

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-003992/25
to the Commission
Christian Ehler (PPE)
(10 October 2025)**

Subject: Facilitating a better EIT

In recent months, several stakeholders and participants have strongly criticised the functioning of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). In particular, the cost-benefit balance seems to be negative for many of the EU's leading research organisations. Generally, the EIT is seen more as an institution that controls its Knowledge and Innovation Communities rather than one that enables them to excel. It seems clear that, under the control of the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) of the Commission, the EIT has not kept up with the needs of EU researchers and innovators, which is not surprising, given that DG EAC does not generally deal with research and innovation.

In the light of the above, can the Commission clarify the following:

1. The Governing Board's vision for the future of the EIT does not reflect the framework conditions that Knowledge and Innovation Communities need to succeed; what are those framework conditions, in the Commission's view?
2. What measures is the Commission taking to ensure that the EIT is positioned as an enabler rather than a controller?
3. Why should the co-legislators and stakeholders expect that, under DG EAC, the EIT can be reformed to support EU research and innovation to make continued financial support for the EIT worthwhile under the next multiannual financial framework?

Submitted: 10.10.2025

**Answer given by Ms Zaharieva on behalf of the European Commission
(8 December 2025)**

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is an independent EU body which has a Governing Board (GB) providing strategic guidance.

The EIT sets out the rights and obligations of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) by means of partnership and grant agreements.

It supervises the KICs through quality control, monitoring and evaluations ⁽¹⁾, while leaving them room to design their actions in a bottom-up way.

The KICs integrate the knowledge triangle connecting education, research and business. Entrepreneurial education and skills development are critical drivers of innovation, and a catalyst for key industrial sectors, and EU policies, to which the KICs are fully aligned: energy, climate, digital, raw materials, manufacturing, urban mobility, food, health, culture and creativity and water, marine and maritime.

The Commission designs and implements Horizon Europe collegially, in full alignment with all EU priorities. The Commission keeps the EIT closely aligned with EU policy developments so that the KICs contribute to EU priorities, such as the Union of Skills ⁽²⁾, the Startup and Scaleup Strategy ⁽³⁾, the Industrial Alliances ⁽⁴⁾ and the New European Bauhaus ⁽⁵⁾.

The Commission supports the KICs to set up Policy Advisory Boards which provide a feedback loop with Commission services. The mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe has assessed the KICs' performance positively ⁽⁶⁾.

1 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0819>, Article 6(c).

2 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0090>.

3 https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/2f76a0df-b09b-47c2-949c-800c30e4c530_en.

4 https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/industry/industrial-alliances_en.

5 https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en.

6 https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/support-policy-making/shaping-eu-research-and-innovation-policy/evaluation-impact-assessment-and-monitoring/horizon-europe-programme-analysis_en, see especially the leverage effect of KICs.

In line with the EIT Regulation ⁽⁷⁾, the EIT GB has submitted its contribution on the Strategic Innovation Agenda ⁽⁸⁾. The Commission will take it into account for the review of the Commission's proposal of the EIT legal framework, due by 31 December 2026 ⁽⁹⁾. It is in this context that the Commission will reassess the provisions concerning the KICs.

It is a prerogative of the Commission to decide upon its internal organisation in order to ensure the operation of its services.

⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0819>, Article 4(4) of the EIT Regulation.

⁸ <https://www.eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-07/EIT%20Strategic%20Vision%20%28with%20annexes%29%20July%202025%201.pdf>.

⁹ Article 26 'Review', EIT Regulation: 'By 31 December 2026, the Commission shall, on the basis of the results of the evaluations referred to in Article 20(2) and (3), submit, where appropriate, any proposals for amendments to this regulation which it considers to be necessary, in particular in relation to the EIT's mission and objectives set out in Article 3 and with a view to extending the EIT's budget beyond the period specified in Articles 3 and 21 in accordance with the relevant Union framework programme for research and innovation'.