

Response from Centre for Enterprise

Impact on the national interest

1. Where has EU action had a **positive impact** for the UK on research, technological development, innovation or space? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action encouraged national action in any areas? EU support for innovation in cluster development has helped the UK improve the quality and effectiveness of its cluster organisations and innovation networks. It has also helped the UK to enhance its reputation in the field of cluster development and innovation in service industries. There is evidence in the involvement of UK cluster organisations in collaborative projects, eg in creative industries and technical textiles, and the benefits to businesses in these industries. UK universities have been particularly effective in participating in FP7 projects, which has led to a considerable enhancement of the UK research base.
2. Where has EU action had a **negative impact** for the UK in these fields? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action prevented potentially useful national action in any areas? I am not aware of any negative impact.
3. How, and where, has UK engagement with partner countries or international bodies, both within and outside the EU, been helped or hindered by EU involvement? Participation by UK universities and cluster organisations in EU programmes has helped considerably to raise their profile in Europe and has made it easier to initiate new collaborations and realise business opportunities.
4. What benefits or difficulties has the objective of a European research area (ERA) delivered for the UK?
5. How has the EU sought to coordinate the policy instruments at its disposal across different policy areas to create an enabling environment for researchers and innovators? How successful has this been? The Europe 2020 strategy and its related strategy documents have attempted to coordinate policy instruments across different policy areas. It is too early to say how effective this will be in practice. Some of the new thinking from Europe 2020 shows that the strategic thinking in different policy areas is similar, eg there is much in common between smart specialisation and emerging (or more precisely evolving) industries, but these still need to be joined up.

Future opportunities and challenges

6. What could the EU most helpfully do to promote scientific and technological progress and innovation (including in the space sector)?
 - How could the EU use its existing competence differently to deliver more in your area? More support for cluster policy development

- How might a greater or lesser degree of EU competence deliver more in your area? The role of the European Commission in research, technological development, innovation and space is to develop effective support programmes for the relevant businesses, academics and policy makers. This involves working with those technical experts, businesses and government organisations within member states, who have in-depth knowledge of the key topics and who can help to define the support programmes. The European Commission therefore needs improve the ways that it identifies individual experts and sets up panels of experts to produce forward-looking programmes that will make a significant difference to Europe.
 - How could improvements to existing EU activities make them more effective and efficient? Reduce bureaucracy and paperwork. A single core application form should be introduced for all EU programmes from DG Research, DG Enterprise, DG Regio, etc. Projects that start with research funded through Horizon 2020 often need to move on to commercialisation funded by INTERREG etc. The transition from one EU programme to another should be seamless through better coordination of the timing and priorities in the programmes and streamlining the application processes and documentation.
7. Where might future EU level action be detrimental to your work in this area? A lack of action to reduce bureaucracy and paperwork would be detrimental.
 8. Where might action at national rather than EU level be more appropriate / effective? National level action should address the overconcentration of business headquarters and research infrastructure in London and the South East. This overinflates costs and pressure on accommodation and makes it more difficult for excellent research to be commercialised in the UK, especially in manufacturing industries. National level action is more appropriate for opportunities that are local or confined to the UK. This applies in particular to smart specialisation strategies although these have to identify opportunities for trans-national collaboration as well as addressing local opportunities. Overall, the principles of subsidiarity should apply although there may be occasions where EU funding is needed to overcome a shortfall in local/national funding.
 9. How could EU and national policies and funding streams interact better? There should be better coordination of the timing and priorities of the programmes. This would make it easier to match national and EU funding where appropriate, and make the transition between national and EU level support programmes easier.
 10. What impact would any future enlargement of the EU have on this area of competence? The impact of future enlargement of the EU on the promotion of science and innovation would be minimal as all of the current accession countries already participate in the EU funding programmes. Enlargement of the EU would benefit UK businesses by increasing the market opportunities for their products and services.

11. Are there any other points you wish to make which are not captured above?