

PRESS RELEASE : 04 APRIL 2006

EIT proposal threatens to fragment Europe's Universities

The European University Association (EUA) adopted unanimously on Thursday a formal position on the proposed European Institute of Technology to ensure that the voice of universities is clearly heard in the continuing discussions.

While EUA supports the overall objective of creating a new space for creativity in research and training in Europe, it believes that the proposed legal construction for the "knowledge communities", as presently defined in the European Commission's "Communication on the European Institute of Technology", is the wrong mechanism for reaching the goals behind the creation of the EIT. "We are in favour of competitive mechanisms to support excellence in research and innovation but not through 'top-down' legal entities that fragment universities", stated EUA President Professor Georg Winckler.

An active stakeholder in the overall debate on future European RTD policy and expenditure, EUA responded previously to the European Commission's consultation on a possible EIT by launching an open consultation of its own with the Association's over 750 members. The outcomes of this process were presented in November 2005 in a statement to the EC on behalf of the university sector in Europe.

EUA reiterates that the EIT should not hinder the establishment of the European Research Council with an annual budget of €1.5 billion, and that the proposed EIT should be financed using fresh money outside of that allocated in Category 1A of the EU Financial

Perspectives, preferably matched with contributions from public and private funding sources.

EUA undertakes to investigate solutions that strengthen existing institutions and avoid the fragmentation of Europe's universities and that demonstrate added value in relation to the proposed 7th Framework Programme instruments. The Association will explore alternative, innovative and European approaches to achieving the overall objectives identified in the proposal if the current legal and financial problems cannot be resolved. It also pledges to engage actively in the further EU discussions on the EIT within the broader context of the support to be provided to Europe's universities.

- [EUA Policy Position on the European Commission's "Communication to the European Council on the European Institute of Technology \(EIT\)"](#)
- [EUA Statement on the Public Consultation on the idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology \(EIT\)](#)

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research.

For further information, please contact:

Elizabeth Tapper
Press Officer
Tel: +32 2 234 38 80,
Mobile/GSM: +32 473 748 785
Email: elizabeth.tapper@eua.be

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