

Recommendation Regarding the International RTI Monitor

“The biggest challenge that Austria has to overcome, is to take the step from being an innovation follower to an innovation leader, or from being a country that is engaged in a catching up process to one that produces at the cutting edge of technology, i.e. is a front-runner.” This is how the Austrian Council for Research and Technology Development described Austria’s current objective, which also enjoys broad political support. On the way to becoming a leading European research nation, defined by the government as being one of the three leading states in the European Union, it will be necessary to pay close attention to the development of these leading innovation nations. The Austrian Council therefore suggests continuously monitoring these countries and conducting comparative analyses with Austria.

This monitoring should focus upon the most important areas and key data of the countries concerned. In order to ensure comparability and limit data collection expenses, most of the data to be monitored is extracted from the international statistics of the EU and the OECD. The Austrian Council’s Strategy 2020 and the system evaluation carried out on behalf of the BMVIT and the BMWFJ have shown that in future it will be necessary to concentrate more on research, technology development and innovation output variables. Internationally, these are measured in the European Innovation Scoreboard. In addition to these output variables, the Scoreboard also includes various input variables. The Austrian Council closely studies the indicators and thematic areas upon which the scoreboard is based, and attaches a great deal of importance to the analysis of the data, especially in comparison with the innovation leaders.

Recommendation

The Austrian Council recommends subjecting the RTI performance of the innovation leaders (and where necessary, other relevant countries) to a systematic monitoring. This data would provide a benchmark for measuring political measures with best practice examples from the leading innovation nations. The availability of data in suitable categories and at a suitable aggregation level is indispensable for political advisory work. It is therefore essential that this data is also available in a form that compares Austria with the leading countries.

The Austrian Council considers that the compilation of the RTI monitor falls within its statutory remit, as it supports the presentation of the leading benchmarks.