

Digital Single Market

Reports and studies 7 November 2013

Uplifting Europe's industrial capability

The objective of this session was to provide foresights on the technological challenges for 2014-2020, to share visions, plans and policy need and highlight opportunities for Europe. The topics covered were such as robotics, systems and components, photonics and manufacturing. The industrial leaders from Europe discussed what the key points are for enabling technologies for ICT and the importance of innovations and investments in ICT.

This session was organised by Anne Bajart, Project Officer in DG CNECT – Robotics. Ben Hurley (CEO of NRDC) chaired the session.

Rob Hartman from the Netherlands introduced the audience to his company ASML, the world's leading provider of lithography systems for the semiconductor industry, manufacturing complex machines that are critical to the production of integrated circuits or chips. Today chips are everywhere to solve the problems of the world – in phones, cars, etc. They have a wide application in healthcare and many other fields. The European ambition should be to get 20 % of world market share. So Europe should strengthen its positions in this field.

Renaud Champion from Robolution Capital talked about the upcoming technological revolution of robotics. He mentioned a few social challenges such as improving medical care, working conditions and many more. Champion stated that „Europe can become the global leader in Intelligent Robotics in order to deliver sustainable working and life solutions for the citizens of the EU“. To do that, we should break technological barriers, simplify access to finance and bring back the High-Tech investors, work towards unity and actively drive a paradigm shift in EU Citizens' perception of robotics to stimulate acceptability.

Fergal Ward from Intune Networks highlighted the need for disruptive innovation in Europe. Disruptive innovations are the innovations that help create a new market and value network, and eventually goes on to disrupt an existing market and value network by displacing the earlier technology. Ward encouraged the Europeans to think about organic growth – sustainable and disruptive innovations, to make friends with your SMEs because that is where disruptive innovation and leadership happens, as well as to build new product lifecycles.

Gerard Beenker, the Vice President Artemis-Industry Association spoke about electronic components and embedded systems. That covered such topics as smart mobility, smart houses, buildings and healthcare. Key technology enablers are ICT, and ultra-low power affordable semiconductors. Beenker forecasted that the Internet of Things will be huge and will impact many different industries and applications.

Sabine Herlitschka from Infineon Technologies introduced with the companies' achievements in the field of innovative semiconductor solutions for energy efficiency, mobility and security. This business is vitally supported by the key enabling technologies such as micro- and nano- electronics, biotechnology, photonics, advanced manufacturing systems, advanced materials etc. In the end she summarised what is needed for European industrial capabilities.

Herlitschka spoke about the need to strengthen the supply chains. Instead of bringing a silicon valley to Europe she would rather see an innovation valley in Europe. The competition between EU countries does not strengthen our capability. Europe has to compete with USA, Asia and other regions outside Europe.

As for the ICT students and young researchers, the most interesting takeaway from this session in general would be that you can't accomplish something big all by yourself; you have to find partners, other researchers to help you overcome the obstacles and challenges and that's what this conference all about. By gathering all these excellent researchers, they showed us how you can benefit from each others, whose interests are in the same field of science.

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