



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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President of the European Commission

Taking Joint Technology Initiatives forward – a vital partner for innovation and growth

First calls for proposals under the Joint Technology Initiatives
Innovation and Investment Package

Brussels, 9 July 2014

Dear Minister Stefania Giannini,,

Dear colleagues from the Commission, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, Neelie Kroes, Siim Kallas,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

It is a pleasure to be here with you today for the launch of the first calls for proposals under the Joint Technology Initiatives, a vital part of our new seven year research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020.

I would particularly like to thank Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn for all her efforts in driving forward our ambitious European agenda on research and innovation and for organising this event.

It includes a very interesting exhibition which I just had the opportunity to visit briefly with the CEOs of some of the companies involved in the partnerships, to whom I would like to pay tribute for their innovative stance and creativity. In fact I've read the programmes of these initiatives, some of them I already knew before, others are new: the Innovative Medicines Initiative 2, Fuel Cells and Hydrogen 2, Clean Sky 2, Bio-based Industries, Electronic Components and Systems, Shift2Rail and SESAR 2020. These are some impressive achievements and projects, and I wish you all the best for these Joint Technology Initiatives.

But I would also like to thank Vice-Presidents Neelie Kroes and Siim Kallas from the Commission, who are with us here today. Their contributions towards innovation in the digital and transport sectors just go to show how innovation applies across our economy, touching upon many areas which impact on our daily lives; and why - as we look ahead - we need to continue to mainstream innovation, so that we can maximise growth and improve our living standards across the board, through science and innovation.

This is why I particularly welcome today the broadening of this next generation of partnerships to three new areas, in air and rail transport, as well as in bio-based industries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are certainly back on the road to recovery in the European economy, following the worst crisis to have hit our economies since the 1930s: growth is coming back across the European Union, predicted at 2% next year; and for the first time since 2011, employment and household incomes are also growing.

So this is the moment to seize by innovators and entrepreneurs.

Because whilst the crisis is not yet over – we cannot say it's over when we have such high levels of unemployment -, governments now understand better the need to invest in the future to support the creation of new jobs; they understand that innovation and the digital economy are vital to build on our recovery, to increase growth, and to tackle unemployment;

They understand that going back to business as usual is simply not an option.

This is why our Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs aims to reach 3% of European GDP in research and innovation, which could generate 3.7 million more jobs by 2025;

And it is why we have already managed to make good progress in the agenda set by our Innovation Union flagship initiative; be it, for instance, in agreeing on the Community patent after thirty years of negotiation, or in further reducing the innovation gap with the United States and Japan. We did it through initiatives such as the European Research Council, which has provided grants to 2600 top researchers between 2007 and 2012 and has become the reference point in frontier research; and through the European Institute of Technology, linking up business and academics through Knowledge and Innovation Communities.

But the crisis has also highlighted the need for us to rebalance our economies and regenerate our industrial base. That is why we are working hard for what we have called a European Industrial Renaissance with the aim of having 20% of our GDP coming from industry by 2020.

Because evidence shows that those countries who invest most in research and innovation - and who can count on a strong industrial base - are best equipped to get out of the crisis fastest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last month, the Euroscience Open Forum event in Copenhagen focused on "Science building bridges". I had the pleasure to be there and it allowed me to highlight the bridges we are building in Europe: between all the scientific disciplines; between researchers and the general public; between the laboratory and the market place, something which many of you are particularly involved in; between Member States; and between the European Union and our global partners internationally.

I bring this to your attention because I see the Joint Technology Initiatives not just as a bridge between the public and private sectors, between universities and businesses, between European institutions and European companies, but as the very foundations of the new kind of approach we are trying to foster in European research and innovation.

They are based on joint efforts and cooperation, which are essential for our smart, successful and efficient recovery; essential because the problems we face today are simply beyond the means and capacities of individual Member States or single companies. I have had a lot of contact with some of you, for instance in the field of medicine, and I remember visiting the biggest laboratories in Europe and the world and being told they will not have the necessary investment to innovate in some medicines. But together, by pooling our means, we can do it. In the end I think it's a very simple concept.

That is why – despite our overall seven year European budget being smaller – Horizon 2020, our budget for research, is 30% bigger than its predecessor and one of the very largest research programmes in the world. We could get 80 billion euros for this budget. I'm very proud of this. Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn has worked very hard with the Member States and I also discussed this issue with the Prime Ministers of all our Member States.

Let me tell you very frankly that reaching an agreement was easier here than for other areas. Which shows, to be fair to our Heads of State and government, that they are much more attentive to the need of investing more in this area. I had more difficulty in convincing Member States to be more generous in financing other areas. But for this one, it was not exactly what we had put forward, but, and I have to put it on record, it was easier because today there is an awareness, which is very good for the future.

By working together, we will be able to deliver more research and innovation and produce better results; we will have the joint capacity to focus on strategic technologies that will underpin growth and jobs in key sectors of a knowledge-based European economy; and we will certainly be able to multiply the investment effect.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are looking to build on success.

I am delighted to see how the first generation of JTIs have already delivered some very concrete results.

Allow me to give you quick examples from three of the initiatives, but obviously, time permitting, I could mention many more:

The 40 on-going projects under the Innovative Medicines Initiative – which is becoming even more important given our ageing population – have, for instance, increased the speed of development in diabetic drugs and are helping to predict better drug toxicity;

Under our climate agenda, hydrogen fuel cell powered busses are now being integrated in five cities across Europe; and good progress is being made to reduce by 20% aviation emissions, which currently contribute to 3% of global greenhouse gases.

Evaluations of the current JTIs show that they shorten the time to market; expand technological competences; ensure more efficient funding, with long term commitments and strategies; and, importantly, attract a high level of industrial participation, including SMEs, more than 17000 of which received funding from our last research programme.

So we are making good progress, fully in line with our priorities; but, of course, we cannot settle for what we have achieved so far; we cannot stand still; we need to make more progress, which is why we want to make these partnerships even better, and why the Commission adopted the new Innovation and Investment Package almost exactly one year ago today, on 10 July 2013.

This package was agreed between the European Parliament and the Council. I see here among us my friend Jerzy Buzek, the new chairman of the ITRE Committee and former President of the Parliament. I wish you all the best, Jerzy. This man is going to be very important in the future because he will be the person in the Parliament deciding on investments in this field.

And I'm grateful to the European Parliament and the Council because this package was agreed in record time at the start of last May, which will mobilise over the next seven years around at least 22 billion euros of public and private investment. And we were able

to adopt the proposals establishing the Public-Private Partnerships with your organisations in the following month.

This starts today with the first call of proposals, totalling 1.12 billion euros of public investment to be matched by the private sector, for this coming year.

So I see this event as the next phase of our journey:

A journey which the current Italian Presidency of the Council has continued to prioritise; and I would like to thank Stefania Giannini, Minister for Education, Universities and Research for her presence here today. Some days ago the whole College of Commissioners was in Rome with the Italian government. I had a very good meeting with Prime Minister Renzi. By the way I'm very happy with the support Prime Minister Renzi has been giving to the digital agenda. Just yesterday in Venice, with Vice President Kroes, what he said was very impressive. I really want to thank the current Presidency of the Council, in particular Prime Minister Renzi for his commitment to the digital agenda. I'm sure that during the six months of the Italian Presidency we will make specific progress in this area.

And this new journey will allow the new generation of partnerships, now broadened to cover seven areas, to represent a renewed, and more ambitious, collective commitment of European companies, both small and big, alongside the European Commission and our governments, our Member States, to invest in major technological advances together;

A journey that will ensure that these partnerships remain inclusive, open to anyone, and on the basis of open calls, to ensure we make the most of our collective brain power. This is very important; because they bring companies in the same sector together with academic researchers - allowing them to work together, and make the progress we all need;

And a journey that will allow them to build on the cross discipline angle to this work, from the bio-economy to pharmaceuticals, from micro-electronics to energy technologies, from aviation to rail, supporting our industrial, transport, health, as well as climate and energy priorities.

To conclude, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me tell you that the recent European elections showed that European citizens expect us to do more to meet their needs, and overcome the crisis, improve their living conditions, and improve our European competitive edge.

That means European institutions and Member States mobilising all their efforts and means to support growth and innovation, particularly through public private partnerships, and by getting our people together.

That is why we are looking to build on the momentum and looking to address future challenges, with a conference in Lisbon on 6th to 7th of October, entitled: "The future of Europe is Science". Of course it's not only science, but I decided to have this title to put the accent on how critical science is, not only science, but innovation, but without science Europe would not be able to live globally. I believe we have more than the means, intellectually and critically, with our universities and businesses, to live globally in the field of science. We will address past achievements and foresight issues, based on a report to be delivered by the Science and Technology Advisory Council I set up a year and half ago.

But ultimately the progress we make, the positive impact on people's lives, does not come from the conferences we organise in the European Commission. It comes down to

our ability to deliver change through *your* knowledge, *your* entrepreneurship, *your* research and innovation.

During the last 10 years in the European Commission we have been doing everything we can with the means available to create the best conditions. But at the end of the day it's not the European Commission who will solve these problems in our society. It depends on you. It depends on the people working on the ground, it depends on businesses, it depends on researchers, on our academics, on our young people. But I've been travelling all over Europe, I know there is great potential and great creativity.

So let's create the right conditions for these initiatives to thrive.

And I believe JTI's are fundamental to this process, because the next generation of JTI's are already building on our track record to go further, and I believe there is now more ambition to build a more robust future.

With today's launch for the first call for proposals, my message is clear: take advantage of the momentum we have been generating together; let's seize the new opportunities available; and encourage participation from across our businesses, industries, our researchers and academics!

Thank you very much for your attention and thank you all for your commitment to this very important agenda.