



Europe recognized the importance of nanosciences and nanotechnologies early on, building on its already established position in material sciences. We must now further consolidate these strengths to maintain the leading position we have reached in the field and to exploit the potential of nanotechnology in a timely way.

Nanosciences and nanotechnologies are highly promising areas for research and industrial innovation, with a potential both to boost the competitiveness of Europe's industry and to create new products that will make positive changes in the lives of everyone. That is why the development and use of nanotechnology should not be delayed or left to chance. This is also why I wanted to increase the contribution to nanotechnology research and technological development in the EU Framework Programmes. Almost 1.4 billion € has already been granted to nanotechnology projects in FP6 and we expect to double that within FP7 on a year-to-year basis.

Nanotechnology benefits from an interdisciplinary approach and – as for all new technologies – may pose new challenges. Like a prudent car driver, policy makers should be able to press on the accelerator or the brake as a function of the opportunities or potential risks that are met. These must be duly investigated upfront, accompanied by appropriate safety measures.

Following the successful "EuroNanoForum 2003" and "EuroNanoForum 2005" (dedicated to applications in health care), I am glad to present you with this third "EuroNanoForum 2007".

Nanotechnology, even if at its beginning, is no longer in its infancy and impressive progress is being made in many technological fields, from chemistry to electronics, from new sensors to functionalised surfaces and novel fabrics. This EuroNanoForum 2007 event is dedicated to the industrial applications of nanotechnology and also addressing the possible precautions related to nano-particles and safety measures.

The European Commission has defined a wide-ranging strategy for an integrated, safe and responsible approach to nanotechnology, and a matching Action Plan. The European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Economic and Social Committee, the hundreds of members of the public who replied to our open consultations and countless stakeholders welcomed this approach.

Nanotechnology allows new products and services to be created for the benefit of all. It is a promising area for industry and investors, a source of new jobs for our youth and offers many challenges for researchers in natural and social sciences, as well as in engineering. As for all new technologies, it is important that all stakeholders act responsibly and that an open and transparent dialogue is maintained between all stakeholders in Europe and across the world.

To the researchers and to all those engaged in research, development and innovation in nanotechnology I send my best wishes for a successful and fruitful work.



Janez Potočnik
European Commissioner for Science and Research