

Thank you Malcolm,

It is a great honour to have been invited to talk before you this evening.

This meeting is particularly timely as we in the Parliament are in the process of preparing the final H2020 reports. This consists six separate reports and EIT falls under the scope of two of these: the strategic innovation agenda and the regulation report.

I have been fortunate enough - if that is the right term - to have been nominated as the rapporteur for the specific programme implementing H2020. Although this does not

include EIT, I will be the shadow rapporteur for the EIT opinion in the Budget Committee.

This being said, I also have a long experience of working with the EIT from its earliest days in my previous capacity as adviser to President Barroso. The EIT funds three KICs and this meeting is devoted to discussing one of these, the climate KIC. I know the good work that this KIC has generated across Europe and in particular at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and at Imperial College, London.

EIT is a new programme, whose funding the Commission proposes to increase substantially (subject to approval by

Parliament and Council). The first exchange of views took place yesterday in the ITRE Committee. A few MEPs expressed doubts about the absorption capacity of EIT.

However, this is an opinion that I do not really share. Indeed, EIT is a new institution and has yet to show its full potential: EIT is a programme of real worth as it combines education with research and innovation.

The increased budget can be used to strengthen the existing KICS and to create new KICS in response to the different societal challenges with which we are all confronted. We could go even further and at a time when the major industries in Europe are crying out

for well trained engineers: EIT may be able to answer some of their requirements.

It may also act as a model for other universities across Europe to imitate. In this respect, EIT could act as a catalyst for the modernisation of the European University system. An example would be the EIT's capacity to promote an "Excellence Initiative"; one that would take inspiration from the German initiative but at a European level.

Meetings such as this are of real value in exchanging points of view and generating new ideas. Much as I would like to listen to your discussion until the end, unfortunately, I have to attend the first meeting of the group of

rapporteurs for H2020. Please accept my  
apologies and back to you Malcolm.