



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

28 January, 2019

Norway's position on the future of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

Cooperation with the European Union on education, research and innovation is a priority to Norway. We therefore wish to contribute to the further development of the European policy for education, research and innovation, including to the further strategic development of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT).

Referring to [Norway's position on the Commission's proposals for Horizon Europe](#), Norway's proposals for amendments of Article 18.5 in the regulation establishing Horizon Europe, the EEA EFTA Comment on Horizon Europe as well as the EEA EFTA Comment on the Commission's proposal for Erasmus, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (MER) is pleased to hereby present our inputs to the revision of the regulation establishing the EIT as well as to the EIT Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) for 2021 to 2027. Our position on the future of the EIT builds on the aforementioned positions.

We support the overall objective of the EIT in strengthening innovation capacity across Europe by fostering the integration of the knowledge triangle.

Our key messages for the future of the EIT are:

- Norway underlines that the EIT regulation should explicitly allow for full participation and eligibility in all parts of the initiative including the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) for institutions, undertakings, organisations and nationals of the EEA EFTA States, in line with the provisions in the EEA Agreement, and calls for amendments of Articles 5(k) and 7(3) in line with this.
- The EIT should seek increased openness and transparency when it comes to designing and implementing both KICs and synergies with other parts of Horizon Europe, and other relevant programmes and initiatives, as well as regarding information and data to stakeholders.
- Norway calls for giving priority to a new KIC on Seas and Oceans.

Explicit inclusion of the EEA EFTA States

Norway participates actively in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ and this is also foreseen under the next Multiannual Financial Framework. Participation in the EU programmes for research, innovation and education is a means towards developing, strengthening and broadening cooperation in higher education, research and innovation as provided for in the EEA Agreement. The modalities for the EEA EFTA States participation in the future EU programmes for 2021 to 2027 should be based on the relevant provisions of the EEA Agreement, as they have been in Horizon 2020.



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In order to ensure that the EEA EFTA States' participation in the EIT is based on the provisions of the EEA Agreement, the Ministry of Education and Research would hereby like to propose amendments of Regulation (EC) No. 294/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and subsequent amendments by EU Regulation (EU) No. 1292/2013.

The future European Institute of Innovation and Technology should allow for full participation and eligibility in all parts of the programme for institutions, undertakings, organisations and nationals of the EEA EFTA States, in line with the provisions of the EEA Agreement. Article 81, litra d of the EEA Agreement lays down that "*At the project level, institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EFTA States shall have the same rights and obligations in the Community programme or other action in question as those applicable to partner institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EC Member States*". According to the EIT Regulation Article 7(3), the minimum condition to form a KIC is the participation of at least three partner organisations, established in at least three different Member States. This Article does not provide for equal rights for participants from Member States and the EEA EFTA States and is thus not in line with the provisions of the EEA Agreement. We suggest that the Regulation is amended so that the minimum condition to form a KIC would be participation from partners established in a minimum of one Member State together with at least two different Member States or EEA EFTA States.

Article 81, litra b of the EEA Agreement lays down that "*The status of the EFTA States in the committees which assist the EC Commission in the management or development of a Community activity to which EFTA States may be contributing financially by virtue of their participation shall take full account of that contribution*". Norway has been participating in the EIT Stakeholder Forum's special configuration of Member States. Article 5(k) of the EIT Regulation only refers to Member States' representatives in the special configuration. Norway proposes to amend Article 5(k) by explicitly including representatives of the EEA EFTA States, so that the Article is in line with the EEA Agreement and to reflect that Norway already participates in the special configuration.

Transparency and openness

Norway welcomes the ambitions in the Commission's proposal on synergies between Horizon Europe and other EU programmes under the next Multiannual Financial Framework. Cooperation and synergies between programmes will increase the probability of achieving the objectives of the EIT and of the Innovation Union. The Ministry of Education and Research also welcomes the EIT Governing Board's newly adopted Policy Papers on synergies with the EIC, other parts of Horizon Europe and other EU programmes 2021–2027. However, we would like to emphasise the need for open and transparent processes when it comes to designing and implementing synergies between programmes.



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We would also encourage the EIT to increase transparency with regards to selection processes for projects and new KICs and information on their activities. The KICs must not be perceived as "closed clubs". New KICs should be open and transparent from their inception, not only when they are formally constituted.

Furthermore, we welcome the efforts EIT the has made towards openness by monitoring results and making information and data accessible to stakeholders. However, currently available data do not provide a full overview of the different countries' participation in the EIT. We would therefore welcome efforts to improve the coherence and completeness of data.

Future KIC on Seas and Ocean provides an untapped potential

With reference to the EIT input to the SIA 2021–2027 on future EIT thematic areas, we agree with the EIT Governing Board that a KIC on "Water, marine and maritime" is crucial to create and accelerate sustainable, circular and blue economies that are based on healthy coastal and marine ecosystems. We agree that the economics of water and marine and maritime innovations are significant. However, it also involves considerations on trade-offs between economic, social and environmental objectives.

The seas and oceans offer an enormous potential for sustainable blue growth in Europe and are at the same time key to understanding and tackling global challenges. Healthy seas and oceans provide livelihood, food security and economic prosperity of hundreds of millions of people. However, the coastal and marine ecosystems are facing an increasing number of threats. Overfishing, marine pollution and climate change are affecting communities globally. The EU has a unique opportunity to show leadership in this field by joining efforts in order to contain the threats and unlock the growth potential by an increased synergy between higher education, research and innovation on issues related to seas and oceans that will improve the quality of life for European citizens and improving Europe's economic performance.

Norway proposes a KIC on Seas and Oceans. A KIC on Seas and Oceans could facilitate a more balanced and wholesome approach to the marine and maritime sector and would serve as a platform for mobilising cross-sectorial research and innovation that would address all pillars and clusters in Horizon Europe.



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Norwegian proposal for amendments of the Regulation (EC) No. 294/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and subsequent amendments by EU Regulation (EU) No. 1292/2013.

Paragraph in the EIT Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council	Amendments of the text	Comments
Art.5 (k)	(..) Member States and EEA EFTA States representatives shall meet in a special configuration(...). The special configuration of Member States' and EEA EFTA States representatives (..)	Norway proposes to amend Article 5(k) by explicitly including representatives of the EEA EFTA States, so that the Article is in line with the EEA Agreement and to reflect that Norway already participates in the special configuration of Member States. Article 81, litra b, of the EEA Agreement lays down that <i>"The status of the EFTA States in the committees which assist the EC Commission in the management or development of a Community activity to which EFTA States may be contributing financially by virtue of their participation shall take full account of that contribution"</i> .
Art.7.3	The minimum condition to form a KIC is the participation of at least three partner organisations, established in at least three different one Member States together with at least two different Member States or EEA EFTA States.	The EIT should allow for full participation and eligibility in all parts of the programme for institutions, undertakings, organisations and nationals of the EEA EFTA States, in line with the provisions of the EEA Agreement. Article 81, litra d, of the EEA Agreement lays down that <i>"At the project level, institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EFTA States shall have the same rights and obligations in the Community programme or other action in question as those applicable to partner institutions, undertakings, organizations and nationals of EC Member States"</i> .

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