



Research & innovation and technological sovereignty in digital technologies to drive Europe's recovery

Paris, 3 July 2020- After the social and economic upheaval of the COVID-19 crisis, research and innovation (R&I), and technological sovereignty are at the heart of Europe's recovery plans. The European Union (EU) aims to drive a 'collective and cohesive recovery that accelerates the twin green and digital transitions in order to strengthen Europe's competitiveness, resilience and position as a global player'¹. The Next Generation EU recovery instrument proposed by the European Commission is intended to bring a further €750 billion to the EU's revamped €1100 billion Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. **And as the provider of essential technology building blocks for the green and digital transformations, the Electronic Components and Supply (ECS) industry has a key role to play in this recovery.**

Major additional investment in R&I programmes, such as a proposed '€13.5 billion increase to Horizon Europe funding'², may boost the industry's ability to address societal challenges including health, climate, energy, mobility, and industrial competitiveness. It will reinforce strategic European digital supply chains along with the industry's capacity to deliver enabling technologies for a safe, secure and sustainable recovery for all.

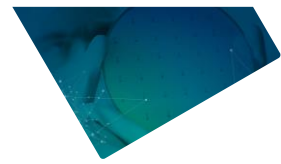
The COVID-19 crisis has revealed only too clearly that Europe needs to stand ready with its own sovereign capabilities to face up to future global shocks. The outbreak has highlighted the importance of healthcare systems, health research capacity and preparedness for pandemics. It has also underscored the central role of digital technologies in our society. Digital connectivity and applications have been key to maintaining essential human contacts, as well as keeping industries running and people working. Data and information have been critical to responses to the virus at every level from governmental to local community action.

Now, as Europe accelerates its drive to make its economies more digital, more resilient and more sustainable, these technologies will be increasingly essential. In its 'Conclusions on Shaping Europe's Digital Future'³ published on 9 June 2020, the Council of the European Union stressed that Europe's digital technologies, infrastructures and applications are the vital enablers not only of Europe's digital future, but also of Europe's Green Deal and its goal of a climate neutral EU by 2050.

¹ Source: Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation- A communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions. 27 May 2020 Page 2- [Link](#)

² Source: The role of Research and Innovation in Europe's recovery- EC News- 27 May 2020- [Link](#)

³ Source: Shaping Europe's Digital Future - Council Conclusions – 9 June 2020 - [Link](#)



Hence the widespread consensus within industry and European institutions that Europe cannot afford to be dependent on others in key strategic areas – whether in R&I, supply chains or production. Nor can it ignore strategic concerns linked to data, cybersecurity, and protection from misinformation, where Europe seeks to apply its own values and regulations.

In recovering from the crisis, Europe has a unique opportunity to expand its technological sovereignty along with higher levels of education, more and better employment, and world-leading research capacities. European R&I is vital for shaping Europe's digital future and next generation digital technologies in line with Europe's social, economic, and environmental priorities. As the Council of the European Union has stated, fundamental building block such as microelectronics 'made in Europe' will be an ...essential underpinning technology for a successful digital transformation' in many industrial sectors from automotive, manufacturing, aeronautics, space, defence and security to agriculture and healthcare⁴. Similarly, Europe needs trusted hardware and software value chains which ensure that European values on security, data privacy and consumer protection are built into digital technologies.

The increased Horizon Europe budget promises to give European industries additional resources to achieve these goals. It will enable existing ECS ecosystems across Europe to expand vital R&I in strategic digital capabilities and capacities in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, secured communication, data and cloud infrastructure, 5G and 6G networks, supercomputers, quantum computing and blockchain. And by enhancing collaboration between large companies, SMEs and research institutions, it will boost the impact of these technologies in building a sustainable future.

"Collaborative innovation is one of the most effective mechanisms for addressing societal challenges and delivering growth. Today, in the wake of COVID-19, we need to amplify the impact of collaboration in ECS even further and faster. AENEAS has worked with sister-industry associations ARTEMIS-IA and EPoSS for many years and already in September 2019, AENEAS, together with 92 European associations, urged the EU Institutions to make RD&I a priority within the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27 in a Joint Statement. Today, we reiterate our plea for adequate investment in RD&I. It is the key to European digital sovereignty and to a resilient recovery that benefits all Europe's citizens," states Caroline Bedran, Director General of AENEAS.

About AENEAS: <https://aeneas-office.org>

AENEAS is an Industry Association, established in 2006. The purpose of the association is to promote Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) in order to strengthen the competitiveness of European industry across the complete Electronics Components and Systems (ECS) value chain. AENEAS provides unparalleled networking opportunities, policy influence & supported access to funding to all types of RD&I participants in the field of micro and nanoelectronics enabled components and systems, and its applications. Member of ECSEL JU, AENEAS is also operating the EUREKA funded programme PENTA.

⁴ Source: Shaping Europe's Digital Future - Council Conclusions – 9 June 2020 - [Link](#)