

EP-EIT-Hearing May 2, 2007

Decades ago EU had the worldwide accepted leadership in science / research / education
(examples from Germany - Humboldt, Einstein, Daimler)

Today Lisbon / Barcelona goals - knowledge triangle is key,
no existing EU-instrument looking at integration of all 3 elements in triangle
linking the 3 pillars in modern economy - governments are active in - and pay for -
innovation (US , Asia) in addition of science – no trouble with state aid rules

EIT debate seen as proxy for EUs innovation gap (European paradox)
EIT name misleading, no debate on science - MIT growth based on defence contracts
wake up EU - innovations costs money – it is governments responsibility

Research / innovation on agenda of external (non research) people like EU president / EP
seen as unique opportunity - Aho report “Create an Innovative Europe “ demand side

ERC great step / success for EU (EURAB was instrumental, now everybody seen as father)
but covers blue sky research only, now a similar step needed for rest of the knowledge
triangle - innovation and education

Positive example for action of three different EC DGs being seen as working together

EURAB – first opinion NO (top down approach), EC absorbed critics / recommendations
then second opinion YES, if it is done right
(knowledge innovation communities, independence GB, dual affiliation etc.)

Now, politics should stop lip service - “follow your mouth “
one statement in favor along with 5 statements about concerns is unattractive for private

How to strengthen the knowledge triangle?

Few EU knowledge centers / regions are doing very well (e.g. Cambridge, Munich etc.)
success based on specific government support, courageous personalities or
even by chance, definitely we need for more of them - across whole EU with
a support strategy from politics in general

Incentives to integrate of all 3 fields as seen in some cases (3-RD MISSION for universities)
knowledge transfer is inherent / implicit via people and close collaborations

Scientific research strategy taking into account BUSINESS needs (e.g. Max Planck society)

ENTREPRENEURAL spririt / culture / mentality as an integrated element of education
Cultural difference EU / US - no decrease in scientific reputation of researcher
if entering a strategic alliance with business (in US normal even for Nobel laureates)

MOBILITY of researchers from public to private and vice versa (e.g. pension rights)

HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) is national responsibility - hard to start any reform / improvement, EIT may be seen as TEST BED / LAB with a pivotal role for new HE models / cases e.g. new disciplines or “systems technology“ industry is asking for

How to attract private funds ?

First THEME, then team - private funds attracted only after specific theme of EU dimension - e.g. climate / renewable energy / cancer / transport etc - is selected and of interest for the relevant business / industry

Flexible rules needed, depending on themes, e.g. IPR is very different for specific themes (health / pharma or IT / software)

INDEPENDENCE for GB, KIC and reliable environment for partners are mandatory in order to attract private funds (esp since major private funds are expected)
no political influence in theme and KIC selection (the best, similar to ERC)
high transparency in rules for competition to select KIC
phase down possibility, periodical evaluation/ assessment of KIC s
(as accepted standard in business environment)

Leverage EXISTING systems of open innovation in private public partnerships
EUREKA, Joint Technology Initiatives etc.
Increasing private contribution up to 50% seems unrealistic

Best use of Structural/Regional Funds and regional interest (after theme selected)

How to establish a brand, an image, a reputation ?

PSYCHOLOGY / culture matters in order to attract best people
Brand name important, “EIT diploma” needed (in addition to univ degrees)
Avoid compromise, go for success - EIT as a “catalyst for change” –
not only bypassing national weaknesses

VISIBILITY, even outside Europe (attract the best, global market) is important
avoid dilution by a large **network, better PARTNERSHIP** create critical mass –
use a lighthouse effect (even Stanford s reputation/image is often better than reality)

EIT has to be seen in connection with a clear VISION / RISK e.g. specific theme
(go to the Moon effect) set a signal, obligation for politicians to be courageous –
not only control

TRUST is important, e.g. GB personalities selected,
(principle of Max Planck Society - select the best, provide resources and trust them)

What to do now ?

SPEED matters – experience seen in Asia

Wassiliy Kandinsky – “better to be vaguely right, than to be precisely wrong”

More TRIALS needed, nothing more convincing as success,

start one theme of central importance, with some comparative advantages

and interests for EU and wait – if successful, others will be attracted –

if not - stop it using evaluation / phase down rules

(in EU we need a culture not only to build up - but to phase down as well)

If agreement in analysis / goal and wish to establish a powerful signal via a new EIT concept, then - during the coming Portuguese presidency (LISBON) with the support of the EP - there is need for a strong European action / signal, to boost innovation under the European flag.