



Brussels, 18 January 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ESIA welcomes EU plans to boost the clean tech economy

On 17 January 2023, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen announced the intention to launch a ‘Green Deal Industrial Plan’ to plan for the future and write the “story of the clean-tech economy” in Europe. ESIA, as the voice of the semiconductor industry in Europe, welcomes this initiative as a decisive instrument to let the EU economy leapfrog ahead and deliver on the net-zero emissions goals by 2050. Semiconductors play a crucial role in delivering on the ambitious goals for the green and digital transition.

During her keynote speech at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, President von der Leyen elaborated on the four pillars of the Plan, starting with a regulatory environment that allows for fast scale-up and creates conducive framework conditions for enabling technologies. Simplified fast-track permitting, especially for Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs), would be a particularly welcome improvement to accelerate the green transition. For instance, the IPCEI on Microelectronics & Communication Technologies has yet to be launched, whereas a faster procedure would have been beneficial to the clean-tech economy. ESIA is going to work closely with the European Commission on the right provisions needed for an effective and efficient ‘Net-Zero Industry Act’ and ‘Critical Raw Materials Act’.

As for the second pillar, the Commission anticipates a boost for investment and financing of clean-tech production. A temporary adaptation of the EU state aid rules shall be proposed “to speed up and simplify” calculations, procedures, and approvals. The EU environment for investments can be cumbersome when compared internationally, which is why ESIA welcomes the approach to increase the attractiveness of the EU Single Market for investments from European and foreign enterprises and levelling out the playing field. In that regard, the upcoming European Sovereignty Fund should leverage key technologies that enable energy efficiencies, such as power semiconductors.

ESIA would also emphasise the Plan’s third pillar on developing skills needed to make the green transition a reality. As a matter of fact, no regulatory framework or incentive programme will boost the clean-tech economy if the talent pool cannot provide the necessary personnel.

Lastly, the focus on facilitating open & fair trade shall open up new markets and make supply chains more resilient. As an industry reliant on globally connected value chains, the fourth pillar of the Plan provides much-needed momentum for an ambitious trade agenda.

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About ESIA: *The European Semiconductor Industry Association (ESIA) is the voice of the semiconductor industry in Europe. Its mission is to represent and promote the common interests of the Europe-based semiconductor industry towards the European institutions and stakeholders in order to ensure a sustainable business environment and foster its global competitiveness. As a provider of key enabling technologies, the industry creates innovative solutions for industrial development, contributing to economic growth and responding to major societal challenges. Being ranked as the most R&D-intensive sector by the European Commission, the European semiconductor ecosystem supports approx. 200.000 jobs directly and up to 1.000.000 induced jobs in systems, applications and services in Europe. Overall, micro- and nano-electronics enable the generation of at least 10% of GDP in Europe and the world.*