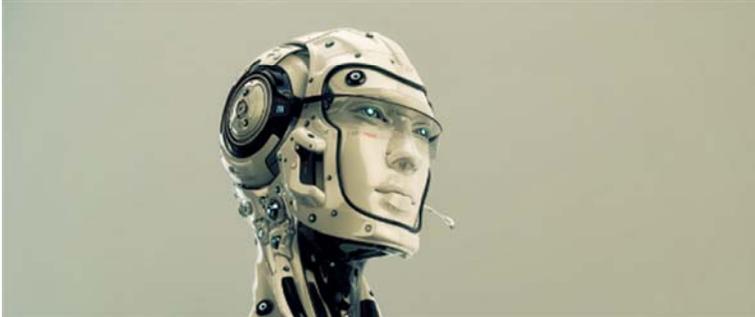




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# EUROPE IS PLOUGHING €2.8BN INTO ROBOT WORKERS



**Micro Electronics**  
by Ben Sullivan | 03 June 2014

## Fears of human worker replacement won't stop efforts to beat US, Korea and Japan in robot production.

The European Commission, along with 180 companies and research organisations under the umbrella of euRobotics, has officially launched a programme to invest €2.8bn into robotics by 2020.

Dubbed SPARC, the initiative covers robotics in manufacturing, agriculture, health, transport and civil security, and is an effort to strengthen Europe's position in the global robotics market.

European Commission VP Neelie Kroes said: "Europe needs to be a producer and not merely a consumer of robots. Robots do much more than replace humans - they often do things humans can't or won't do and that improves everything from our quality of life to our safety. Integrating robots into European industry helps us create and keep jobs in Europe."

The initiative hopes to create over 240,000 jobs in Europe, jobs which would hopefully not be subsequently replaced by robot workers.

Speaking at a press conference, held at the International Trade Fair for Automation and Mechatronics in Munich, Neelie Kroes said: "70% of EU citizens believe that robots steal people's jobs. None of these worries mean that we should turn our backs on innovation."

"But equally - we cannot dismiss these concerns; we need to take them seriously. They are legitimate."

"I know that robots can empower people, boost our competitiveness, and create jobs. And many studies agree with me. For example - showing that each industrial robot actually supports 3.6 jobs. That robots will directly and indirectly create 2 million jobs over the next 8 years."

But Kroes did point out the benefits of integrating robotics into society highlighting such applications as robots performing surgery, caring for the elderly and driverless deliveries.

"They are fast, precise, powerful. Doing the tasks that humans find too difficult, too dangerous, or just too dull."

"They make my robot vacuum cleaner seem positively primitive!"

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