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Meeting of Special committee on the policy challenges and budgetary resources for a sustainable European Union after 2013 (SURE)

First exchange of views on the report on Investing in the future: a new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for a competitive, sustainable and inclusive Europe

17th March 2011

European Parliament, Brussels

I would like to raise four points.

First, let me say that direct use of EU budget is not a final solution to growth funding challenges Europe is facing. That is why I appreciate very much the effort of the rapporteur to put emphasis on the need to exploit the potential of EU budget catalytic and leverage functions. But maybe we should go further and exploit its role in coordinating all European investment expenditures (European, national, regional, private, EIB) in some policy areas, especially where combination of funding from different sources is needed. We could ask the Commission to establish a methodology and facility to do it in a way ensuring the supervision of European Parliament.

Second, some of the colleagues keep saying that we do not propose any change in EU budget spending because they see the same names of European policies funded by EU budget. The truth is that some of European policies - in particular cohesion policy - have been profoundly reformed, their objectives adjusted to new challenges and new instruments developed. So I would like to encourage you to look into policies' frameworks before we say that things are kept as they were in the past.

My third point is on research. As you know we have increased the allocation to R&D for 2007-2013 by 159%. I would say it is important first to look into how efficient we can be before we decide on further major increase of EU

budget in this area. What I lack in the report is a strong call for creating conditions for private sector to increase its R&D investment and for the radical reform of the way European universities are funded.

And my last comment is related to an extremely important in my view point 121 of the report. We ask the Council and the Commission to reach an agreement with the Parliament on a practical working method of the MFF negotiating process. I think we should go further and propose the method ourselves.