



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

From:	Commission
To:	Delegations
Subject:	European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) - Information from the Presidency and the Commission

Delegations will find attached a note from the Commission on the above-mentioned topic with a view to the Competitiveness Council on 26 May 2014.

European Innovation Partnerships

Information note from the Commission

European Innovation Partnerships (EIPs) present a new approach to EU research and innovation by being challenge-driven, acting across the whole research and innovation chain, and streamlining existing instruments and initiatives.

Since 2011, five EIPs have been launched to accelerate research, development and market deployment of innovations tackling major societal challenges, pooling expertise and resources and boosting the competitiveness of EU industry. As member of the Steering Groups, Member States have been actively involved in the strategic innovation partnerships from the beginning.

The EIPs address ‘Active and Healthy Ageing’ (AHA), ‘Water’, ‘Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability’, ‘Raw Materials’, and ‘Smart Cities and Communities’. All five are now in the implementation stage, having identified priorities and engaged a wider range of actors across the demand and supply sides of innovation.

In a short period of time, the EIPs have established themselves in the European research and innovation landscape. They have proved considerable outreach and mobilised a wide range of partners across demand and supply, and first results are emerging.

Examples: The six AHA Action Groups gather over 500 commitments, comprising 1000 regions and municipalities and 3000 partners, including research/academia, civil society, health and care providers, large industry and SMEs, mobilising over €1 billion. Their work is expected to have an impact on over 2 million patients and 30 million citizens by 2015. Their first deliverables - collections of good practices and toolkits for their replication, compilations of evidence on the impact of integrated services etc. - were presented in November 2013. The 32 AHA Reference Sites represent a rich collection of real life examples of innovation. They are committed to replicate transferable elements and share lessons learned, so that more regions will be able to benefit from their successes.

The EIPs are continuing to mobilise implementation on the ground through Action Groups, Operational Groups and other actions. They also maintain efforts to complete their monitoring and evaluation frameworks to improve measurement of progress and impacts.

Examples: Under the Water EIP, the City Blueprints Action Group includes a 'learning alliance' of European cities to share their best practices and tools on Urban Water Cycle Services with the objective to make investments in urban water systems infrastructure more efficient. The VERDYGO Action Group will prove the innovative concept of modular low-cost adjustable waste water treatment plants in real-scale demonstration sites.

An independent expert group, chaired by Mr Esko Aho, has assessed progress and evaluated the overall performance of the EIPs. The group has concluded that the EIP is the right approach to help enable future European economic growth and welfare, and that there are sound reasons for the EU to continue promoting the EIP approach, provided that the EIPs target systemic innovation with a strong focus on diffusion of innovation.

The Commission is taking full account of the expert group's findings and recommendations to see how the EIP concept can be further strengthened in the future, and invites the other partners in EIPs to also take account and continue their active support going forward.