



Agenda

Regional Innovation Impact of Universities in Europe

[Online event](#)

18th June 2021

**The European Commission's
science and knowledge service**

Joint Research Centre

Regional Innovation Impact of Universities in Europe

Background

Many universities in Europe make major contributions to their home towns, metropolitan areas and regions. But how important are they exactly? What is their actual socio-economic impact on the local environment and communities? How active are they in terms of collaborating with business enterprises and contributing to regional innovation systems? Can universities expand or intensify those connections and interactions? How can we incentivise them to do more?

The European Commission has been supporting different initiatives to understand the multiple ways in which higher education can contribute to their local surroundings and region. This includes understanding their role in Smart Specialisation Strategies, developing frameworks to assess higher education impact in their regions, and boosting their innovation and entrepreneurial capacity through a new EIT initiative. The 2021-2027 financial framework will provide new opportunities for higher education contributions to skills for Smart Specialisation Strategies, industrial transitions and entrepreneurship with the use of European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Funds.

Objective

Driven by European Union (EU) policy challenges, the event centres its attention on one specific feature of their impact profile: their 'regional innovation impact' (RII). How do universities engage with, and directly contribute to, 'regional innovation systems' from an RII viewpoint? The recently published book ["Regional Innovation Impact of Universities"](#), focuses on one specific feature of the impact profile of universities: their 'regional innovation impact'. The book further elaborates a previously introduced [Regional Innovation Impact Assessment Framework](#), building on a series of pilot studies of the framework, by some 20 universities across Europe, to explore its potential application by both universities and policymakers.

The event will bring together national and regional policymakers, higher education institutions and international experts interested in exploring how universities can increase their regional engagement and impact using the Regional Innovation Assessment Framework.

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13:00-13:15

Welcome

Mikel Landabaso, Director, Joint Research Centre

Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, Director, DG Education, Youth, Sports and Culture

Peter Berkowitz, Head of Unit, DG Regional and Urban Policy

13:15-14:00

Introducing “Regional Innovation impact of Universities”

Chair: Dominique Foray, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale Lausanne

- The Regional Innovation Impact Assessment (RIIA) Framework
Robert Tijssen, Leiden University
- Testing the framework on universities in Europe: lessons learned
John Edwards, CIS NOVA
- Advancing the framework and scope for implementation
Koen Jonkers, Joint Research Centre

Questions and open discussion with participants

14:00-15:00

Panel discussion about the relevance and applicability of the RIIA framework

Chair: Fernando Hervás, Deputy Head of Unit, Joint Research Centre

- Per Michael Johansen, Rector Aalborg University, Denmark
- Maria Jose Figueras Salvat, Rector Rovira I Virgil University, Spain
- Beata Lubos, Director department for Innovation at Ministry of Economy, Labour and Technology, Poland
- Francesc-Xavier Grau, former Secretary for universities and research, Catalan government
- Stephane Berghmans, Director for Research & Innovation, European University Association
- John Goddard, Emeritus Professor of Regional Development Studies at Newcastle University

15:00-15:10

Closure

Fernando Hervás, Deputy Head of Unit, Joint Research Centre