

**Oral Question on innovation partnerships within the Innovation Union
flagship initiative**

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Intervention by Danuta Hübner, Chair of the Committee on Regional
Development

Over the last years a lot has already been said about innovation and it has become a symbol of a policy instrument that can fix all our problems. There are huge expectations and we must deliver. The time has come to be more pragmatic now.

Without doubt, innovation can play a fundamental role in reinvigorating growth in the European economy. But for this to happen, we need a concrete, strong and joint public-private effort.

This effort should aim at improving framework conditions, access to financing and re-focusing innovation policy. But what matters most now is time. We must move quickly and decisively from ambition to action, identifying and eliminating factors that hinder innovation, but first and foremost designing effective new policy instruments. European innovation partnership can be such an instrument, potentially excellent.

To put the first European innovation partnership in action, we should act with urgency. Our approach should be learning by doing and use good practice that exists.

Today, innovation is usually born within a well functioning innovation system where regions play a key role. This means that we can accelerate the move toward an innovation-based economy by fully exploiting the potential of the current cohesion policy investment in innovation (85 billion Euro) as well as its

future, post-2013 commitment to smart growth. Cohesion policy can make innovation work across all member states and regions.