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*Committee on Regional Development*

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**2010/2245(INI)**

11.2.2011

# **DRAFT OPINION**

of the Committee on Regional Development

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on Innovation Union: transforming Europe for a post-crisis world  
(2010/2245(INI))

Rapporteur: Danuta Maria Hübner

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## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Stresses that innovation can be addressed most effectively at the regional level, where physical proximity fosters partnership between actors such as universities, research organisations and industry; notes that the most dynamic technology industries are not located in or near capital cities but in the proximity of the most innovative universities;
2. Points out that decision-takers at regional level must be fully aware of the potential for economic growth that research and innovation activities offer all regions; notes in this regard that even regions without universities and research centres should be able to develop their own innovation capacities;
3. Takes the view that non-technological innovation efforts need to be strengthened, and that in this context best practices regarding this kind of innovation should be spread and rules and conditions governing access to EU financing should be specified;
4. Underlines the need to detect sleeping innovators; points to the important role of intermediate organisations in detecting sleeping innovators, providing incentives, giving advice and supporting innovation; takes the view that these organisations should be strengthened and that a programme aimed at improving training, qualifications and expertise should be developed for them;
5. Stresses the need to strengthen the links between EU budget instruments and EIB funding; recognises the investment leverage potential of these sources of funding and asks for them to be strengthened, especially as regards JEREMIE and JESSICA;
6. Welcomes the proposal to launch European Innovation Partnerships as a tool to bring together stakeholders across policies, sectors and borders to speed up innovations in order to tackle major societal challenges; notes that the partnerships and the regional policy instruments addressing these challenges should be better aligned and that partnerships should capitalise on the experience gained with existing national and regional initiatives with similar features;
7. Stresses that the full innovation potential of EU regions must be mobilised in order to meet the Europe 2020 objective of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and points out that future regional policy must treat this challenge as a major priority.