

Zagreb, 24 February 2020

EIT Awareness Day – Powering Croatia’s innovation talent

Zagreb, 24 February 2020 – How can innovation effectively tackle global challenges from climate change and sustainable energy to healthy living and urban mobility? The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) presents proven ways to increase Croatia’s innovation potential and bring tangible solutions to pressing challenges facing Europe.

The event, co-organised with the Croatian Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts under the auspice of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union is an opportunity to benefit from and join Europe’s largest innovation network of more than 1500 leading business, research and education organisations – the EIT Community.

Innovators and firm investments are the strongest innovation dimensions in Croatia as presented in the European Commission’s Innovation Scoreboard. Croatia scores well on Non-R&D innovation expenditures, SMEs with marketing or organisational innovations, and enterprises providing ICT training. Yet untapped opportunities for Croatia to expand its innovation capacity remain and that is exactly where the EIT comes in.

The EIT is Europe’s most proven innovation engine powering European talents to turn their best ideas into products, services and jobs. The EIT Awareness Day in Zagreb will showcase the EIT’s unique innovation approach and present how organisations, entrepreneurs, innovators and students in Croatia can join and benefit from the EIT Community network, investment and activities.

The event will open with introductions from **Darko Horvat**, Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts and **Blaženka Divjak**, Minister of Education and Science and **Ognian Zlatev**, Head of the European Commission Representation in Croatia.

Darko Horvat, Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts: *‘Innovations have no alternative in today’s competitive economy. We need to support our entrepreneurs and innovators in a process of creating and turning great ideas into concrete products or services, now more than ever. I am pleased to see the recent positive growth of investments in research and development in Croatia, but we feel that we can achieve so much more with a common clear vision and close co-operation. I believe that with EIT, Europe’s largest innovation network, we can accomplish just that.’*

Blaženka Divjak, Minister of Education and Science: *‘The EIT Awareness Day, during the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, is a great opportunity for Croatian talent. Entrepreneurial skills are driving the modern economy and the EIT successfully powers the transition from student to entrepreneur. What’s more, EIT education creates change makers that find solutions to pressing challenges, from climate change to digitalisation. This is exactly what Croatia needs.’*

Martin Kern, EIT Director: *“Croatia can be proud of the progress made in the development of its innovation capacity since it joined the EU. Today is the day to focus on Croatia’s innovation talent and to better connect them to Europe’s largest innovation ecosystem with more than 1 500 partners and 50 innovation hubs across Europe. I encourage all Croatian entrepreneurs passionate about delivering innovation to benefit from the EIT’s programmes which provide, among others, entrepreneurial skills development, business creation and acceleration services. We want you to be part of a growing and dynamic community that is jointly tackling Europe’s challenges.”*

A PRESS POINT featuring **Darko Horvat**, Minister of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts; **Blaženka Divjak**, Minister of Education and Science, **Romana Jordan**, Member of the EIT Governing Board and **Martin Kern**, EIT Director will take place **at 09.30**. Please find the event’s agenda [here](#)

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BACKGROUND: EIT- MAKING INNOVATION HAPPEN!

What is the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)?

The EIT was created in 2008 to power Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT is the only EU initiative to fully integrate business, education and research. We are Europe's largest innovation community with more than 1,500 partners and 50 innovation hubs across Europe. The Institute boosts the development of dynamic pan-European partnerships between leading universities, research labs and companies. These are called Innovation Communities and each focus on a specific global challenge. **More information:** <https://eit.europa.eu/who-we-are/eit-glance>

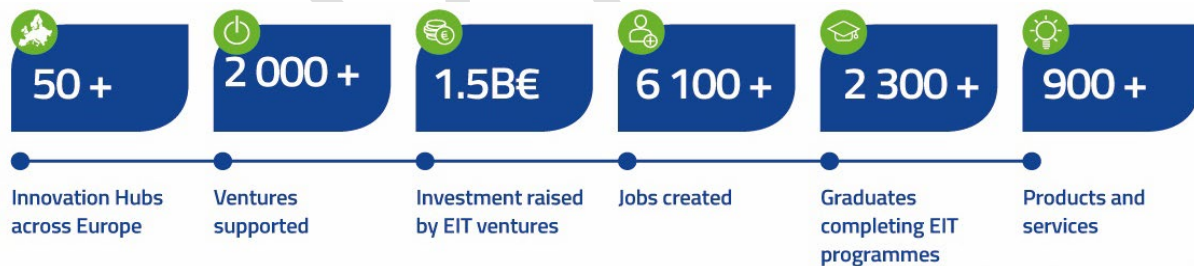
What challenges do the EIT's Innovation Communities focus on?

The EIT's eight Innovation Communities work to:

- accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy ([EIT Climate-KIC](#))
- drive Europe's digital transformation ([EIT Digital](#))
- lead the global revolution in food innovation and production ([EIT Food](#)),
- give EU citizens greater opportunities to enjoy a healthy life ([EIT Health](#)),
- achieve a sustainable energy future for Europe ([EIT InnoEnergy](#))
- strengthen and increase the competitiveness of Europe's manufacturing industry ([EIT Manufacturing](#))
- develop raw materials into a major strength for Europe ([EIT RawMaterials](#))
- solve mobility challenges of our cities ([EIT Urban Mobility](#))

Together with their leading partners, they offer a wide range of innovation and entrepreneurship activities. This includes education courses that combine technical and entrepreneurial skills, business creation and acceleration services and innovation-driven research projects.

What has the EIT achieved?



* figures September 2019

Meet talented EIT Community innovators and entrepreneurs: [EIT Community Success Stories](#)

EIT Community in Croatia



More information on [EIT Community activities in Croatia](#).

For more information on the EIT visit eit.europa.eu & follow the EIT on Twitter @EITeu