



Press Release

TU9 and TU Austria Set Key Impulses for Europe's Innovation Future in Brussels

Technical Universities focus on opportunities and challenges
of the 10th EU Research and Innovation Framework Programme (2028-2034)

Brussels, March 3, 2026

On March 2, 2026, around 100 high-ranking representatives from the EU Parliament and EU institutions, European university associations and industry accepted the joint invitation from TU9 - German Universities of Technology and TU Austria to attend the discussion "Next MFF - From Policy to Practice. How Technical Universities Drive Europe's R&I Impact" in Brussels.

The event focused on the ongoing negotiations for the next EU Research and Innovation Framework Programme (FP10), the intended integration with the planned European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), and the question of how Technical Universities can further strengthen their role as bridge builders between basic research, industrial application, and societal benefit.

Angela Ittel, President of TU Braunschweig and TU9 Co-President, and Peter Middendorf, Rector of University of Stuttgart and TU9 Co-President, emphasized:

"As strong networks of Technical Universities in successful innovation ecosystems, we are committed to an independent, internationally compatible FP10. It is Europe's most important instrument for excellent and cooperative research and innovation. Together with Erasmus+, the ECF, and good connections between these instruments, it strengthens the EU's competitiveness in the long term. This also includes attracting and retaining talent in Europe. Our research-based education, doctoral training, and lifelong learning are clear competitive advantages in this regard."

Jens Schneider, Rector of TU Wien and President of TU Austria, added:

"In order to secure Europe's technological sovereignty in the long term, consistent investment in research, talent, and innovation spaces is needed. Technical Universities are ready to contribute their expertise and strong partnerships so that FP10 and ECF can jointly create tangible added value for science and industry."

Technical Universities: Focus on Innovation, Excellence und European Competitiveness

The high-profile program included keynote speeches by Maive Rute, Deputy Director-General DG GROW, and Anastasios Kentarchos, Advisor to the Director at the Common Policy Centre DG RTD. Both highlighted the importance of close coordination between the EU research programme, industrial competitiveness, and sustainable added value in Europe.

In the following interactive discussion – moderated by Mattias Björnmalm (Secretary General of CESAER) – Angela Ittel, Jens Schneider, Maive Rute, Anastasios Kentarchos, and experts from the audience discussed key questions about FP10 and ECF, including:

- how FP10 can become a driving force for technological growth and European resilience
- what role the ECF should play in strengthening European industrial capacities
- how to balance advancing excellence, mission orientation, and geopolitical challenges
- what instruments are needed to strengthen technology transfer, deep tech start-ups, and innovative ecosystems across Europe

- how Technical Universities can systematically contribute their unique role as research partners, trainers of highly qualified talent, and accelerators of innovation

The participants pointed out that only a well-funded, coherently structured, and strategically coordinated interaction between FP10 and the ECF can further increase Europe's innovative strength and secure its global competitiveness. There was agreement that Europe needs advanced technologies in strategic areas. Combining cutting-edge research with real-world applications is an important way to achieve this.

Technical Universities are strong partners in this endeavor, drawing on over two hundred years of experience. The Presidents of TU9 and TU Austria agree: "We are fully aware of the urgency and importance of the challenges ahead and are ready to intensify our efforts and make our contribution."

About TU9

TU9 is the Alliance of leading Universities of Technology in Germany: RWTH Aachen University, Technische Universität Berlin, Technische Universität Braunschweig, Technical University of Darmstadt, TUD Dresden University of Technology, Leibniz University Hannover, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Technical University of Munich, and University of Stuttgart.

TU9 Universities take special responsibility for the productive and innovative strength of our society and economy. We help shape the future by contributing to digitization and the energy and sustainability transition, to name a few. To this end, we combine our specific expertise in basic research, especially in the natural sciences and engineering, with applied research and innovation. TU9 Universities enjoy an outstanding reputation around the world as renowned research and teaching institutions. As such, they train exceptional young academics for careers in science, business, and administration and assume social responsibility. TU9 Universities foster top-class international networks and diverse cooperation with industry, making them a key element of Germany as a location of science and innovation.

About TU Austria

TU Austria is the Alliance of the three Austrian Universities of Technology - the TU Wien, the Graz University of Technology and the TU Leoben - founded in 2010. Since 2025, the BOKU University, the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences of Johannes Kepler University Linz, and the Faculty of Engineering Sciences at the University of Innsbruck are strengthening TU Austria as associate members.

Under the motto "feel. tech. europe.", the TU Austria-Universities join forces and use synergy effects in order to accomplish more in research, teaching and higher-education policy and to be convincing as a strong partner in the industrial and economic sectors with their cumulative expertise. TU Austria is a strong, internationally networked forum that stands for excellent science, economic relevance, and sustainable development in Austria.

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