

Innovation Union Competitiveness report 2011

Foreword



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The main messages presented in the executive summary of the Innovation Union Competitiveness report confirm that Europe is in a state of "Innovation emergency" which makes the building of an Innovation Union essential for the success of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs.



Most importantly, this analysis is substantiated and enriched by a solid body of evidence. This report constitutes the most comprehensive publication to date of statistical data and economic analysis on research and innovation from a European perspective. It brings together in a single document the information needed to properly understand the innate complexity of the European economy from an innovation point of view.

For each theme, a dedicated chapter provides the key data at European and at country level and outlines the strategic and operational issues that need to be addressed. The report aims to be a practical tool to help policy makers and stakeholders in regions, in Member States and Associated Countries to evaluate the situation in their country and to understand the contribution that building the Innovation Union and the European Research Area can make to tackling their economic challenges and addressing their citizens' concerns.

The report and the annexed country profiles will also support the design and development of ambitious and realistic national or regional innovation strategies, consistent with each country's particular strengths, economic structure and policy objectives as well as with an overall European view of the common challenges before us. While a great deal of detailed information is presented, the report is user-friendly and allows the reader to quickly find the information most relevant to his or her interests.

We are now at the start of the ambitious long term work to create a sustainable Innovation Union. The size of the challenge is all the greater because we face it at a time when most Member States are confronted with strong budgetary constraints. The solution is smarter investment in growth-enhancing policies that get excellent value from the money invested, prioritising the most cost-effective reforms that help develop new markets for innovative products and services. This approach will help create the conditions for a smart and creative economy, based on knowledge and on innovation, bringing concrete benefits to everybody.

Faced with an innovation emergency, now is the time to act. This report provides an excellent evidence basis for action and constitutes a reference-point to measure the progress that we'll accomplish together in the next decade. It is my sincere hope that you will find it useful for achieving our common goal: the Innovation Union.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maire Geoghegan-Quinn". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn