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K4I Forum of the European Parliament

INPACT (Pact for Innovation) Working Groups

1. Science Communication: The Value of Evidence in the Digital Age (Priority xi)

Steward MEPs
Eva Kaili MEP (S&D, Greece)
Paul Rübig MEP (EPP, Austria)

Tuesday, 11 October 2016, 19h30 – 22h00
Members' Restaurant, European Parliament

Abstract

"We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology." – Carl Sagan

In today's world, where science and technology permeates our everyday life, it is becoming ever more important to ensure effective and reliable Science Communication, particularly in the EU. In fact, Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Science, Research and Innovation has placed "citizen science" as one of his three top priorities.

However, Science Communication in Europe is significantly below the level needed to keep the public informed, ensure a broad public debate on the impact of science on society and allow for informed innovation acceptance. For example, a report recently published by the Joint Research Centre points out that Europe reports only 1/5 of the science news reported in the US.

It is therefore timely to rethink how the EU can support stronger Science Communication and to address a number of questions:

How can science and media work better together to improve communicating science to the European citizens? What is the role and responsibility of each actor? How can the EU institutions foster better cooperation between the key stakeholders? What kind of institutions and incentives are needed to support better Science Communication?

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2. Focus on people: young generation, entrepreneurs/start-ups, citizens (Priorities xiii, xiv)

Steward MEPs
Brando Benifei MEP (S&D, Italy)
Victor Nerescu MEP (S&D, Romania)

Tuesday, 11 October 2016, 08h00 – 09h30
Members' Restaurant, European Parliament

Abstract

Human capital and innovation are strongly tied together. People are the source and medium of making dreams a reality and turning inspiration into innovation. Entrepreneurs, thinkers, creators, and scientists make it possible to access knowledge, bring innovation to the market and ensure growth. The effective use of human potential is thus the core of economic progress and the heart of innovation capacity. To secure its position in a global context in this century the EU must, as a priority, invest in young talent.

The structural problem is the cause of a dramatic talent loss. Covering several pivotal policy areas, the Working group will place a focus upon the "creation" of policies and programs that enable young innovators to take full advantage of their opportunities and potential.

The WG raises the following urgent questions for which we need answers:

- How to increase support and create more incentives for young researchers and innovators?
- How to develop research policies and programs that incentivize innovation and company creation?
- How to ensure Europe's future by enhancing young people's interest in STEM education and research and empower them with the relevant skills and competences through a variety of educational programmes and partnerships with schools and universities?
- How to enable and support cross-border mobility for young innovators?
- How to build an environment in Europe with a positive attitude towards risk and encourage the freedom to try and fail?

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3. Mid-term review/ post 2020 planning; MFF/H2020/30: impact on innovation (Priority viii)

Steward MEPs
Lambert van Nistelrooij MEP (EPP, The Netherlands)
Vicky Ford MEP (ECR, UK)
Jan Olbrycht (EPP, PL)
Andrey Novakov MEP (EPP, Bulgaria)

Tuesday, 12 October 2016, 08h00 – 09h30
Members' Restaurant, European Parliament

Abstract

The European Union since many decades has in place the largest public funding program on research. The major change made in 2014 was to add under Horizon2020 innovation to the excellent research Framework Programs. This integration means to combine 2 areas which follow different drivers and are being judged against different dedicated impact criteria. Impact of Knowledge creation through research and invention is mainly based on publications, international participation and patents. Innovation is successful of bringing this knowledge quickly to market-near solutions with the aim to create economic value for society and industry.

Now after 4 years, Horizon2020 is subject to an interim evaluation. The results of this evaluation expected to be published in Mid 2017, can guide priority setting and focus of the final phase from 2018 to 2020. The discussions on the mid-term review will also have an influence on the next European research and innovation approach beyond 2020.

This context raises the following urgent questions for which we need answers:

- How to improve in the future prognosis and measurement of impact ex-ante to allow for priority setting in the planning phase of such a large public investment? The currently performed model of ex-post evaluation is quite late to provide this?
- Is the current pre-dominantly applied broad bottom-up approach derived from research still the best approach for innovation? Or does it need to be balanced by a top-down political approach to give guidance, certainty and reliable frameworks to private investors as currently in place in other regions of the world?
- Should the EU focus it´s innovation support predominantly on enabling and facilitating private investments through public co-funding with focus on public-private risk-sharing, rather than fully public funding of projects? How to do this practically, while avoiding increased complexity and time delay?

- How should the next approach be structured? More focus on Europe, more public-private partnerships; better synergies and interlink between national programs, regional funds, SME programs and other dedicated investment programs targeted at innovation to allow smooth transition of innovation from research to innovation in the speed required vis-a-vis global competition?
- Should the focus be only on political and societal solutions? A major part of industry (> 20 % EU GDP) is positioned along value chains; security of supply of Europe
- Research and innovation based on technology building blocks requires a dedicated funding and investment scheme to keep EU competitiveness and support EU re-industrialisation?

September 25th
Gernot Klotz

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4. Regulatory framework/Innovation Principle (Priorities iii, iv, v)

Steward MEPs
Jerzy Buzek MEP (EPP, Poland)
Cora van Nieuwenhuizen MEP (ALDE, The Netherlands)

Tuesday, 12 October 2016, 08h00 – 09h30
Members' Restaurant, European Parliament

Abstract

"I am committed to getting the conditions right for innovation in Europe. Clearly one of the most important of these conditions is the regulatory framework. This is why the Commission has already innovation within its new Better Regulation framework and has emphasised the importance of innovation friendly regulation in its Single Market strategy." (Commissioner Moedas in his foreword: A BETTER FRAMEWORK FOR INNOVATION Permanent Representation of the Netherlands, 26 January 2016).

The May Competitiveness Council adopted conclusions on the creation of a research and innovation-friendly environment.

In its conclusions, the Council acknowledges that Europe's ability to attract and mobilise private investments requires a sound regulatory framework conducive to research and innovation. It invites the Commission, in cooperation with member states, to further develop and implement a pilot on Innovation Deals.

It also stressed the application of the innovation principle, whereby policy and regulatory measures are evaluated in terms of their impact on research and innovation.

The establishment of framework conditions for research and innovation is a part of the development of the Better Regulation Agenda and of the EU's efforts for more jobs, growth and investment.
In December 2015, the Commission issued a working document titled "Better regulations for innovation-driven investment at EU level" (15392/15).

The document acknowledges that there is no simple relation between innovation and the regulatory environment due to the large number of systemic factors affecting innovation. It thus highlights the need to evaluate the impact of existing or proposed legislation on innovation.

The document also identifies a number of barriers to innovation in existing legislation applicable to specific sectors at EU level.

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5. Adapt political structures and processes to breakthrough technologies and new business models (Priority vii).

Steward MEPs
Michal Boni MEP (EPP, Poland)
Angelika Mlinar MEP (ALDE, Austria)

Tuesday, 11 October (TBC) 2016, 08h00 – 09h30
Members' Restaurant, European Parliament

Adapt political structures and processes to breakthrough technologies and new business models

1st Working Group Meeting - 11 October 2016

Breakthrough technologies, or Future and Emerging Technologies (FET), are technologies which are expected to bring fundamental change and serve as the basis for many subsequent technological inventions. They lie at the heart of changes in technological paradigms and create new technological systems and even new industries.

The EU is already strongly supporting the research on new and breakthrough technologies through a number of programs, mainly Horizon 2020. However, to keep Europe at the forefront of worldwide change and technological advancement, we need to adapt our overall political structure and processes. Only through the creation of an open, inclusive and innovation-friendly environment will Europe be able to stay competitive at a global level.

So how can European policymakers support breakthrough technologies? Before we can answer this question we have to take a closer look at the great variety of technologies and the very different fields of application we are talking about: From genetic engineering and medical technology to autonomous driving, from energy storage solutions to artificial intelligence, from material science to nano-technology, we are dealing with many different technologies under one name: Breakthrough.

Therefore, this context raises a few questions for which we need to find answers:

How do we define 'breakthrough' and how can Europe stay at the forefront in R&I for these technologies?

Which instruments are used to assess the economic, social and environmental impact of breakthrough technologies?

Do all breakthrough technologies have different needs in terms of political framework or can common needs be identified?

Does a common European approach on emerging technologies exist? Is it useful to be developed?

Which instruments are used to assess the policy measures for breakthrough technologies in place?

What can different, sector-targeted political strategies for breakthrough technologies look like?

How can we ensure full application and market readiness for breakthrough technologies? How can we make sure that they have full access to the internal market?

How can we make our overall regulatory framework more flexible and adaptable? How can we regulate to innovate and enable?

Note: This is not the abstract for the working group but information on so-called innovation deals which can help guiding the group's work.

Innovation deals:

The Innovation Deals initiative was introduced in the Circular Economy Package adopted by the European Commission in December 2015. The Commission introduces the concept of innovation deals as «a pilot approach to help innovators facing regulatory obstacles, by setting up agreements with stakeholders and public authorities». It is all about the cooperation between innovators, stakeholders, regulatory authorities and the Commission.

The Circular Economy Package consists of an EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy that establishes a concrete and ambitious programme of actions, with measures covering the whole cycle: from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials.
Innovation Deals (IDs) will allow innovators to quickly address legislative obstacles, shortening the time between moment of inspiration and market uptake.

Innovation Deals take the form of voluntary cooperation between the EU, innovators, and national, regional and local authorities. European Commission does not fund the preparation or implementation of IDs.

The Deals will be an innovation in how the Commission works, helping to form a more modern and responsive administration in line with the Commission's Better Regulation Agenda.
Main barriers in regulatory framework:

The essence of regulatory framework in Innovation Deals - evidence from Member States

- Two-thirds of the perceived regulatory barriers currently preventing innovators from bringing their ideas to the market can be overcome through explanations or clearer interpretation of specific regulations by public authorities.

Different interpretations and/or manners of transposition of national, local and EU legislation and the fast pace of innovation have led to a policy and legislative framework that may not always adequately support innovation and its market uptake.

Regulatory Barriers can arise in the following situations:

I. The regulatory framework

1. is de jure or de facto prescriptive in technology choice and discourages different solutions and new entrants;
2. establishes a level of strictness which is inconsistent with available cost-efficient technology, hence delaying investment and deployment of solutions.

II. Regulatory frameworks not sufficiently friendly for innovation, for example:

1. the regulatory environment is not fully in a line with sectors and the development of open innovation;
2. inconsistencies between regulations give rise to legal uncertainties and unnecessary additional compliance costs.

Stakeholders view the following as possible examples of the above:

- Health technology assessment,
- Nanomaterials: Towards a unified definition,
- Energy-efficient buildings.

III. Legislation is not appropriately implemented across Member States/European and National legislation duplicates or overlaps. The examples indicated by stakeholders presented in areas where implementation is a key issue are:

- Eco-design for resource efficiency,
- Energy-efficient buildings,
- Electrified vehicles.

IV. Gaps: If no EU legislation exists in a given field, barriers to the internal market may arise/there may be uncertainty for investment in innovation. Examples of this indicated by stakeholders are:

- Road vehicle automation,
- Health technology assessment,
- Low carbon hydrogen in transport.

Conclusion: The relation between innovation and regulation needs be further investigated both at the horizontal level and from sectorial perspective, in order to identify and reduce barriers and to find ways to improve opportunities for innovation.

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