

## **EARTO Open Letter to European Commission President Juncker: Research & Innovation Are the Future of Europe**

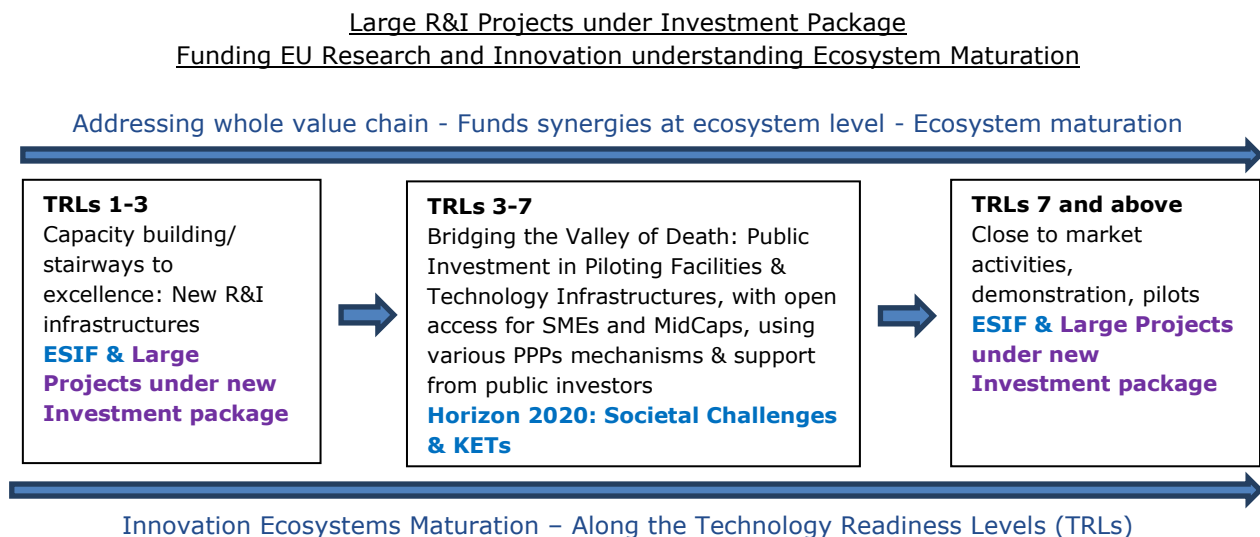
10 December 2014

Dear President Juncker,

On behalf of EARTO members, 350 European Research & Technology Organisations (RTOs), I hereby would like to congratulate you on taking a stand for Europe by presenting Europe with a new €315 billion Investment Package and a new European Fund for Strategic Investments. Europe's difficult times call for great ambitions and actions to boost growth and support Europe's industrial competitiveness on global markets so as to keep and create new jobs. **Innovation is the key to changing today's economic trends and the European Commission has launched Horizon 2020 as a major vehicle for such change.** We are facing an innovation emergency: EU is falling behind the US and Asia in terms of innovation performance. Today while Europe creates excellent research, it does not capitalise sufficiently on the knowledge created in terms of economic success, new products and job creation.

In this context, EARTO members share your views that Europe can better use the common EU budget and Union financial instruments, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), and that public funds available at Union level should further stimulate private investments. If European industry is to maintain its leading role on global markets in important areas such as energy, telecom, digitalisation, life science, the built environment and transport, **such investments should be heavily directed to supporting the renewal of European industry by making use of research, technology and innovation activities.**

In the face of decreasing research & innovation investments from Member States and industry, **your new Investment Package should be a complement to Horizon 2020 and ESIF funds. Projects to be financed under your new Investment Package should include strong research & innovation components** aiming to support existing strengths in European value chains and innovation ecosystems. Such requirement should be mirrored in the selection criteria of projects under your Plan's regulations to be developed in the coming weeks. The following diagram illustrates how your Investment Funds might further support Europe's innovation ecosystems:



In addition to your new Investment Package, **the newly launched Horizon2020 Programme is key for the future of Europe: it should be strongly protected and suffer no cuts, being the only real pan-European R&I programme today**, in particular the key pillars looking at solving societal challenges and supporting industry with the developments of Key Enabling Technologies as well as the new instrument Fast Track to Innovation.

Furthermore, **European structural funds (ESIF) must now focus on maintaining and increasing Europe's Research & Innovation capabilities.** In our experience, the complementary activities of such funds take place at the level of innovation ecosystems (as opposed to project level) in which RTOs are working with industry, regions and academia. Such funds have already been used for developing new research & technology infrastructures which are key vehicles for innovation for large companies as well as SMEs. Such good practice should be more broadly known and implemented in Europe. Therefore, best practices between regions must be shared, using the knowledge available in the various European RTOs today. **To support improved innovation-oriented specialisation strategies already fostered by regions, the dialogue between regions and Innovation Actors (especially Industry & RTOs) should be emphasized to increase the impact of ESIF funds, particularly in regions where RTOs may not be directly located but where funds have been allocated.** In addition to willingness for dialogue, the ability of regions to allocate funds to regional "outsiders" will be key for this.

Today, I offer you the support and expertise of our 350 RTOs members in defining investments in research and technological infrastructures/facilities that are highly necessary for boosting innovation and keeping/creating jobs in regional and national ecosystems. **Accordingly, EARTO as the European RTOs network, remains ready to work with you and your services for the setting-up and implementation of your Investment Package.**

Remaining at your disposal for further dialogue,

Yours sincerely,



Ms Maria Khorsand  
President  
EARTO

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***EARTO - European Association of Research and Technology Organisations***

*EARTO is the European trade association of the research and technology organisations (RTOs), a non-profit organisation founded in 1999. EARTO groups over 350 RTOs with a combined staff of 150,000, an annual turnover of €23 billion, special equipment and facilities to a value of many €billions and more than 100,000 customers from the public and private sectors annually.*

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