

## Frequently Asked Questions regarding European Innovation Partnerships

### 6 December 2010 FAQs

1. What are the **objectives** behind European innovation partnerships?
2. What concrete **benefits** can be expected from working together as part of European innovation partnerships?
3. Why has the Commission proposed to launch a **pilot partnership** and why did it choose to dedicate this pilot to active and healthy ageing?
4. How will future innovation partnerships be **selected**?
5. What **governance** structure is proposed?
6. What is envisaged for the **governance of Active and Healthy Ageing**?
7. What should be the **focus** of the partnerships, how should they **work** and what will be the specific **deliverables**?
8. Are partnerships a **new instrument** and what are the links with existing instruments?
9. Are partnerships meant to become a **decision making body** or a **new funding source**?
10. Are there **national/regional examples** of partnerships which the Commission has considered when developing the European innovation partnership concept?
11. Is there not a risk that partnerships will be **driven 'top-down'** and lead to "picking winners"?
12. Are all **Member States** expected to participate in innovation partnerships?
13. What will be the role of the **European Parliament and Council** in the innovation partnerships?
14. What will be the role of the **Commission**?

### Complementary FAQs – for EIPs in general

15. How are the **members of the Steering Group** selected and what is its status?

Members are invited by the Commissioners responsible for the partnership, possibly through a call for expression of interest, taking gender equality into account.

The group has no formal status, members are not paid, and they take part on a personal capacity. There are no financial or legal obligations resulting from the Steering Group set-up (except administrative expenses to the Commission for workshops, meetings etc.).

16. What is the **Strategic Implementation Plan** of an EIP?

The first major deliverable of an EIP is its Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) developed and endorsed by the Steering Group.

The SIP covers at least the following: the narrative with a joint vision, an overall target and objectives; the priority areas and actions with specific objectives and feasible deliverables ("what"), building on a mapping of existing barriers to innovation and major initiatives as well as contributions from wide stakeholder consultations; the rationale and added value of the EIP for identified priority areas and actions ("why"); proposals for implementation measures including process and governance as well as a monitoring and

evaluation framework ("who" and "how"); and the approach to overall response by stakeholders with timelines ("when").

The Commission issues a Communication in response to the SIP where it states its general credit and support for the SIP; recognises the responsibilities for implementation among different stakeholders and the role of the European Commission; proposes mechanisms and modalities for stakeholders to get involved and commit and ensure operationality of the SIP; proposes its support in terms of regulatory framework, funding tools, evidence, monitoring and evaluation to facilitate implementation of the SIP actions at EU, national, regional and local level; when necessary, proposes changes in process and governance to ensure effective implementation, building on suggestions from the SIP; and sets a timetable for implementation, committing to reporting regularly on the progress of the SIP implementation through already established channels.

When necessary, SIPs should be updated by the EIP Steering Group.

17. What is the **timeframe** of an EIP?

An EIP operates over a limited timeframe, with first measurable outcomes within 1-3 years, and with a headline target to be achieved within 5-8 years after its launch.

EIPs pursue both actions targeted towards results achievable in the shorter term as well as in the longer term. The need for short term results is a reflection of its aim to speed up innovation in line with the growth and jobs agenda. Depending on the focus of each particular EIP, it may seek to mobilise knowledge sharing and stimulate policy support, public and private funding, and demand side actions in the areas of regulation, standards and public procurement more efficiently and effectively.

18. What role will EIPs play in implementing **Horizon 2020**?

EIPs should increase the impact of actions funded under Horizon 2020 by linking them to a broader strategy.

The EIPs will provide systematic input on a continuous basis during the implementation of Horizon 2020. They will deliver important contributions to the definition of priorities in the annual Work Programmes of Horizon 2020, through the Strategic Implementation Plans and also through experience gained during the implementation of different actions under the EIPs.

Specific Horizon 2020 priorities, notably among the Societal Challenges, will support, interface and establish links with the actions and activities developed in the context of the EIPs. The implementation of Horizon 2020 will seek to contribute to achieving the aims of the specific EIPs by providing key knowledge, ensuring dialogue, and supporting the follow-up on proposed priorities.

For instance, the following specific references are made to EIPs under the H2020. In the Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 in the Societal Challenge of 'Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing' activities are developed in the context of the EIP on 'Active and Health Ageing'; in the 'Food security, sustainable agriculture, marine and maritime research, and the bioeconomy' challenge will establish appropriate links with the actions of the 'Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability' EIP; and in the 'Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials' challenge will interface with the 'Raw Materials' EIP.

19. How will **funding** be provided for Strategic Implementation Plans?

The European Innovation Partnerships bring together public and private stakeholders to accelerate the deployment of major innovations by committing them to undertaking supply and demand side measures (funding, regulation, standards, procurements etc) across sectors and the entire innovation system. The EIPs and their Strategic Implementation Plans are neither a new funding programme nor instrument nor a legal entity.

This means that

- private partners will contribute to the work of the partnership employing also their own relevant resources;
- public funding (EU, national, sub-national) will be allocated on the basis of the existing procedures for decision-making by EU institutions or by national, regional or local authorities.

The EIP's Strategic Implementation Plan will serve as the key reference document for the implementation of the EIP. However, EIPs must be open for new insights, demands, taking up the dynamics emerging in the respective working fields. The EIPs will provide an important input to the decision-making processes under the relevant EU funding programmes and initiatives, including FP7/Horizon2020, CIP, Structural Funds, and Rural Development Funds.

## 20. What are the **main lessons** learnt in the pilot phase about EIP **governance and processes**?

Experience from the EIP pilot on Active and Healthy Aging suggests that the Steering Group of an EIP should be set up as a single body with members serving in a personal capacity without legal and financial obligations or decision-making power. The Group should aim at a balanced composition, including gender, although representativeness from all Member States as well as the involvement of all relevant stakeholders will not be achievable. Therefore, the Steering Group will not replace or supersede existing governance structures.

Moreover, an inclusive and open consultation should feed the EIP with content during the elaboration of the Strategic Implementation Plan and during implementation.

Feedback mechanisms should be established between the EIP and relevant innovation actors.

Other mechanisms of interaction should be defined by each EIP according to its specificity, e.g. size of Steering Group, involvement of Group in the implementation phase.

Moreover, the pilot phase has clarified that there will be strong involvement of Parliament, Council, Commission and stakeholders throughout the different stages of a partnership: the Commission proposals for an EIP are based inter-alia on public consultation; the launch of an EIP through the setting up of a Steering Group requires the agreement of Parliament and Council; if the Commission positively assesses the Strategic Implementation Plan, it issues a Communication proposing follow-up actions, for response by Parliament and Council; the Commission will provide yearly reports on progress as part of the State of the Innovation Union reporting.

See also the Commission staff working paper reporting on the first available experiences from the pilot EIP in terms of governance and processes: [http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/eip\\_staff\\_paper.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/eip_staff_paper.pdf)

21. What is the **timing for new partnerships**?

In the 2010 Innovation Union strategy, the Commission had announced to start a pilot partnership on active and healthy ageing and, taking into account the views of Parliament and Council and input from stakeholders, to present proposals for further partnerships during 2011.

An exchange of views on the first experiences on governance and processes with the pilot partnership took place at the September Competitiveness Council who concluded in its session of December 2011: "Looks forward to the Commission Communication transmitting the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) to the European Parliament and the Council for endorsement and that will provide a basis for launching the future EIPs."

On 29 February 2012, the Commission adopted the Communication to the European Parliament and the Council "Taking forward the Strategic Implementation Plan of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing". The same day, it adopted two communications with proposals for a partnership on sustainable agriculture and a partnership on raw materials.

The Commission is working on proposals for partnerships in the field of water and of smart cities - both fields were indicated in the Innovation Union strategy - with the aim to present proposals in 2012.

**Complementary FAQs – for the EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing**

22. Will the **Steering Group continue** after the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) has been presented?

The current Steering Group has fulfilled its initial mandate in preparing the Plan. However a coordinating group is still needed to ensure a strategic overview of the progress and synergies across the various Action Groups. Given the current pilot stage of the Partnership, the Commission proposes that the Steering Group continues (in interim) until the first Conference of Partners in order to ensure rapid progress during the start-up phase of the Actions Groups.

23. What is the expected **outcome of invitations for commitments**?

Following the submission of Commitments, stakeholders who meet the EIP conditions will be invited to join Action Groups – one for each of the Specific Actions identified in the invitation. An Action Group will be an assembly of partners committing to run a number of activities contributing towards the target deliverable of the relevant Specific Action. Each Action Group will define and agree on a governance structure and identify partners willing to facilitate a process leading to the development of an Action Plan formally endorsed by all the partners.

The Action Plan should:

- map the commitments received,
- define the activities to be pursued, the roles of partners and the activities where each partner is involved,
- identify areas where partners can co-develop, co-design or co-operate on activities,
- agree on the level of data sharing,
- provide a delivery plan with milestones and targets, indicating how the various activities are combined to reach the deliverable target of the Specific Action.

Stakeholders whose commitments do not meet all of the EIP conditions, will be invited to develop their commitments further, through an open digital platform, a "Marketplace for innovative ideas". This online tool will help stakeholders develop their commitments, find partners, share practices and projects, access robust data and evidence, and link to other related platforms. The Marketplace will be operational as of 3 April 2012.

24. Which **form does a commitment** to participate in the SIP implementation take, who can submit it, should Member States submit a letter of support?

A Commitment is a measurable and concrete engagement in support of a Specific Action in order to deliver on the priorities identified in the Plan for the Specific Action concerned.

Interested parties are encouraged to submit their commitments either as a joint initiative of several partners together, or as individual submissions. A party making an individual submission is still required to indicate with which other stakeholders they are already partnering with in the scope of the commitment concerned. A joint initiative can also include partners outside Europe but needs to be led by a European organisation.

Each Commitment submitted through the Invitation for Commitment needs to fulfil the following general criteria and EIP principles:

- Engagement – underwriting the Partnership and its objectives and criteria
- Inclusiveness and Partnership – widely involving all relevant actors and constituencies
- Delivery – timely delivery of agreed outcomes/outputs
- Critical mass – sufficient, concrete and measurable resources to carry out the actions of the commitment
- Advocacy – inspiration and political support for all participants

It is not necessary for Member States to submit a letter of support.

25. How will **reference sites be evaluated**?

Reference Sites are defined as regions, cities or integrated hospitals/care organisations, established in a geographical location in Europe that provide a holistic/comprehensive innovation based approach to active and healthy ageing. They provide concrete examples of existing and successful integrated solutions, based on evidence of their impact on the ground.

Following submission of applications, candidate reference sites will be invited by mid 2013 to complete a self-assessment and be assessed by peers. The assessment will be done on the basis of an independent, widely accepted and commonly agreed assessment methodology.

To be considered a Reference Site, the candidate needs to demonstrate the following at the assessment:

- implementation of a substantial number of the Specific Actions identified in the Plan in an integrated way in one geographical location, and commit to substantial investments (financial and human) by participants in their coalition
- coverage of all three pillars of the Partnership, notably "prevention, screening and early diagnosis", "care and cure", and "active ageing and independent living"
- coverage of a significant proportion of the target population (at least 10%) by the services put in place; the notion of "target population" refers to patients or older persons who can benefit from such services.

26. Has the pilot EIP led to **alignment of financial instruments**?

The actions in the Partnership are the result of a joint vision, agreed by a high-level Steering Group, which has proposed in a Strategic Implementation Plan one single and coherent framework action, that should lead to development of commitments.

Based on the SIP, the Commission is currently aligning on-going initiatives and programmes to match the EIP aims with the existing financial instruments (e.g. FP7, European Investment Bank, Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, Structural Funds etc).

The Commission has already started to align such instruments and will continue to pursue this systematically in order to optimise the impact of funding, and will take full account of relevant aspects of the Plan to contribute to its objectives and vision.

The Commission is already linking up advanced and applied research and large scale validation of innovation for the Plan's actions:

- the Framework Programme for Research (FP7) has earmarked €220 million on health research that can be relevant for the Partnership;
- the ICT part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) has allocated € 24 million in the 2012 work programme for actions directly relevant to the Partnership;
- the Health Programme work plan for 2012 allocates €4 million for aligning health promotion, in particular on existing integrated care solutions;
- the Commission contributes €25 million p.a. to the work programmes of the Ambient Assisted Living Joint Programme, which covers areas of high relevance to the Partnership.