to our co-hosts from Photonics21 and the different colleagues from the Parliament and the Commission who have found time in their busy schedules to attend this event.

The purpose of this lunch debate is to discuss the importance of Key Enabling Technologies (KETs) for fuelling innovation, economic growth and cohesion in Europe. Let me first outline

something of the importance of the KETs before going on to consider the possible synergies that can be created between H2020 and the structural funds. I shall finish this brief introduction with a call from the heart regarding the importance of ensuring that European research and innovation is granted at least adequate funding in the forthcoming 2014-2020 budget.

With regard to the importance of Key Enabling Technologies, these do, indeed, have a central role to play in H2020. Although they have been placed in the second pillar – that of industrial leadership – they are expected to play a significant role in both or the two other pillars: Pillar 1 - Excellence - will have a number of bottom-up calls where KETs can be further developed whilst

in Pillar 3 - the KETs are of central importance in tackling the different societal challenges with which we are currently confronted. The KETs, therefore, are central to the elaboration of a complete H2020 strategy.

Synergies between Horizon 2020 and the Structural Funds

Turning now to the question of synergies between H2020 and the structural funds, let me first give you an idea of the state of play with regard to H2020 in the Parliament. As things currently stand, H2020 underwent the second consideration of various amendments in the ITRE committee. The different reports will be voted on at the end of November (on the 28th in fact).

A central question today is how H2020 might facilitate access to and the use of funding at the level of the regions and SMEs. This is the case, above all, at the point of intersection between R&D&I and structural funding. In this process, building synergies between H2020 and the structural funds has been one of our constant preoccupations in elaborating H2020.

In this respect, the structural funds have a complementary role to play with regard to what Horizon 2020 will be able to do. *Upstream* from Horizon 2020, the structural funds can be used for capacity building. *Downstream* from Horizon 2020, the structural funds can help smooth the passage from conception to market. At the same time, they can also be used to co-finance certain projects.

This also involves the role of smart specialisation, something that will entail enhancing synergies between H2020 and the structural funds. Under current economic restraints, smart specialisation represents an innovative policy tool that brings a fresh perspective on the debate on resource allocation in European regions. In this context, universities and research centres have a key function to fulfil.

Before finishing, let me say a few words about the pressure that we are currently experiencing to revise the budget. As you may know, the MFF negotiations are still under way. In this context, the Cypriot Presidency has recently announced that “*all elements inside and outside the MFF, will have to be adjusted downwards*”. A decision on

the final figures is expected for the third week of November (between the 22nd and the 23rd).

These “adjustments” will inevitably have a considerable impact on the whole structure – and for that matter on the viability – of H2020. It is to be hoped that the different governments – and not least those with a reputation for academic excellence – will make an effort to attribute an at least adequate budget for H2020.

Let me now introduce Mr. Giorgio Anania, from Photonics21.