Europe Must Fund First Production Fabs, says Chery

10 comments
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The closing presentation of the European Nanoelectronics Forum 2014 was given, appropriately, by the man leading the charge to restore Europe's technology manufacturing ecompetitiveness.

"CATRENE, ECSEL and H2020 are essential for the support for industry," said Jean-Marc Chery, COO of STMicroelectronics, adding, "still missing is support for investment in first production capability."

Investing in initial production capability is the next step to restore Europe's manufacturing competitiveness, said Chery, asserting that support for the first production phase of manufacturing is "in line with revised state aid rules."

"There is a clear willingness to continue R&D," said Chery, "the next step is to move from support for R&D and pilot lines towards a focused investment package for R&D and first production via a dedicated IPCEI (Important Project Of Common European Interest)."

First production facilities are the "crucial investment to make sure Europe catches up in manufacturing," said Chery who is fully signed up to the Neelie Kroes goal of: 'Doubling the economic value of semiconductor production in Europe by 2020-25.'

To achieve this, the primary investment must be investment in first production, said Chery. "We need another funding instrument besides ECSEL," he said, "EUREKA is the right framework for it."

Europe's technological differentiator is FD-SOI which has significant advantages over finfet in terms of cheapness and low power making it particularly suitable for consumer applications like IoT.

"28nm FD-SOI is perfect for IoT," Chery told EW.

Growing an ecosystem around FD-SOI is the $360 million three year programme Places2Be to build FD-SOI pilot lines in Grenoble and Dresden which will take the technology down to 14nm.

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