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Internet Innovation ... Shaping The Future

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"If this isn't the future, it certainly looks a lot like it," said the time traveller to whoever was listening. Trouble is, he had arrived in 2020 and didn't realise that the internet had become ubiquitous and so important that just about everyone was listening ... in a good way.

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Recent developments(September 2014): Want to shape the 'Net Innovation' vision in Europe?

Innovation and the internet go hand-in-hand ... where 'keeping up' is tantamount to losing ground. To help Europe become more competitive, the Commission has launched a consultation to explore the future directions of its far-reaching Net Innovation programme.

The Innovation Union is all about leading not following, and with guidance from the Digital Agenda, the new Horizon 2020 funding programme will ensure Europe stays ahead of the game ... well ahead. To this end, the Commission is looking to update its 'Net Innovation' vision and has launched a public survey to help define and prepare the 2016/17 Work Programme for [Horizon 2020](#) [1].

Broadly, the EU addresses innovation over the internet by keeping the needs of business, society and individuals at the forefront of its programming decisions. Thus the survey will help to identify key technological challenges and research priorities, and establish a research and innovation agenda for the coming years.

The questionnaire is aimed at gathering the opinions of a wide cross-section of society who would be interested in shaping the Net Innovation topics in the next Work Programme. Contributions are particularly sought from innovators and entrepreneurs, civil society organisations, research institutions, business, policy-makers, higher education institutions, and public authorities.

You can find more information and take the online questionnaire [here](#) [2]. The survey is open until 10 October 2014. Once concluded, the Commission will analyse and process the replies received and

publish a report on the public consultation.

Original article from net-innov future magazine (January 2014):



The internet will continue to change the way we keep in touch, do business, learn new things, and how we interpret and interact with our surroundings. It's a game changer, and thanks to forward planning and policy-making, the EU intends to be at the forefront of these changes.

The engine driving the EU's approach to the Future Internet is the Innovation Union – a flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness – and specific elements of the Digital Agenda for Europe. But all engines need fuel to move forward, and this is where Horizon 2020 (H2020) comes in, supplying the essential research funding and technical directions for the coming seven years.

Horizon 2020 is longer, smarter, better-funded, more targeted and much simpler to administer and take part in for all types and sizes of organisations – in and outside the EU – than any previous Framework Programmes. The priorities of H2020 are **excellent science, industrial leadership and societal challenges**.

The programme is an investment in future jobs and growth and addresses people's concerns about their livelihoods, safety and the environment. And it strengthens the EU's global position in research, innovation and technology.

THREE STRANDS, MANY OUTCOMES

The **business strands** of activities are bundled in the Future Internet Public-Private Partnership (FI-PPP, see also on pages 13-15) which, as it enters its third phase (2014-2016), reaches out to SMEs and web entrepreneurs, while enriching the two other strands of internet innovation – 'society' and 'individual'.

The third phase of the FI-PPP ensures that technological developments and trials taking place in phases one and two will evolve into seed-type activities generating actual take-up of innovative internet services and applications. This last phase is also expected to connect and establish close synergies with 'smart' regional developments and policies.

The **societal strands** of activities focus on developing innovative Collective Awareness Platforms (CAPs, see also pages 10-11) for sustainability and social innovation. The challenge is to harness the collaborative power of ICT networks (networks of people, of knowledge and of sensors) to create collective and individual awareness about the multiple sustainability threats confronting society at the social, environmental and political levels.

So, what's really on the horizon (for 2020)?

By 2015, it is estimated that **two-thirds of the world's data traffic will be video** and that mobile-connected traffic from tablets will demand as much bandwidth as the entire global network in 2010. And by 2020, up to **50 billion devices** could be connected through the internet, and an average of seven objects per person on the planet, with unfathomable numbers of 'machines connected to other machines' (M2M) via the web. And the growth in the number of new applications running on these networks shows no sign of slowing, according to experts.



These trends present a challenge to network operators but **also a huge opportunity** to web entrepreneurs preparing to tap this burgeoning market.

A significant portion of H2020 is dedicated to boosting information and communications technologies developed in Europe. And internet innovation is an important part of the long-term picture that the EU is striving to colour in with H2020 and the Innovation Union.

The EU will address innovation over the internet using a three-pronged approach:

- **Business**
- **Society**
- **Individual**

The resulting 'collective intelligence' will lead to better decision-making and empower citizens to adopt more sustainable individual and collective behaviours and lifestyles. Future innovation actions are expected to develop and test solutions to clearly defined sustainability challenges by harnessing 'network effects', leveraging innovative combinations of social networks, sensor networks and knowledge co-creation networks.

Participants may include not only industry and academia but also local communities, grassroots activists, hackers, social entrepreneurs, students, citizens, creative industries and civil society organisations.

Areas requiring further research include the motivations and incentives for online collaboration, the impact of extended awareness and peer pressure in driving more sustainable behaviours, defining online reputation mechanisms, and facilitating policy and technological developments addressing a range of areas, such as identity, anonymity, ethics, privacy, network neutrality, access, governance, and more.

The **individual strands** are covered by the Startup Europe initiative (see pages 8-9). The internet is a significant socioeconomic motor and entrepreneurship on the web helps to stimulate growth and jobs.

The challenge is to create an environment in Europe that encourages more web entrepreneurs to start a business and grow internationally. **But what needs to be done?**

Accelerate web entrepreneurship in Europe (online platforms with new services): Develop and test online platforms connecting existing local web entrepreneurship ecosystems and hubs, and build on these to provide support and new services for web entrepreneurs. The new services should help promising startups to launch and scale up their operations across Europe, uncover new financing opportunities, link potential web entrepreneurs with key mentors anywhere in Europe, as well as link venture fast-tracking activities from several locations – providing real EU added value.

Having “geeks in-residence” is just one idea to help with the tricky technical questions of growing a tech venture, or any other measure – local, national or European – which supports web entrepreneurs in the launch, growth and internationalisation of their businesses.

European coordination activities in the area of web entrepreneurs: Europe needs a support and coordination action to strengthen the environment for web entrepreneurship and exploit synergies across existing stakeholder communities. The goal is to increase the impact, accessibility and reach of the online support platforms and the new services they offer, as well as link into other relevant initiatives.

More info

- FI-PPP – <http://fi-ppp.eu> [3]
- Collective Awareness Platforms – <http://ec.europa.eu/digitalagenda/collectiveawareness> [4]
- Startup Europe – <http://startupeurope.eu> [5]

(Article from [net-innov future](#) [6] magazine (2014)).

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Links

[1] <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/>

[2] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/news-redirect/17711>

[3] <http://fi-ppp.eu>

[4] <http://ec.europa.eu/digitalagenda/>

[5] <http://startupeurope.eu>

[6] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/sites/digital-agenda/files/NetInnoFuture-MEP-E-web_0.pdf

[7] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/our-media-library>

[8] <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/newsroom/all/news-article>