

Good afternoon,

Ladies and gentlemen

Let me say a few words about myself for those of you that do not know me. I work principally on the ITRE and Budget Committees as a Portuguese MEP in the European Parliament. At the moment, I am the rapporteur for the Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020. In this capacity, I am particularly interested in themes of research and innovation and feel that the most useful contribution that I can make to this panel is to give you a broad outline of the way in which H2020 might affect the European Welfare model.

In particular, there are two spheres that would seem to be of particular relevance. The first is the development of a knowledge society as this supposes the crucial role of education and training and the second is the question of an ageing society. (Multipolar; Budget policies 2014-2020; strengths & weakness. The economic crisis is a consequence of the technological revolution).

With regard to the development of a dynamic knowledge society, it is necessary but not sufficient. Education at all levels, research and innovation are all central to this objective.

One of the means to furthering this goal is H2020, and the EIT - the European Institute of Technology - has a central role to play here. The EIT aims to promote the "knowledge triangle". This brings together research, innovation and education as the key drivers for the new knowledge based society.

One of the institute's goals is to ensure that graduates and post-graduates are able to move into the world of work with the skills that they have gained from their education. Moreover, improved links between further education and the world of work should enable us to reduce youth unemployment by ensuring that our highly qualified young people are able to take advantage of the actual skills and knowledge they have accumulated.

Turning now to the question of an ageing society, H2020 has three pillars and the third of these pillars covers six distinct societal challenges. The first societal challenge is that of health. In this context, extensive provisions have been made to deal with the challenge posed by demographic change and related issues. This involves taking advantage of multidisciplinary advanced and applied research and innovation with behavioural, gerontological, digital and other sciences.

The goal is to find cost effective user-friendly solutions that will contribute to active, independent and assisted daily living for both the ageing population and people with disabilities. This covers such areas as mobility, smart personalised assistive technologies, service and social robotics, and ambient assistive environments.

I hope that this brief summary of the links between Horizon 2020, on the one hand, and what will undoubtedly be a much changed model for welfare provision, on the other hand, will serve to give one or two pointers with regard to the challenges posed by a rapidly changing environment for the social services.

Thank you very much

Maria da Graça Carvalho