

European Institute of Innovation and Technology and Strategic Innovation Agenda: EU co-legislators reach political agreement



Representatives of the Portuguese presidency of the Council today reached a provisional political agreement with the negotiators of the European Parliament on a package consisting of :

- amendments to the regulation on the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) and
- a decision on the future Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) of the EIT.

The key amendments to the existing EIT regulation concern financial sustainability and openness of Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), stronger principles for monitoring and evaluation and the role of the member states in the governance of the EIT. More specifically, the EIT will establish performance-based mechanisms for the granting of financial contributions to KICs in order to enhance their capacity to attract other investments and to finance their activities independently of the EIT's contributions. The enforcement of these provisions will be supported by stronger monitoring and evaluation principles: the continuation of existing KICs will be subject to comprehensive assessment, which should include the monitoring of progress towards financial sustainability as well as openness to new members. A group of representatives of member states will be consulted on strategic decisions, such as the extension of partnership agreements with KICs.

The key features of the agreed SIA are the following :

- it requires Knowledge and Innovation Communities to become more open, inclusive and transparent;
- it clarifies the scope of the new pilot that will support the development of entrepreneurial and innovation capacity in higher education institutions;
- it defines eligibility criteria and the budget for activities under the Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS), aimed at widening the EIT's regional activities to modest and moderate innovator countries;
- it provides for a simplified performance-based funding model for the KICs;
- it introduces a continuous monitoring and evaluation system of the KICs, including closer monitoring of their openness;
- it clarifies the EIT's relations with KICs after the termination of the framework partnership agreement;
- it provides for a streamlined procedure for the launch of a new KIC in 2022 or 2023 in the field of cultural and creative sectors and

industries and of a second new KIC in the field of water, marine and maritime sectors and ecosystems in 2026, taking into account the strategic planning process of Horizon Europe.

Background

The **European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)** is an integral part of Horizon Europe, the future EU framework programme for research and innovation. The EIT's budget for the years 2021-2027 (as provided for in the Horizon Europe regulation) amounts to €2.96 billion. The EIT's leading mission since 2008 is to contribute to sustainable European economic growth and competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the member states and of the EU as a whole by addressing societal challenges through innovation-driven knowledge integration between higher education, research and innovation (knowledge triangle) It brings together leading universities, research labs and companies to form pan-European partnerships, the so-called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), to help innovators and entrepreneurs across Europe turn their ideas into products and services for the market. Since 2010, the EIT has over the years launched eight KICs, each of them focusing on a different societal challenge (Climate, Digital, Food, Health, InnoEnergy, Manufacturing, Raw Materials, Urban Mobility).

The **Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA)** complements the legislative framework for the functioning of the EIT for the years 2021 to 2027. It sets out the priority fields and strategy of the EIT for the period 2021-2027 by defining the EIT's objectives, key actions, mode of operation, expected results and resources needed. The SIA also ensures the coherence of the EIT with Horizon Europe, the future EU framework programme for research and innovation for the period 2021-2027 and is expected to foster synergies with other EU programmes.

Next steps

The agreed texts will be submitted to the relevant bodies of the Council and the Parliament for political endorsement shortly. Following such endorsement, the Parliament will proceed to the adoption of its position at first reading on the basis of these agreed texts (following legal linguistic scrutiny). The Council will then formally approve the Parliament's position and both legal acts will be deemed to have been adopted. This will take place after the Horizon Europe regulation has been adopted.