



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

### **Neelie Kroes**

Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda

### **2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON KEY ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES**

**BRUSSELS, 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013**

I am delighted to be here today to meet the new High Level Group for key enabling technologies.

The last few months have seen much progress.

We have agreed Horizon 2020 and its budget. 70 billion Euros over the seven years is a good deal, and a worthy investment in European growth.

Plus, we have made solid progress on public-private partnerships for key enabling technologies.

- Just last week we launched an innovation investment package: including a proposed Initiative on **Electronics, known as ECSEL**. A partnership for a strong and competitive European electronics industry.
- Plus in **Photonics**, we now have a detailed plan for our contractual PPP. So it can be up and running by the start of Horizon 2020.

I am very pleased with the commitment from industry in these PPPs. And we absolutely need it for success. Particularly for activities closer to the market.

Over half of the first Horizon 2020 work programme will target innovation, including pilot lines.

Now is the time to implement. And you're right to focus on that: thank you for your recommendations; they are very useful. If I may, I will outline a few extra dimensions to consider:

- First, we need more active ***cooperation between different areas of Horizon 2020, in particular the KETs and Societal Challenges***. We need to build these links between those communities, and bring them closer: but that needs your help. I hope this becomes one of your main priorities from now on.
- Second, mainstream activities need to integrate SMEs better. Even more than currently planned: so they can access innovation services and the infrastructures for advanced research, manufacturing and testing.
- Third, on ***Smart Specialisation***. Regional authorities are drawing up smart specialisation plans; and key enabling technologies need to be part of that. So make sure you engage actively with them. We only have a few months left to make it happen.
- Fourth, we need your support to develop ***excellent regional innovation clusters*** – and help them network with each other. Such clusters are essential to create new partnerships, new ecosystems, innovation and investment.
- And finally, we all know about the terrible employment crisis today.

Something that keeps me up at night. But I also know that many of you are facing a **shortage** of skilled labour. That is exactly what our Grand Coalition for digital jobs is about: so please join and support.

Europe today faces many challenges. But we absolutely need to invest in future growth – not in spite of those challenges, but because of them. That's what enabling technologies are all about for me. Not subsidising this or that sector: but supporting and strengthening the foundations for our whole economy. And I thank you for your cooperation.