

National Innovation Strategy of Finland

**ITIF Event: Benchmarking Leading Countries'
National Innovation Policies**

**Washington, D.C.
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Tekes

- 1) Need for a new innovation strategy**
- 2) Main elements of the new strategy**
- 3) Some recent initiatives**



Background

- Finland has succeeded well in international comparisons of competitiveness
 - high-quality educational system
 - continuous investments in R&D, both public and private
 - networking
- However, in recent years success has been declining
- The economy and society are facing immense pressure for change
 - globalization
 - sustainable development
 - accelerating technological development
 - ageing population



NEW SOLUTIONS ARE NEEDED

Government Response

- **As part of Prime Minister Vanhanen's Government Programme, the Ministry of Employment and Economy was assigned with the task of drawing up a new innovation strategy in 2007**
- **The strategic process involving hundreds of experts from various stakeholders lasted over a year**
 - **also a consultation forum on the internet open to private individuals, companies & other organizations**
- **The steering group of the process submitted its proposal for a national innovation strategy to the Cabinet in June 2008**
- **Based on the proposal the Cabinet gave its innovation political report to the Parliament in October 2008**
- **In May 2009 the Parliament confirmed its support for the guidelines in the report and requested the Cabinet to specify during spring 2010 the measures it plans to take to implement the policies outlined in the report**



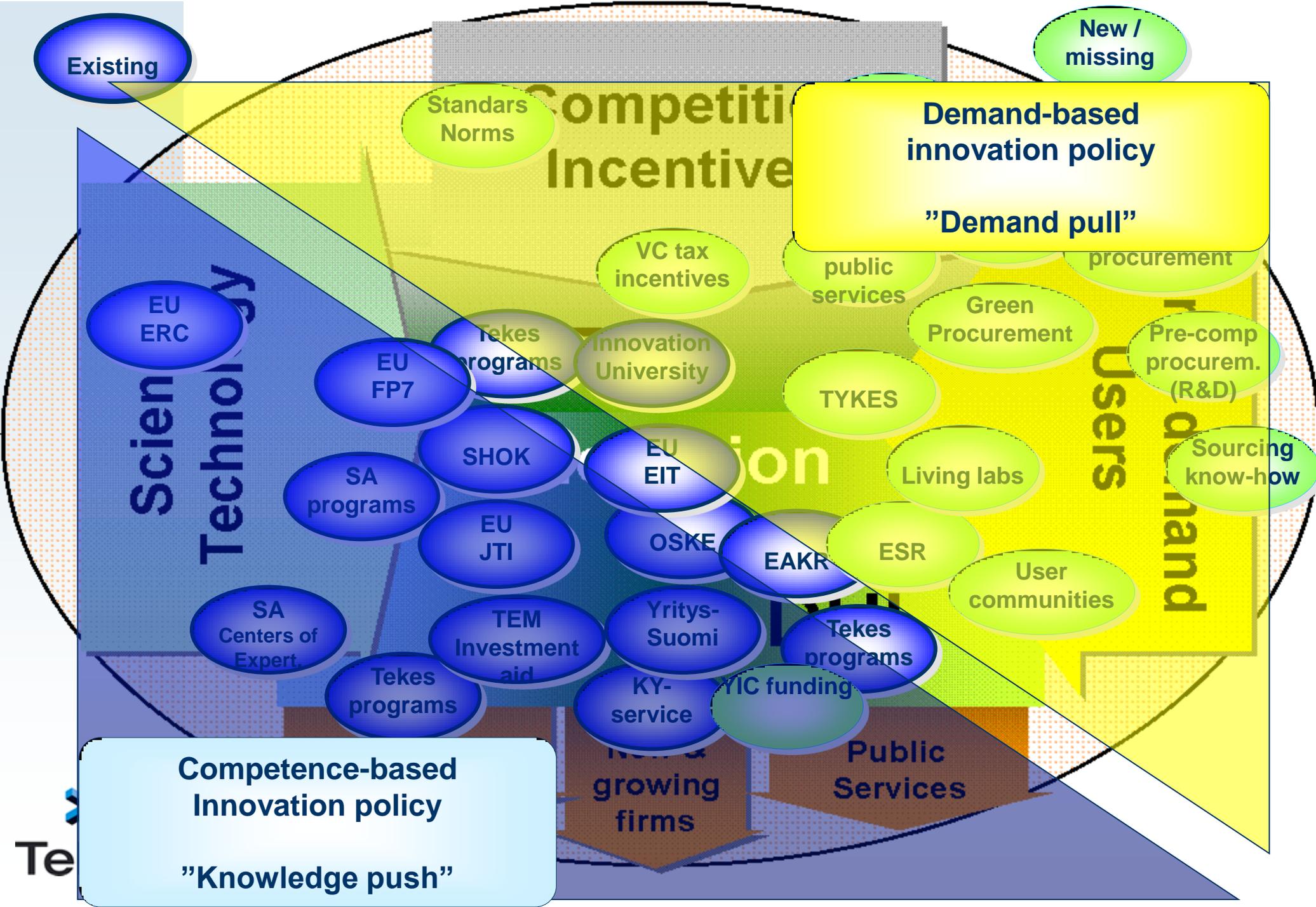
Basic Strategic Choices



Basic Strategic Choices

- **Innovation activity in a world without borders**
 - Finland's success depends on the ability to connect and become positioned in global knowledge and value networks
- **Demand and user orientation**
 - traditional approach to focus on the development and commercialization of new technologies or inventions does not guarantee competitive strength
 - key to competitiveness is the ability to realize the needs of customers and citizens and to offer corresponding solutions before competitors
- **Innovative individuals and communities**
 - innovation capabilities and incentives for individuals as well as creation of innovative communities are critical success factors in the future
- **Systemic approach**
 - innovation policy must be broad-based and comprehensive





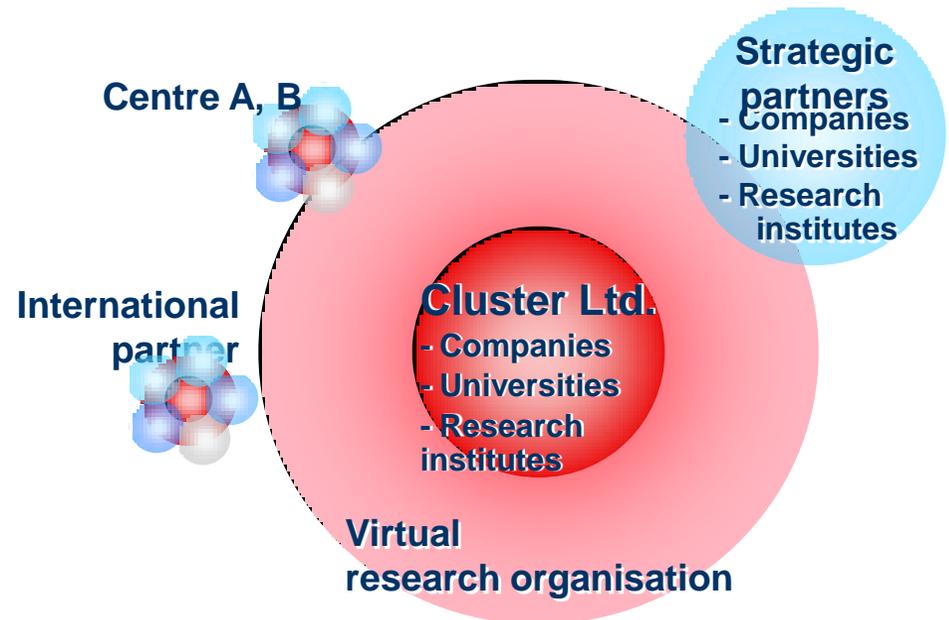
Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation

- Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation will provide a new way of coordinating dispersed research resources to meet targets that are important for Finnish business and society
- The aim is to create new, more efficient framework for collaboration between companies, universities, research organisations and sources of funding
- This will strengthen areas of research and technology that are important to Finland and to create new areas of national competence



Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation

- Centres consist of the coordinating function jointly owned by stakeholders and a virtual research organisation
- A non-profit limited company will be responsible for the centre's operations; the company's shareholders include relevant companies, universities and research institutions
- The parties who are not shareholders can participate in the centre's research programmes and projects
- The company's shareholders will prepare a strategic research agenda for the centre and decide on how the agenda will be carried out
- In addition to shareholders, public funding organisations will commit themselves to providing funding for the centres in the long term



Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation

The following Strategic Centres have been confirmed by the Research and Innovation Council and are now operational

- Energy and the environment
- Forest cluster
- Information and communication industry and services
- Metal products and mechanical engineering
- Built environment
- Health and well-being



Aalto University

- **A full merger of three existing universities**
 - Helsinki School of Economics
 - Helsinki University of Technology
 - University of Art and Design Helsinki
- **Creation of the “innovation university” is one of the flagship projects in the extensive higher education reform being implemented by the Ministry of Education, which will increase the financial and administrative autonomy of the universities**
- **The goal for the new university is to be one of the leading institutions in the world in terms of research and education in its own specialized disciplines by 2020**
- **Operation will start January 1, 2010**



Evaluation of the National Innovation System

- In line with the government's innovation political report, a review of the Finnish innovation system is being carried out in order to identify the kind of changes required for the implementation of the guidelines of the national innovation strategy
 - structures
 - operational models
 - other development measures
- Review work is headed by a panel of internationally recognized experts and conducted by Etlatiето Oy, subsidiary of Research Institute for the Finnish Economy
- To be completed in September 2009



Further information:

National Innovation Strategy

<http://www.tem.fi/en>

Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation

<http://www.tekes.fi/eng/>

Aalto University

www.aaltoyliopisto.info/en/

