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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

of the Interim Evaluation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

{SWD(2017) 351 final}

Executive summary

This Staff Working Document (SWD) presents the results of the interim evaluation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)¹ for the period 2011-2015. It is based on an independent evaluation report prepared by external experts, as well as on other sources of evidence, inter alia the Commissioner Navracsics' HLG report² and the ECA performance report³. The evaluation has taken into account the specific EIT objectives associated with the Horizon 2020 Regulation⁴.

The EIT model, comprising the EIT and its Knowledge Innovation Communities (KICs), is valid and working well. The EIT remains strongly **relevant** through its focus on societal challenges and innovation addressing main barriers such as lack of entrepreneurial culture, low level of cooperation between academia and industry, and insufficient development of human capital.

Regarding **effectiveness**, the EIT has successfully supported innovation in Europe via entrepreneurship, support to hundreds of start-ups, providing access to cross-border networks and to seed and growth funding. The first-wave⁵ KICs' activities are leading towards visible results.

The Knowledge Triangle, encompassing education, business and research, is a key feature of the EIT model. Its integration at strategic, organisational and operational levels shows promising results in terms of flows of knowledge and information, new types of cooperation and less fragmentation within sectors.

The **impact** of the EIT and KICs is to be seen through the open, pan-European networks of key players built in education, business and research sectors, as well as the good results achieved in terms of creating new or improved products, services and processes. However, KICs' impact so far, is primarily limited to their ecosystems and this is an area where further improvements are needed.

The overall knowledge and awareness about the EIT and its community are still insufficient and need to be expanded in the future. The KPIs that measure the impact of the KICs and demonstrate the aggregate effects of the EIT model need to be further elaborated and improved. Despite the progress achieved, EIT's education activities need to further expand and have stronger impact at European level.

In terms of **coherence**, the EIT fills a gap and fits well within the European innovation landscape. It operates in line with the EU innovation objectives. The EIT model complements national and subnational innovation initiatives and capacities. The increasing coherence between the EIT and other EU innovation policy initiatives and instruments at implementation level is not yet matched at programming level.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 as amended by the Regulation (EU) No 1292/2013.

² https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/eit-hlg-final-report_en.pdf

³ http://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/SR16_04/SR_EIT_EN.pdf

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013

⁵ First wave KICs comprises: EIT Digital, EIT Innoenergy, EIT Climate-KIC.

Despite their efforts to cooperate with national and regional authorities, KICs still need to improve their integration into local innovation ecosystems.

The EIT model is unique. It provides **EU added value** by combining cross-border operations of the KICs, local presence through its collocation centres and long term commitment of its partners in addressing societal challenges at European level.

As to **efficiency**, the EIT administrative costs are low and in line with those of the H2020 Executive Agencies. Over the last few years, considerable improvements have been made at EIT central management level as well as in the management of KIC operations. However, the administrative burden on the KICs in managing EU grants has to be further reduced.

EIT carefully monitors the progress of KICs in implementing their financial strategies. However, it is still too early to draw conclusions on KICs' capacity to achieve financial sustainability.

Following a rather difficult start-up phase, the EIT is now beginning to deliver concrete results on a scale which has the potential to actively contribute to Europe's evolving innovation landscape and bring about lasting change in its various fields of action.