



## European Technology Platforms 2020– DRAFT STRATEGY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Smart investment, notably in research and innovation, is vital in order to maintain high standards of living while dealing with pressing societal challenges and taking advantage of demands from EU and global markets.

Building on the strategies for Europe 2020 and for an Innovation Union, the Commission's Horizon 2020 proposal for an integrated research and innovation framework programme recognises the role of European Technology Platforms (ETPs) as part of the external advice and societal engagement to implement Horizon 2020.

The importance of forums and networks like ETPs comes from the fact that markets, while being powerful drivers of innovation, often do not function perfectly when considering the generation of ideas and the high degree of uncertainty and coordination that typifies the innovation process. Networks facilitate the move to more open models of innovation by helping improve the innovation capacity of individual firms. Empirical studies have demonstrated that firms collaborating on R&D are more innovative than those that do not, and this is particularly true for technologically intensive industries where interrelatedness and complexity is high or where the knowledge base is multidisciplinary and widely dispersed. Furthermore, small firms in particular have been able to take advantage of networks in order to overcome disadvantages caused by their size.

### 2. STATE OF PLAY

European Technology Platforms are industry-led stakeholder forums which elaborate medium- to long-term research and innovation agendas and roadmaps for action at EU and national level to be supported by both private and public funding.

They were established in 2003 after the European Council called for a strengthening of the European Research Area by "...creating European Technology Platforms (ETPs) bringing together technological know-how, industry, regulators and financial institutions to develop a strategic agenda for leading technologies".

There are currently 36 officially recognised ETPs spanning a wide range of technologies. The five institutionalised Public Private Partnerships which became Joint Technology Initiatives originated directly from ETPs, and ETPs were the European Commission's main partner in developing the four contractual Public Private Partnerships under FP7 and the six European Industrial Initiatives of the Strategic Energy Technology (SET) Plan.

Assessments carried out in 2008, 2009 and 2010 acknowledged the success of ETPs in developing joint visions, setting Strategic Research Agendas and contributing to the definition of the research priorities including those under the Research Framework Programmes. Furthermore, some Member States have established national technology platforms to mirror ETPs: some, in order to build capability and enable their research communities to influence and participate in European activities, others to align their activities to the shared strategic vision.

The aforementioned assessments also highlighted some shortcomings, notably the difficulties of SME participation, the susceptibility of ETPs to be captured by 'big' players, the risk of duplication, and inconsistent EC procedures for oversight and funding (some ETPs received funding for the secretariat or specific actions while others did not).

The rationale for ETPs remains valid: ensuring high impact of EU research in leading markets and technology areas with the overall objective to close the gap with global innovation leaders and to drive jobs and growth. This rationale is reinforced in Horizon 2020, which will considerably strengthen the innovation dimension of EU support.

### 3. EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS 2020: VISION AND MISSION

#### The Vision

European Technology Platforms will be a key player in the European innovation ecosystem, helping turn Europe into an Innovation Union. This will require ETPs to take a holistic view, identifying the pathway to commercial deployment of research, provide strategic insights into market opportunities and needs, and mobilise and network innovation actors across the EU in order to enable European companies gain competitive advantage in global markets.

#### The Mission

ETPs will:

- 1) provide a coherent business focused analysis of research and innovation bottlenecks and opportunities related to societal challenges and industrial leadership actions: **strategy function;**
- 2) mobilise industry and other stakeholders within the EU to work in partnership and deliver on agreed priorities: **mobilising function;**
- 3) share information and enable knowledge transfer to a wide range of stakeholders across the EU: **dissemination function.**

This will require the industry led and focused ETPs to be inclusive and representative of businesses, research organisations and universities in their respective fields. They must work in close partnership with Member States and Member State based networks as well as with states associated to the framework programme. The ETPs will also need to actively engage with stakeholders including NGOs, social platforms and consumer/societal groups, as appropriate, to foster solutions that are socially responsible, inclusive and sustainable.

#### 4. PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMISSION AND MEMBER STATES

The Commission's proposal for Horizon 2020 specifies the channels of external advice for its programming and implementation: next to taking into account the advice and input from advisory groups, dialogue structures, forward looking activities, targeted public consultations and interactive responsible research and innovation processes, the Commission undertakes to take full account of relevant aspects of the research and innovation agendas established by European Technology Platforms, Joint Programming Initiatives and European Innovation Partnerships.

Together with the innovation system approach underlying the Innovation Union strategy, this provides a strong basis for a partnership with the Commission and with Member States.

As a consequence of this partnership and in order to enable a structured dialogue between the Commission and ETPs, designated Commission representatives will actively participate in the work of respective ETPs.

#### 5. RELATION TO RELATED EU INITIATIVES

With their insights into strategy, their mobilising and their dissemination capacity, ETPs can contribute to the priority setting and implementation notably of European Innovation Partnerships, contractual and institutionalised Public Private Partnerships, Public-Public Partnerships, Joint Programming Initiatives and EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities. ETPs should also seek opportunities to work with ERANets, where appropriate. The Commission departments will help ensuring the necessary links also with a view to ensure synergies.

#### 6. CORE ACTIVITIES

The objectives of the ETPs will be delivered through the following activities, which can be broadly categorised as:

- developing Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas, including the identification of skills requirements and of regulatory barriers;
- encouraging industry participation in Horizon 2020 and helping widen participation and build capabilities within Member States through active cooperation with networks/partnerships in Member States.
- identifying opportunities for international collaboration and developing the necessary understanding to facilitate future collaboration;
- delivering networking opportunities that help the move towards more open models of innovation, by providing opportunities for stakeholders to meet, exchange knowledge, make new contacts and develop ideas for joint working;
- facilitating the formation of new partnerships utilising expertise and understanding within the ETP to for example, identify parties capable of working together to exploit the outcomes of a research project or address a specific challenge;

## 7. CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION

A principal benefit of the ETPs to date has been their ability to provide coherent, strategic advice that replaced a multitude of interactions.

For the efficiencies gained thus far to be retained, the number of ETPs must be finite. Furthermore, ETPs must be aligned with the challenges and priority areas identified by Horizon 2020 and structured to bring disparate stakeholders together.

The criteria for the Commission to recognise an ETP are:

- **Alignment with Europe 2020 priorities and objectives** – this could either be in terms of addressing a Horizon 2020 societal challenge and/or developing industrial capability in a priority sector or emerging area;
- **Scale of the market opportunity** – this must represent a sizeable proportion of a current or potential future market and be seen to contribute to the global value chain benefiting Europe;
- **EU added value** - the capacity and capability and skill-base within the EU to research, develop and exploit the technologies and/ or innovations in the proposed field;
- **Transparency and openness** – the ETP must be representative of the sector in question, be transparent in its activities and be open to new members;
- **Scope** – the extent to which the ETP reaches beyond a niche area and fosters **interdisciplinary** and **cross-sector working without duplication of efforts**;
- **Leverage** – the level of engagement and commitment of industry and Member States to the ETP, and the ability of the ETP to deliver on its proposed agenda.

## 8. IMPLICATIONS FOR EXISTING AND EMERGING ETPS

ETPs currently recognised by the Commission will be reviewed against the revised criteria, and their performance and impact to date. Emerging ETPs will be assessed against the set criteria in view of a possible recognition.

Where existing ETPs are seen to be aligned with the set criteria, recognition will be conferred once more and made public on the Commission's ETP website.

In the event that an existing ETP is not seen to be aligned with the set criteria and there is no scope to broker the formation of an ETP with critical mass including through incorporation within a recognised ETP, the ETP will no longer be recognised or listed on the Commission's website. The Commission's commitment to take full account of relevant aspects of its research and innovation agenda will not apply.

The **review and assessment** will be done by the Commission's ETP inter-service group to prepare a **decision on recognition by the Commissioner of the DG responsible for the policy area associated with the relevant ETP**.

If following the review, there is a clear gap in the portfolio of ETPs, action will be taken by the relevant DG to encourage the formation of a new ETP to address this requirement.

## 9. GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

ETPs define their own governance structures. These should ensure the fulfilment of the ETP's objectives.

Legal personality is not required but might facilitate transparency.

The Commission will evaluate the performance of ETPs every 2-3 years against the above mentioned criteria.

## 10. FUNDING

Given the essential bottom-up character of ETPs, the Commission will not fund recurrent cost such as ETP secretariats. ETPs should rely on self-organisation and financing. However, ETPs will be able to apply for EU funding for specific activities such as the development of technology roadmaps, fostering collaboration between ETPs to address cross-sectoral challenges and networking events for stakeholders by responding to competitive calls for support actions.