

# First the theme, then the team

## ***Second opinion of the European Research Advisory Board (EURAB) on the European Commissions' proposal for the European Institute of Technology (EIT)***

***EURAB is pleased to see that the European Commission recognises that the EIT concept is only one part of a strategy to achieve the Lisbon objectives. An EIT alone will not solve the problems but the European Commission initiative is an important contribution to its resolution. EURAB shares the EC's analysis of the problems in Europe with its "innovation gap", and especially the concerns about deficiencies in the European higher education system, fragmentation, under-funding and often being inadequate in responding to the needs of industry and the service sector. EIT is a good opportunity to create an instrument that is currently missing in a European portfolio in order to fill the innovation gap and attempt to create a Europe that is competitive and attractive in world terms.***

As part of the mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy, the President of the European Commission, in February 2005, briefly presented the idea of the European Institute of Technology (EIT) – a new flagship of excellence. On 8 June the European Commission has issued the Communication, *The European Institute of Technology: further steps towards its creation*. As EIT turned from an idea to an evolving project, thus was the need for a second EURAB opinion. (see IP/06/751, MEMO 06/190 and MEMO 06/233).

In this-opinion (the second on EIT) EURAB points out that the EIT must be seen as a new facilitator rather than a new institution. Its character has to be based on content and networking rather than physical arrangement (buildings, campuses, etc). Joint work on common goal first, "bricks and mortar" later is one of the key message. The procedure for selection of themes and topics of EU dimension and EU added value to be addressed will have to be top down (first in the process), while there has to be a bottom up procedure for team selection.

To be successful, the EIT must learn from and involve the business sectors (industry and services) and the national research laboratories community (RTO's) in addition to the traditional academia like universities. EIT has to mobilize new funding (private-including foundations, regional, national and European funds) and clearly visible actions should be undertaken immediately.

EURAB is stressing also the necessity that after formal decisions the EIT should become as soon as possible a real brand name.

The full text of the second opinion of EURAB on EIT can be found at:

**For more information:**

EURAB website: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/index_en.html)

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/pdf/eurab\\_05\\_021\\_1\\_eit.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/eurab/pdf/eurab_05_021_1_eit.pdf)

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