

Welcome Speech

Euro-CASE Annual Conference 2010. Value Creation through Innovation. European Best Practice Case Studies

Speaker:

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Dear Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a true pleasure for me to welcome you to the third Euro-CASE Annual Conference, this time in Berlin. I am very grateful to you, Professor Martin Schuurmans, President of the EIT, for taking time off from your busy schedule to attend this important conference. I also wish to thank Mrs. Professor Treschow-Torrel, chair of Euro-CASE for agreeing to preside over this event.

It is also an honour for us to welcome representatives from our partner academies as well as experts from science, business and politics to the conference today. And I would like to greet the representatives from the Federal Government and the European Union.

I am especially honoured to welcome you here to the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences – the birthplace of acatech. In this regional scientific academy, one of seven – now eight in Germany, a bottom-up process was started in early 1997 to establish a national scientific academy in the Federal Republic of Germany.

And it is no wonder indeed that this process started here: the BBAW originated from the “Preussischen” Academy of Sciences initiated by Leibniz in the year 1700 under the paradigm: “Theoria cum praxi”. And in this academy an engineer becomes an ordinary member: von Siemens.

Ten years later, in 2007, the Federal and then 16 State Governments of Germany decided to commonly fund acatech as an official institution and, thus, on the 1st of January 2008 acatech became the first national academy of science and engineering of a unified Germany under the patronage of our Bundespräsident.

Now, in 2010, we are proud to host the Euro-CASE Annual Conference for the first time.

In my opinion the time is now right to reflect on a number of questions. Today, Europe is at the crossroads of its future: Did we choose the right instruments in the crisis? Have our recovery programmes had the intended effects? How can we secure lasting and sustainable growth? How do we produce long-term value creation?

acatech's answer has been and will be: through innovation.

We have all seen that the issue of “innovation” has grown in importance. But we believe it is not only a question of where the new growth should come from or in which specific fields Europe needs more science, research and development. For acatech, the key question is also: Which growth should we strive for – especially after the crisis?

One message seems to be very important: At the beginning of the 21st century, we cannot strive for “more of the same”. The “Global Challenges” call for a new understanding of growth and responsibility. We are, for example, confronted with major problems resulting from the unbridled exploitation of our habitat. The continuous growth in the world’s population and the global economy as well as the increasing demand for energy will continue to place a huge demand on natural resources. The wise management of the Earth’s resources and environment, consistent with the principles of sustainable development, is indispensable for “Our Common Future”.

acatech strives to contribute to the solving of the “Global Challenges” within the context of science and engineering. acatech perceives itself as a working academy, which supports the government with technically qualified recommendations concerning policy questions within a techno-political context.

In order to promote sustained innovation, acatech focuses on four core areas:

- **Scientific recommendations:** acatech advises policy makers and the public on future technology issues based on the best of research.
- **Transfer of expertise:** acatech provides a platform for exchange between the sciences and business.
- **Promotion of young scientists and engineers:** acatech is committed to supporting young scientists and engineers.
- **Voice for science and engineering:** acatech, as the National Academy of Science and Engineering in Germany, represents the interests of scientists and engineers at a national and international level.

Ladies and gentlemen, today, I would like to ponder on the last point:

The global challenges require a transnational and transinstitutional effort. It goes without saying that internationally coordinated action is needed and is vital: protecting our living space „Earth“, preserving our natural resources for current and future generations, finding solutions for an aging society, preparing our cities for the next century!

acatech will, therefore, develop its international relations as well as its cooperation with the relevant players such as international organisations, academies, corporations, universities etc. And in this context Europe plays a special role: If the Union acts collectively, it will, in many areas, be much better able to face the challenges. In the past, critical historical moments have allowed for the EU to undergo new developments and changes. Today’s financial and economic crisis might allow for a new and fresh perspective. The Europe 2020 strategy is a first step towards putting forward a vision for an innovative EU. This strategy needs to be developed and implemented.

In my opinion, academies can play an important role as independent advisors to policy makers. The key objective would be to bring Europe back on track by setting an agenda which is based on scientific evidence and which aims at sustainable growth through innovation.

In this context, Euro-CASE offers the European Academies of Sciences and Engineering a most suitable platform to work together on the same mission. Euro-CASE likewise has a vision: By 2020, Euro-CASE will be the voice of European excellence in Engineering, Applied Sciences and Technology for the world. It will deliver evidence-based policy advice on key European issues to a range of EU stakeholders, including the European Commission and Parliament.

acatech supports this vision and will help to strengthen its unique position in Europe. It is, therefore, an honour for acatech, to hold the third Euro-CASE Annual Conference which focuses this year on innovation and value creation. We will discuss practical examples, various approaches and potential actions as well as recommendations.

I wish you a most fruitful day with interesting and stimulating discussions and exchange of knowledge so that we can, together, envisage the future of an innovative Europe.

First of all, however, I look forward to the speech of the Chairman of the European Institute of Technology, Martin Schuurmans. Martin Schuurmans has dedicated his career to the promotion of innovation in research and industry. He was involved in the early preparations for the High Tech Campus of Eindhoven promoting open innovation. From 2002 he was responsible for Innovation and Industry at Philips Medical Systems in Boston until retiring from Philips in 2005. During that time he was also a part-time professor of Innovation Management at the Technical University of Delft. Today, he chairs the EIT who has the mission to address Europe's innovation gap. Professor Schuurmans, we thank you very much for coming to Berlin and we look forward to your remarks on the "Instruments of the EU to foster Innovation".

Thank you very much.