

# European Institute of Innovation and Technology: Commission proposes strategy for 2021-2027

Today, the European Commission has proposed an update of the legal base of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) as well as its new Strategic Innovation Agenda for 2021-2027.

The EIT is an independent EU body created in 2008 that is strengthening Europe's ability to innovate. The proposals adopted today will align the EIT with the EU's next research and innovation programme [Horizon Europe](#) (2021-2027) delivering on the Commission's commitment to further boost Europe's innovation potential. With a proposed budget of €3 billion, which represents an increase of €600 million or 25% compared to the current Strategic Innovation Agenda (2014-2020), the EIT will fund activities of existing and new Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) and support the innovation capacity of 750 higher education institutions.

Tibor **Navracsics**, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, responsible for the [EIT](#), said: *"Since 2008, the European Institute of Innovation and Technology has been nurturing talent and creativity through a unique focus on education and entrepreneurship. The strategy we are now putting in place for 2021-2027 will help ensure that all of Europe's regions benefit from the Institute's potential and will further boost the innovation capacity of our higher education sector. And I am particularly proud to announce today the launch of a new Knowledge and Innovation Community to support innovation in the cultural and creative industries, planned for 2022."*

The EIT currently supports eight KICs which bring together companies, universities and research centres to form cross-border partnerships. The Strategic Innovation Agenda proposed for 2021-2027 is designed to achieve the following goals:

- 1. Increasing the regional impact of Knowledge and Innovation Communities:** In the future, the EIT will strengthen its networks, involving more higher education institutions, businesses and research organisations by developing regional outreach strategies. The selection of cooperation partners and the preparation of KIC activities will be more inclusive. KICs will also develop links to [Smart Specialisation Strategies](#), an EU initiative to spur economic growth and job creation by enabling each region to identify and develop its own competitive advantages.
- 2. Boosting the innovation capacity of higher education:** The EIT will support 750 higher education institutions with funding, expertise and coaching, enabling them to develop economic activities within their area of interest. The Institute will design and launch activities particularly in countries with a lower innovation capacity. In doing so,

the EIT will build on successful policy initiatives such as [HEInnovate](#), a free self-assessment tool for all types of higher education institutions, or the [Regional Innovation Impact Assessment Framework](#), which allows universities to assess how they are fostering innovation in the regions they are based in.

- 3. Launch of new KICs:** The EIT will launch two new KICs, selected in fields most relevant to Horizon Europe policy priorities. The first new KIC is set to focus on the cultural and creative industries and is planned to start in 2022. This sector has a high growth potential, many local grassroots initiatives and strong citizen appeal and is complementary to the existing eight KICs. The priority field of a second new KIC will be decided at a later stage; it is due to be launched in 2025.

The revised EIT Regulation ensures greater legal clarity and alignment with the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. The new legal base also introduces a lean and simplified funding model for the EIT designed to more effectively encourage additional private and public investment. Finally, it reinforces the EIT's governing structure.

### Next steps

Both the revised EIT Regulation and the Commission Decision on the Strategic Innovation Agenda for 2021-2027 will be presented to the European Parliament and the Council for discussion and adoption.

### Background

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology was established in 2008 by [Regulation \(EC\) No 294/2008](#) amended by [Regulation \(EC\) No 1292/2013](#) and is based in Budapest. Its purpose is to address major societal challenges by improving the innovation capacity and performance of the EU through the integration of the knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation.

The EIT is a central part of the Commission proposal establishing [Horizon Europe](#), the next EU research and innovation programme (2021-2027) with a proposed budget of €100 billion. The EIT is one of the three components of its "Innovative Europe" pillar. The Horizon Europe proposal sets out the funding for the EIT under the next long-term budget as well as its rationale, added value, areas of intervention and broad lines of activity. However, the Horizon Europe proposal itself does not provide the legal basis for continuing the EIT operations as from 2021. The legal base of the EIT remains the EIT Regulation that sets out its mission, its key tasks and the framework for its functioning.

With its proposed budget of €3 billion for 2021-2027 the Institute will boost innovation by supporting more than 10 000 graduates from its KICs' Master and PhDs, around 600 new start-ups and more than 7000 existing ones.

The proposals presented today build on the external evaluation of the EIT carried out in 2017 which confirmed that the rationale behind the establishment of the EIT is valid.

For more information

[EIT factsheet](#)

[EIT on Innovation in Education webpage](#) (including legal proposals)

[EIT webpage](#)

[Horizon Europe webpage](#)