

INESC BRUSSELS HUB

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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PUTTING IT IN CONTEXT

In times of uncertainty and change we need to put things in context through factual, real information to build our knowledge and support future decisions.

In this edition of the HUB newsletter, we focus on providing a concrete update on what is being done at European level and at the HUB to facilitate and accelerate INESC institutes adaptation to the new reality.

We also keep things going with ease and naturally: policies keep coming out, activities are ongoing.



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CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

Change is unavoidable and sometimes is accelerated. It is the case today because of the coronavirus pandemic. However, life will go on, research will continue to need funding, it will always be a core area of European action and budget, it will not become simpler and it will continue to depend on networks, priority alignment and specific processes, rules and ways of doing things. As it has always been, in Europe and everywhere else. How, then, to characterise the change we are living through and have to adapt to? Some major trends are already under way, some others will come in the future. Several foresight and anticipation studies point to:

- a) Diminished mobility and a crisis in tourism;
- b) Increasing measures to promote green economy;
- c) Increasing virtualisation of the economy and digitalisation of currencies, as well as radical reform of the financial system and disruption of current banking sectors.

There are other trends and power struggles, of course. Among which, of relevance to the future of the European project is that related with governance: there is already and will be even more evident as time passes a reinforced power struggle between supranational, national and even regional political authorities. Populist leaders will use the pandemic to reinforce their grip, others will argue in favour of the clear evidence that these type of threats call for more European integration and an European government.

Research and innovation is and will be among the issues that will continue to see its supranational and international role reinforced. When BREXIT happened research was quickly put among the topics that will have preferential treatment. The UK will continue to collaborate with the EU and the EU Member States will continue to collaborate among themselves and with third countries.

As for us, at INESC institutes, [in the words of the Chair of the HUB's Management Committee, in BIP Magazine](#) “it is time to redirect our attention towards the outside, to our position and our intervention in the country as a whole, in its economy and alongside its citizens; as well as towards our partners and customers, and all the collaborative actions at hand.”.

NEWS FROM THE INESC UNIVERSE

HUB IS ACCELERATING ONLINE PROJECTS AND SERVICES

At the HUB we are aware the current coronavirus pandemic is accelerating the transition to a more digital European representation, agenda-setting, capacity building and policy analysis. We also believe that, exactly because of this trend:

- a) The importance of maintaining close personal contact and physical presence in Brussels will be reinforced;
- b) Reinforcing visibility and consistent representation and active voice in key issues of strategic importance is even more crucial;
- c) Training and capacity building at both institutional level and researcher-level, needs to be accelerated;
- d) Preparing adequately, through sound policy and programme knowledge is core to future success.

In this way, the HUB's Policy and Operations Board has decided to accelerate some of the activities it had already planned, such as training (i.e. training for European Research Council, Marie Curie and European Innovation Council successful applications), foresight (INESC Future Tech initiative), policy focus in 2020 (synergies and gender balance) and start discussing with the INESC community and the HUB's Management Committee the increase of the thematic work groups from 2 (Health Technologies and AI and Robotics are the current ones) to 4 (with two other themes being analysed).

Moreover, it will accelerate the implementation of online tools for:

- Project partner search – making use of targeted approaches through the Brussels representatives networks;
- Communication:
 - o Launching a series of online workshops instead of the physical ones it had planned and align them completely with the thematic work groups suggested actions and transversal importance strategic topics defined by the Management Committee and the Policy and Operations Board.
 - o Launching its online presence in the first semester 2020, guaranteeing that the new website will be ready (inescbrusselshub.org), social network pages will be active (LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter);
 - o Launching a new initiative, a series of podcasts, called the "The Insider" – see article below for further information.

THE INSIDER – A NEW PODCAST ABOUT RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN EUROPE, THE PEOPLE AND THE INSTITUTIONS THAT MAKE IT HAPPEN

Made in Brussels, by INESC Brussels HUB. The first five episodes are ready and will be launched every Wednesday from 8th of April onwards. For now, we will let our one minute teaser speak for itself. The first five episodes are interviews with the HUB Management Committee directors. They are a way to know a little bit more about the persons that strongly contribute to set the direction of travel of our 5 INESC institutes and the HUB itself, of course.

[Check the teaser here and subscribe](#) to get a notification of publication of each episode when released.

We would also like to receive your feedback, questions and suggestions. Please use the HUB contacts at the end of this newsletter.



INESC TEC PART OF PROJECT WITH MORE THAN €2.5M TO SUPPORT SMES IN THE AGRI-FOOD AND FORESTRY SECTORS

The European project agROBOfood launched its first call, aimed at funding additional Innovation Experiments. The Open Call for Innovation Experiments is open until May 31, and it aims to encourage the adoption of robotics in the agri-food and forestry sectors. You can obtain additional information emailing info@agrobofood.eu and filipe.n.santos@inesctec.pt or by subscribing to the agROBOfood newsletter.

INESC TEC AND INESC ID PART OF EUROPEAN NETWORK OF EXCELLENCE IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



Two teams of researchers from INESC, INESC TEC's Artificial Intelligence and Decision Support Laboratory (LIAAD) and INESC ID's Research Group on AI for People and the Society and Instituto Superior Técnico, will participate in the European network HumanE-AI-Net. The project aims to develop a new scientific approach to make Artificial Intelligence more humanised, consistent with European and universal values and closer to citizens. This network, composed of top European laboratories and researchers in Artificial Intelligence (AI), was one of five recently approved in the ICT-48 call, and it aims to take an important step in the European AI strategy promoted by the European Commission, thus consolidating scientific connections in Europe.

CATARINA BELÉM RECEIVED MARIA DE LOURDES PINTASILGO AWARD 2019

In March this year, Instituto Superior Técnico (IST) attributed the Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo Award to former INESC ID fellow Catarina Belém, in the category Young Alumni. This prize rewards, annually, since 2016, two women graduated at Instituto Superior Técnico. Catarina Belém is currently Research Data Scientist at Feedzai.



INESC MN RESEARCHER SUSANA CARDOSO GIVES VOICE TO EPISODE #776 OF ANTENA 1 RADIO SHOW CALLED '90 SEGUNDOS DE CIÊNCIA'

Susana talks about how each electron has its own rotation direction, known as spin up or spin down, and how these characteristics of electrons can be filtered, in order to develop sensors able to detect small magnetic fields. Susana Cardoso's research group is studying how these sensors can be applied in common electronic devices from Automotive industry to Biomedicine. [The interview is available here.](#)

INESC COIMBRA PAPER ALIGNED WITH RESPONSE TO HORIZON EUROPE MISSION AREAS

INESC Coimbra's published a paper entitled [Mapping marine litter using UAS on a beach-dune system: a multidisciplinary approach](#) and was selected by Elsevier as editor choice for its "Focus on Global Macro- and Micro-Plastic Litter Pollution in Coastal Waters, Beaches, Rivers and Lakes and Climate Change Influence". The paper is also a potential contribution to agenda-setting of Horizon Europe Missions on [Adaptation to climate change including societal transformation](#) and [Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters](#).

POLICY AND STRATEGY

COMMON EUROPEAN RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

A summary of the European Commission's response to the Coronavirus outbreak:

1. Health measures, including:
 - a. Ramping up production of personal and protective equipment, among several other measures, the EC launched 4 co-funded calls/procurements of personal protective equipment and testing kits and will build up a stockpile of medical equipment to be distributed where it is most needed. This is already being done through the RescEU civil protection mechanism.
 - b. Structure green lanes to ensure speedy and continuous flows of goods across the EU and implementation of border management measure across Europe;
 - c. Support repatriation of EU citizens;
 - d. The EIB (European Investment Bank) Group will aim to create an additional €20 billion of investment in small and medium-sized businesses, partly using its own capital and partly backed by the EU budget;
 - e. The Commission made available €1 billion in an EU budget guarantee to the European Investment Fund (EIF), so it can provide liquidity to SMEs, mobilising €8 billion in all to help at least 100,000 companies;
 - f. The Commission's proposal for an investment initiative of €37 billion has been approved. It consists of unused cohesion policy funds, and it involves the bringing forward of expenditure and redirecting it to the fight against the coronavirus;
 - g. After a proposal from the European Commission, the EU Solidarity Fund would now be able to provide support to Member States affected by public health crises like the one caused by the coronavirus;
 - h. The main fiscal response to the coronavirus will come from Member States' national budgets. The Commission has adopted temporary state aid rules so governments can provide liquidity to the economy;
 - i. The European Commission has triggered the 'escape clause' to allow exceptional fiscal support. This will allow applying the maximum flexibility to budgetary rules to help national governments financially support healthcare systems and businesses, and to keep people in employment during the crisis;
 - j. The Commission's economic measures will complement the European Central Bank's €750 billion Pandemic Emergency Purchase Programme of private and public securities during the crisis, in addition to the €120 billion programme decided earlier;
 - k. The Commission issued guidelines to help Member States screen foreign direct investments and acquisitions of control or influence. The aim is to protect critical European assets and technology in the current crisis;
 - l. Setting up a group of 7 independent epidemiologists and virologists that are working with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to provide the policy orientations to follow in the health domain, namely:
 - i. Response measures across Member States;
 - ii. Gaps in clinical management;
 - iii. Prioritisation processes for critical services;
 - iv. Policy measures for long-term consequences of coronavirus.
 - m. The Commission is articulating with social media platforms and traditional media to promote authoritative content and fight disinformation: So far more than 110 disinformation narratives on the coronavirus were exposed, published and updated on www.EUvsDisinfo.eu.

WHAT ABOUT THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RESEARCH, INCLUDING RESEARCH FOR A VACCINE?

1. The Commission has mobilised €140 million to develop vaccines, new treatments, diagnostic tests and medical systems.
2. 18 projects involving 140 research teams were selected to receive €48.5 million; from the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation funding programme.
3. The Innovative Medicines Initiative launched an emergency call funded by up to €45 million from Horizon 2020, to be matched by the pharma industry.
4. The Commission has offered CureVac, a highly innovative European vaccine developer, up to €80 million of support in the form of an EU guarantee of an EIB loan. The company aims to launch clinical testing of a vaccine by June 2020.
5. An European Innovation Council Accelerator call of €164 million has attracted a significant number of start-ups and SMEs with innovations that could also help tackle the pandemic.

CORONA VIRUS KNOWLEDGE HUB – LATEST RESEARCH ARTICLES, INFORMATION AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The [Frontiers Coronavirus Knowledge Hub](#) provides an up-to-date source of trusted information and analysis on COVID-19 and coronaviruses, including the latest research articles, information, and commentary from our world-class scientific community. Frontiers has also waived Article Processing Charges (APCs) and established a priority peer-review process for manuscripts submitted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will further help ensure robust scientific research becomes openly available as soon as possible, for other researchers to build on and to enable evidence-based and factual decision-making for public authorities worldwide.

CALL FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY OPEN WITH €64 MILLION – DEADLINE 10 SEPTEMBER

The funding is available for proposals submitted under 10 topics addressing 5 main areas: buildings, innovative finance, public authorities, consumers and services. The call is managed by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises of the European Commission (EASME). All proposals for Horizon 2020 funding must be submitted through the EU's Funding and Tender Opportunities portal. The video recordings on the specific funding topics are now available for viewing together with presentations on the EU policy context and guidance from EASME on how to submit an excellent proposal. [More information here](#).

OECD AI POLICY OBSERVATORY NOW FULLY OPERATIONAL

[OECD.AI](#) aims to help countries and others shape policy and institutional frameworks for the development of trustworthy AI that benefits society as a whole, guided by the OECD AI Principles. It also has an [AI powered COVID-19 watch](#) and a [monitor on AI research publications](#), around the world.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION LAUNCHES “A EUROPE FIT FOR THE DIGITAL AGE STRATEGY”

The [Europe Fit for the Digital Age](#) strategy is focused on three areas:

1. [Excellence and trust in artificial intelligence](#)

Of particular relevance we emphasise the proposals to “promote excellence in AI”:

- set-up a new public-private partnership in AI and robotics
- strengthen and connect AI research excellence centres
- have at least one digital innovation hub per member state specialised in AI
- provide more equity financing for development and use of AI, with the help of the European Investment Fund
- use AI to make public procurement processes more efficient
- support the procurement of AI systems by public bodies

In the previous edition of this newsletter we already presented this part of the strategy and the launch of the [White Paper on Artificial Intelligence: a European approach to excellence and trust](#). The Work Group Robotics and AI is working on this paper.

- ### 2. [European Data Strategy](#): the goal is to create a single market for data. The strategy was also announced in February and mentioned in our previous issue of the newsletter.
- ### 3. [European Industrial Strategy](#): the goal is to combine measures to promote transition to climate neutrality and digital leadership. This includes [A New Industrial Strategy for Europe](#) and [The SME strategy for a sustainable digital Europe](#).

The strategy reflects the political guidelines of European Commission’s President von der Leyen’s twin goals: digital transition and the [green deal \(official and full communication of the Commission to the Parliament and Council\)](#). An overview of the strategy allows to highlight emphasis on:

- Safeguarding social, labour and environmental standards;
- Attract foreign direct investment (FDI);
- Transform traditional sectors in a “green way” and ensure the same for growth of all others;

It is also clear that there is a specific preoccupation with ensuring secure supply of clean and affordable energy and raw materials and it refers to a step-up in investment in research and innovation and infrastructures in this domain. The strategy establishes a clear relation between the transition to digital and the greenification of industry and places very high emphasis in ensuring the single market implementation and barriers elimination. “The proposal for the new Just Transition Mechanism will mobilise €100 billion to ensure a fair transition for carbon intensive regions as they continue to transform their industries and economies.”.

It acknowledges the need to have a more strategic approach to renewable energies and smart sector integration as the basis for a future Commission vision on clean hydrogen and smart mobility. It also refers to the [New Circular Economy Action Plan](#), which brings forward a series of measures to promote “clean industry”.

It incentivizes research and innovation investment to counter the decline over the last 5 years vis-à-vis the US and Chinese counter-parts and says that it needs to have innovation strategy as the heart of the new industrial strategy overall, emphasizing the need to accept failure along the way, better regulation and strategic foresight, the role of PPPs – Public Private Partnerships “to help industry develop the technologies to meet their goals, as has successfully been done in industrial alliances.” and encourage place-based innovation and experimentation, bringing forth the role of regions, smart specialization strategies and Digital Innovation Hubs.

Finally, it highlights the and presents some actions for promoting reskilling, reinforcing an European Research and Education Area.

SELECTED EUROPEAN JOB OPPORTUNITIES

INESC BRUSSELS HUB HIRING AN ASSISTANT POLICY & COMMUNICATION OFFICER

The work will be developed in the INESC Brussels HUB office, located in the heart of the European Quarter, in Brussels, in a small team but interacting daily with other EU representations, researchers and research managers from all over Europe and European institutions, as well as with over 1500 researchers and technical support staff across 5 INESC institutes in Portugal and beyond.

We are looking for a dynamic, pro-active and motivated colleague with excellent planning, organisational and communication skills. The position requires discretion, team spirit, initiative, flexibility and reliability. We seek a candidate who pays attention to detail and has the ability to adjust to fast-changing priorities, is not scared of engaging in multi-tasking and is willing to contribute and learn. The role will include diversified tasks, from administrative support and organisation of events to communication and R&I advisory support duties, in a broad range of thematic areas.

Crucial pre-requisites are a BA/BSc in any discipline, excellent spoken and written english and desirable pre-requisites are communication and design skills as well as knowledge of European research and innovation policy processes and management.

We offer a full-time contract, health insurance and a competitive salary compatible with experience and role in Brussels. Applications should be sent to the Head of INESC Brussels HUB, Ricardo Migueis, until 15th May (ricardo.migueis@inesc.pt).

EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE – SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES IN MUNICH AND THE HAGUE

The European Patent Office has several opportunities open, from traineeships to the Head of Council Secretariat. [See all opportunities here with deadlines from mid-april to mid-may.](#)

THE GOOD FOOD INSTITUTE – HEAD OF POLICY AND PROJECT MANAGER

The Good Food Institute Brussels is looking for a Head of Policy and a Project Manager for a growing team based in Brussels. [More information here.](#)

EUROPEAN UNION AGENCY OF CYBERSECURITY – CALL FOR TEMPORARY AGENTS

Based in Athens, Greece, the Agency is recruiting temporary agents (3 + 3 years). 12 experts will be recruited immediately to start work in 2020 and potentially 6 experts with a starting date of 01.01.2021 to support the Agency's activities in one or more of the following areas, pursuant to Chapter II of Regulation (EU) 2019/881 - Cybersecurity Act (CSA): Article 5: Development and implementation of Union policy and law; Article 6: Capacity-building; Article 7: Operational cooperation at Union level; Article 8: Market, cybersecurity certification and standardisation; Article 9: Knowledge and information; Article 10: Awareness-raising and education; Article 11: Research and innovation; Article 12: International cooperation. Deadline is 24 April. Applications via email to HRjobs@enisa.europa.eu. More information [here](#) and [here](#).



THE HUB IS YOURS, WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT

The HUB is yours. For any enquiries about services available, your main contact is your institutional contact point in the the HUB's Policy and Operations Board (POB). The list of institutional contact points per institution is:

- INESC Coimbra: [Luís Neves](#)
- INESC ID: [Filipa Borrego](#)
- INESC INOV: [Elisabete Carreira](#)
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Are you a partner or coordinate a European project?

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