

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
The Chair

CONFIDENTIAL

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Jerzy Buzek
Chairman
Conference of Committee Chairs
European Parliament

Brussels,

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Dear Chairman,

In accordance with Rule 118 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy held an exchange of views on Tuesday, 30 September 2014 with Mr Moedas, Commissioner-designate, who, subject to the positive outcome of the nomination procedure, will be responsible for the Research, Science and Innovation.

Prior to the hearing, Parliament had sent the Commissioner-designate a list of written questions to which he replied in writing on Friday, 26 September 2014.

Mr Moedas opened the hearing by making a statement in which he referred to the following priorities:

- to make progress on framework conditions that enable the full potential of European research, science and innovation, by, inter alia, finalising the European Research Area, improving policy coordination, widening participation and accelerating the actions of the Innovation Union, exploring synergies with the European Structural and Investment Funds at national and regional level. He also stressed the importance of the gender dimension, with a view to building a new generation of young, talented and dynamic scientists and researchers;
- to deliver on Horizon 2020, by ensuring that that the Horizon 2020 programme is implemented in the most effective and efficient way, implementing the Innovation Investment Package, developing innovative financial instruments, including for SMEs, and focusing on energy efficiency and competitive low-carbon energy, especially on renewables, with a view to boosting jobs, growth and investment;
- to defend the value of excellence and creative freedom in science and research, with a strong focus on fundamental research and more support for the European Research Council. He also noted that he would foster science diplomacy and international cooperation.

Subsequently, Mr Moedas answered questions and made commitments on the following subjects:

- European Research Area: there were three issues to be tackled first in connection with completion of the ERA: the need to better align national research agendas, address the lack of transparency in recruitment in research institutions and tackle the gender dimension. In particular, he would ensure that Member States implement the relevant roadmap that would be drawn up by mid-2015. He would also seek to improve policy coordination, namely through better monitoring of action at national level and through scrutiny of national reform efforts by means of the European Semester. In that connection, he remarked that it was necessary to ensure that countries or regions that are scientifically less developed can catch up better performing Member States, including by linking better H2020 and the structural funds;
- Coordination in the Commission: he committed himself to ensuring that the issues in his portfolio are properly taken into account in all the work of the Commission, including in the financial package proposed by President-elect Juncker. With regard to the structure of the Commission, he promised that he would be a team player and work with the relevant Vice-Presidents and other Commissioners;
- H2020 budget: he expressed his intention to work closely with Parliament on the H2020 budget; in that connection, he pointed to the task of ensuring continuity of payments, which he would seek to address in collaboration with Parliament. In addition, he would establish a correspondence between commitments and payments;
- Research and Innovation target: he noted the importance of public investment and referred to the need to ensure that Member States meet their promises to invest in research and innovation (the 3% GDP Lisbon Agenda target), stressing the need to use the Structural Funds as a means of leverage, including by improving the use of teaming and twinning mechanisms. He also wishes to raise the profile of his portfolio in relation to the European semester. He also stressed that private investment was lacking, and that a better use of PPPs, JTIIs and the SME instrument would help to incentivise private investment, together with new solutions in that regard that would need to be developed. He made a commitment to develop new output indicators in relation to innovation investments;
- H2020 and health: he noted that the health aspect of H2020 was significant, including with regard to challenges such as anti-microbial resistance and rare diseases;
- PRIMA: he referred to the relevant proposal by the Italian Presidency and noted that the Commission services were analysing whether an initiative under Article 185 TFEU was an appropriate option;
- Bringing ideas to market: he emphasised the need to ensure that ideas are brought to the market, so that research and innovation, including non-technological innovation, generate wealth and growth, noting the importance of knowledge transfer from research to businesses, including SMEs, and of ensuring that all stakeholders, including the social partners, are involved in innovation;

- Simplification: great progress had been made in terms of simplification in H2020 and in relation to the SME instrument, noting that it would be necessary to take stock and examine what further steps should be taken, before deciding on any new legislative measures;
- Sustainability: he viewed sustainability as a key element in his portfolio, especially as regards renewables and would seek to promote research and innovation to achieve green growth and would give priority to the circular economy. He noted also that in terms of energy, there would be an important role for research and innovation in achieving a resource efficient and low carbon economy and recalling the 85% earmarking for non-fossil fuel energy research, which includes the 15% earmarking for market uptake activities of energy efficiency and renewable technologies;
- Innovation Union: he would work closely with Parliament to improve this strategy, ensuring that Member States do not fall behind in terms of innovation and helping SMEs getting access to capital;
- Reindustrialisation: He supported the aim of reindustrialising Europe through research and innovation and would take the necessary steps to ensure that H2020 contributes to achieving that objective, including through support for key enabling technologies.

Before the end of the hearing, the Commissioner-designate made a brief closing statement in which he added/reaffirmed that:

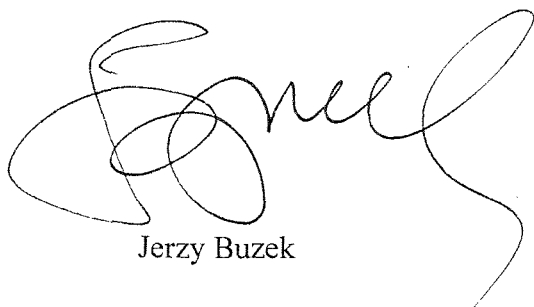
- he would be present in Parliament and would cooperate very closely with the Committee in achieving the priorities set out above;
- if confirmed, he would put himself at the service of Europe and its citizens.

On the basis of the written answers and the responses of the Members present at the hearing, as well as the comments made by our committees' coordinators, who met after the hearing under our chairmanship, we hereby state the following:

The ITRE Coordinators concluded by consensus, with the exception of the GUE group, that Mr Moedas was qualified both to be a member of the College of Commissioners and to carry out the specific tasks assigned to him.

We would be grateful if you could bring this assessment to the attention of the Conference of Presidents.

Yours sincerely,



Jerzy Buzek