The most recent STC report on key research figures does not give an encouraging picture of the state of European research. 80% of all research in the world is undertaken outside of Europe. 69% of patent applications are submitted in non-EU countries. And the list goes on.

It is essential that we reverse this tendency.

The forthcoming budget represents an opportunity to reshape the whole system of EU research and innovation.

It is essential that we act decisively now. If we do not, 2020 will simply be too late to turn things around.

A rigorous overhaul of the system implies:

Firstly, provision of adequate funding;
Secondly, better integration of the three corners of the knowledge triangle; and thirdly, considerable simplification of the structure of research, on the one hand, and of the administrative and financial rules, on the other.

In the light of these factors, I should like to ask 3 questions:

My first question concerns the level of funding in research and innovation required to achieve the various objectives we have set ourselves. What level of funding does the Commissioner believe will be required across the board for research and innovation programmes as a whole?

My second question concerns how best to integrate the CIP, EIT and Framework Programme. What overall structure does the Commissioner believe will be suited to furthering this objective?

My third question involves simplification and is divided into two parts.

Firstly, the complexity of EU programmes, of the associated instruments, and the multiplication of research bodies, creates enormous difficulties for those researchers and SMEs who wish to apply for research funding.

My question in this respect is:

How can this ramifying complexity be simplified?

The second part of my question concerns the administrative and financial simplification process. The next generation of research programmes must be based on the principles of simplicity, legal certainty, excellence and trust.

How does the Commissioner believe these core principles can best be safeguarded?