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Information And Communication Technology – Key For Global Competitiveness

Electronics and information systems play an ever increasing role in the worldwide economy, representing already today nearly 10% of the GDP. In the foreseeable future, their role will further increase, as society is faced with structural problems, such as ageing population, exploding health care cost, transportation bottlenecks, rising energy cost and the need to increase productivity to be competitive on a worldwide basis.

Society is expecting better health systems, safer cars, improved energy management, improved telecommunications and information access, better entertainment as well as security everywhere. These societal challenges are major opportunities for the industry and the real challenge is to be the first to address these new “lead-markets”. Leadership in new markets is strongly related to leadership in micro- and nanoelectronics. This requires a high level of R&D and also major investments in infrastructure. Recognising this fact and the key role of this industry, public authorities in all regions of the world are providing different types of financial support to these industries. These increasing cost make it also impossible for most companies to maintain technology leadership on a stand-alone basis: co-operation is more and more cross-border and not only limited to R&D.