

The flagship sets sail



An analysis of the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology

*Bachelor Thesis
S.W. den Bak*

*Tutor: Dr. H.F. de Boer
Reader: Prof. Dr. J. Enders
Centre for Higher Education and Policy Studies
School of Management and Governance
University of Twente
The Netherlands*

February 2008

Foreword

With great pleasure I have worked on the construction of my bachelor thesis. Particularly the inspiring interviews contributed to my enthusiasm. I would like to thank the interviewees for their time and information. Without them this thesis would not have been possible.

I would like to thank my tutor Harry de Boer for the pleasant cooperation and his constructive remarks which really helped me doing research. Thanks also to Neth-ER for giving me access to their archives and to Bark Europe for providing me the image of the flagship 'Europe'. A special word of thanks to Marlies because of her patience and ongoing support.

With the fulfilment of this thesis also my time as a student in Enschede ends. I would hereby like to thank everyone who contributed to this great period in my life. I will set sail to Leiden and continue in the master program European Governance.

Sebastiaan den Bak

Amsterdam 2008

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
1.1 Motivation	4
1.2 Objective, problem definition and research questions.....	5
2. Agenda Setting	6
2.1 Introduction	6
2.2 Agenda setting theories	6
2.2.1 Barrier model	7
2.2.2 Stream model.....	9
2.3 Choice for the stream model of Kingdon	12
3. The European Institute of Technology	13
3.1 Context	13
3.2 Objectives	15
3.3 Organization	16
4. The agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology	17
4.1 The roots of the EIT.....	17
4.2 From communication to regulation	18
4.3 The German intervention.....	21
4.4 Towards a political agreement and beyond.....	21
5. The analysis	22
5.1 The problems stream	22
5.2 The policy stream	22
5.3 The political stream.....	23
5.4 Coupling the streams: policy windows and entrepreneurs	24
5.5 The alternatives specified	26
6. Conclusion	27
References	29
Appendix I: Interviewed persons	32
Appendix II: Interview questions	33
Appendix III: Summary (Dutch).....	34

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

In the University Newspaper of 22 November 2007 the chairman of the Executive Board of the University of Twente, Anne Flierman, makes the statement that the University of Twente 'needs strategic alliances with strong partners in order to score in a new European Technological Institute'¹. The establishment of the European Institute of Technology (EIT) is a new initiative of the European Commission to build a 'Europe of Knowledge'. The European Commission states that EIT should be a knowledge flagship for excellence in innovation, research and higher education.

Now that the EIT has reached the policy agenda of the European Union, an intriguing question is how that happened. Another question is why it has reached the agenda in its present form. What kind of alternatives has been considered and why did these alternatives not make it? These kinds of questions refer to the process of agenda setting. The agenda setting process is interesting because during this process the problem and solutions to this perceived problem are framed. Problems can only be solved if they 'survive' the agenda setting process, otherwise they will be left 'untouched'. It is interesting to analyse the agenda setting process of the EIT, because the expectations of the EU, and several other stakeholders, are high, while at the same time not too much is known about the EIT. It is a relatively new topic that may have serious consequences for higher education and research in Europe. This thesis intends to contribute to the knowledge about the agenda setting process of the EIT.

I am writing this thesis to finish my Bachelor 'Bestuurskunde' at the University of Twente. European policymaking has always been a topic that interests me. This explains why I have chosen the major 'European Studies' in my Bachelor curriculum. I will continue to learn about Europe in the masters programme European Governance at the University of Leiden. Furthermore, higher education and research policy are topics that gripped me when I was president of the Dutch National Student Association (2006-2007).

¹ UT-Nieuws, Thursday 22 November 2007

1.2 Objective, problem definition and research questions

The objective of this thesis is to shed light on the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology². The problem definition that I want to answer in this thesis is:

How and why did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union?

The related research questions are the following:

1. *What is agenda setting and why is this important?*
2. *What is meant by the European Institute of Technology?*
3. *How did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union?*
4. *What are the alternatives considered and why did these alternatives of the European Institute of Technology did not reach the policy agenda of the European Union?*
5. *Why did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union in its present form?*

To answer the research questions I will use theories and literature about agenda setting to analyse how and why the European Institute of Technology has reached the policy agenda of the European Union. Furthermore, I will interview stakeholders, policy makers and experts in the field of the European Institute of Technology in order to obtain the required information regarding the process of agenda setting.

The theoretical framework of this thesis will be set forth in the next chapter. In chapter three there will be outlined what is meant by the European Institute of Technology. The agenda setting process of the EIT is the subject of chapter four. In chapter five, the agenda setting process will be analysed. The conclusion of this thesis is will be drawn in chapter six.

² In 2007, the European Parliament changed the name 'European Institute of Technology' (EIT) in 'European Institute of Innovation and Technology' (EIT) by an amendment. The name change is ignored in this thesis because of the intelligibility.

2. Agenda Setting

2.1 Introduction

In the fifties and sixties of the 20th century there was a lively debate among political scientists about the democratic level of Western societies. This debate was going on between the 'elitists' and the 'pluralists'. The elitists stated that there is an 'elite' group in society, a permanent and closed group, which has the power to decide which topics become part of the governmental agenda (Mills, 1956). Opposite to the elitists stand the pluralists who do not believe in a closed elite group. According to the pluralists, political decision making is a competitive battle between stakeholders, in which none has continuously the upper hand (Dahl, 1961). In these debates about the democratic level of Western societies the question aroused why some problems reached the government agenda while others do not. This fundamental question resulted in the recognition of the issue of agenda setting. In the seventies the issue of 'agenda setting' reached the agenda (Koppenjan et al., 1987: 34). In this chapter the first research question of this thesis will be answered: *What is agenda setting and why is this important?*

James Dearing and Everett Rogers (1996: 1) write the following about the importance of agenda setting: 'Every social system must have an agenda if it is to prioritize the problems facing it, so that it can decide where to start work'. Problems need to be recognized and prioritized on a political agenda in order to be solved. The way in which problems are defined on the agenda is crucial for the possible solutions. Policy solutions are often called alternatives. Schattschneider (1960: 58) already stated that 'The definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power'. He means with this statement that defining which alternatives will be involved in the final decision is about the power of setting the agenda. In this thesis agenda setting starts with the original idea of an issue or problem. The agenda setting ends with a political decision about the issue under study. An agenda setting process is the period between the original idea and a political decision.

In the next paragraph, theories about agenda setting will be introduced.

2.2 Agenda setting theories

There are two main approaches in the agenda setting literature. The first approach is called the barrier model. The second approach is called the stream model. I will describe them in two subparagraphs. After the description of the two models I will choose the model I am going to use to analyse the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology.

2.2.1 Barrier model

The barrier model was originally developed by Bachrach & Baratz (1970). After studying poverty in Baltimore (USA), they described a model of the political system. According to Bachrach & Baratz (1970: 54) the political process is a process in which social needs have to cross four barriers before they can be transferred into public policy (Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 187). Van der Eijk and Kok (1975: 283) describe the political process as a series of consecutive stages. These stages are *wants*, *demands*, *issues*, *decisions* and *outputs*. Wants are opinions, interests and ideologies. They are formulated in non-political terms and therefore placed outside the political process (Van der Eijk and Kok, 1975: 282). Demands are wants that are described in a political way in order to reach political support. Issues are 'recognised by the decision makers as problems to be decided upon: they are demands which became part of the agenda for decision making' (1975: 283). A decision is a political choice on which issues will be acted upon. Outputs are the effects of implementation. The stages are visible in figure 1.

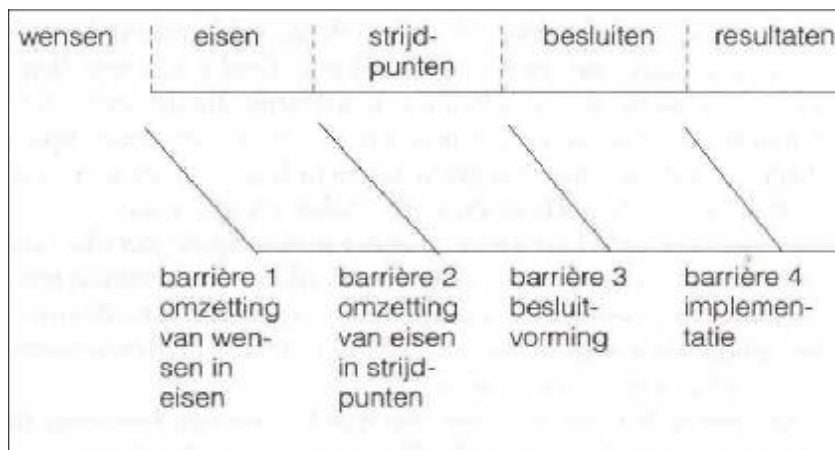


Figure 1: The Barrier Model according to van der Eijk and Kok (translated in Dutch)

In each of the consecutive stages barriers may prevent the 'promotion' of the topic from one stage to the other. If a topic fails such a promotion due to a barrier it will not be dealt with. The stages described above are separated by the following barriers:

1. Prevention of want-demand conversion (Dutch: hindernis voor omzetting van wensen in eisen)
2. Prevention of demand-issue conversion (hindernis voor omzetting van eisen in strijdpunten)
3. Defeat in decision making (een strijdpunt wordt niet of gedeeltelijk uitgevoerd)
4. Implementation (resultaten komen niet overeen met oorspronkelijke wensen)

According to this model, the agenda setting process takes place during and between barrier 1 and 2. When an item 'survives' the second barrier, an issue is created to be decided upon.

Barrier 1: Prevention of want-demand conversion. Wants need to be translated into political terms. This conversion can be thwarted by dominant political values. The want of abortion rights, for example, is very difficult to convert into demands if the dominant political values are religion-based. A lack of knowledge can also prevent the want-demand conversion. Finally, actions from other actors aimed at the prevention of want-demand conversion can occur.

Barrier 2: Prevention of demand-issue conversion. 'A demand that does not reach issue status will wither away eventually.' (Van der Eijk & Kok, 1975: 284). If none of the decision makers feels responsible for a demand ('lack of problem ownership'), the conversion will not cross the barrier. The conversion can also be troubled by organizational procedures, habits and difficulties in relation to the demand.

Barrier 3: Defeat in decision making. When a demand has reached the issue status there is 'only' a positive political decision needed to cross the third barrier. The third barrier blocks the issue if the political decision is negative. It is also possible that a political decision covers only a part of the issue. This phenomenon is called 'modification' by Bachrach & Baratz (1970: 54).

Barrier 4: Implementation. This final barrier means that it is not always the case that the results of the implementation of a decision are fulfilling the original wants. In the implementation phase there are many possibilities to prevent that the desired output is realized. Decisions may for instance have a symbolic character. This means that a decision is aimed to stop the wants or demands, not to fulfil them. Moreover, during the implementation those that have to implement the decision can mould the decision (for own interests or local needs).

Cobb and Elder (1972) developed an agenda setting theory based on the barrier model. Their general hypothesis is: 'the wider the audience, the greater the chance that the dispute will reach the docket of problems confronting decision-makers' (1972: 158). Empirical testing of the agenda setting theory of Cobb and Elder resulted in a lot of criticism by political scientists. Koppenjan e.a. (1987: 39) criticise the principle of the barrier model that public support is necessary for an issue to reach the political agenda. There are, they argue, also issues which are on the political agenda, but not on the public agenda (Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 193-194). The static character of the barrier model is also a problem according to Rosenthal (1996). He states that the policy process in the barrier model is seen too much as an incremental process. Rosenthal (1996) pretends that there is not such a thing as a phased policy process. The latter is an interesting statement to proceed with the stream model.

2.2.2 Stream model

In 1972, Michael Cohen, James March and Johan Olsen developed an interesting theory about the policy processes in American and Norwegian Universities. They described the policy processes in these institutions as a 'garbage can model of organizational choice'. Universities are 'organized anarchies' with three major characteristics: problematic preferences, unclear technology and fluid participation (Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 195). Preferences are problematic because there are conflicting ideas about the achievements of the organization. The technology is unclear because of the trial-and-error methods that are used in the organization. In other words, there is not a structured technology. The participation is fluid because participants vary in interest and showing up in the policy process from subject to subject.

The 'garbage can model' is the point of departure for John W. Kingdon to develop his ideas about agenda setting. He conducted a research on the development of public policy in the field of health and transportation in the federal government of the United States. The argument Kingdon gives for his theoretical starting point is that his results are similar in many of the major contours of the 'garbage can model' (Kingdon, 1984).

Kingdon (1984) is not only interested in how the agenda is set but also why the agenda is set. He wonders why some problems are chosen to be solved and others are not. Kingdon (1984) states that agenda setting is not just about selecting problems, but also about selecting solutions. That is why he makes the distinction between processes of agenda setting and processes of alternative specification. He distinguishes furthermore between participants and processes.

Participants are actors in the policy process. Participants are distinguished between 'visible' and 'hidden' participants. Visible participants are for example ministers, members of parliament and the media. Hidden participants are for example civil servants, academics and interest groups. Visible participants are especially influencing the agenda setting process and hidden participants are especially influencing (the selection of) the alternatives.

Kingdon (1984) observes three independent streams of processes in agenda setting: problems (dutch: problemen), policies (oplossingsideeën) and politics (politieke gebeurtenissen). In figure 2 these streams can be seen. I will describe the three streams in the following subsections. After that, policy windows (open vensters) and policy entrepreneurs will be introduced.

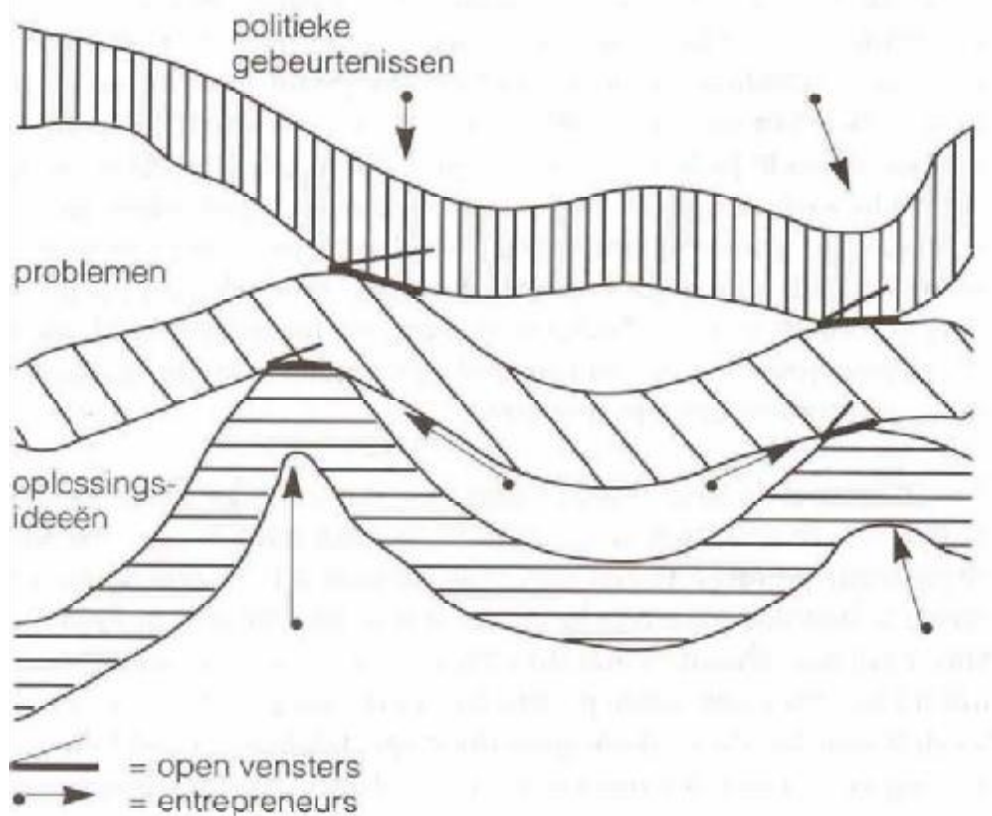


Figure 2: The stream model of Kingdon (translated in Dutch)

The problems stream. The recognition of problems is very important in the agenda setting process. To put it in the words of Kingdon: 'People must become convinced that something should be done to change a condition' (1984: 119). The recognition of problems is possible in different ways. A focusing event, for example a terrorist attack or a flood, might be a justification for recognizing a new problem. In case of a flood a new problem might be that the dikes are too weak. Feedback on current policy is another way to recognize a problem. If a governmental program was aimed to reduce deaths in traffic and in the evaluation it turned out that it failed, there might be the perception of a new problem in the field of traffic safety.

The policy stream. In this stream ideas are floating around. These ideas or alternatives are invented by experts and analysts in policy communities. Ideas are confronted with each other which results in the disappearance or the combination of ideas. Some ideas survive in their original shape. Kingdon calls this 'floating around' and development of ideas the policy 'primeval soup'. To enlarge the chance of survival, ideas should meet as much as possible of the following criteria: technical feasible (capable of being implemented) and the acceptability of values by the policy community. Furthermore, ideas are adapted to budgets and to public and political acceptance (Kingdon, 1984: 151).

After this 'selection process' there arises a short list of proposed ideas. This short list is an agreement of prominent ideas. A viable alternative for an idea on the short list increases the chance for placement on a decision agenda.

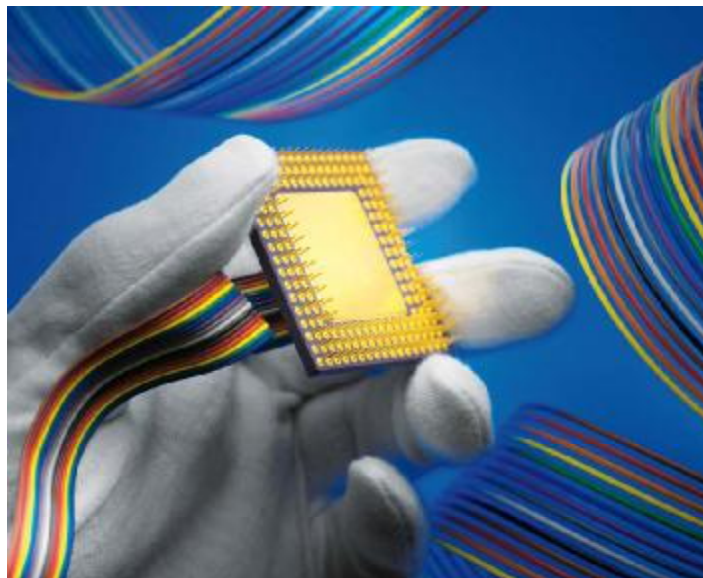
The political stream. Political events are influencing the agenda. A change in the national mood or in the political climate can result in new agenda topics. For example the assassination of Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands in May 2002 shocked the country and the political climate. Also the rise of Fortuyn made a lot of people feel different about politics and politicians. A cabinet change or interest group pressure campaigns can also have a large impact on the agenda. For example the 'standards and values discussion' of Jan Peter Balkenende, the political leader of the CDA, in the campaign for the elections of May 2002, changed the agenda with the coalition agreement of the cabinet Balkenende 1.

Policy windows and entrepreneurs. In the stream model of Kingdon as described in figure 2, the three streams are visible. It might catch the eye that there are couplings between the streams. Problems meet policy solutions and they come together with politics. According to Kingdon, this coupling of streams opens a policy window (1984: 204). A policy window is an opportunity to push proposals through and to put an address on problems. These opportunities are created by policy entrepreneurs. A minister, a member of parliament, a lobbyist or a top civil servant can act as an entrepreneur, when they see their chance to enforce an opening in the policy window. When policy entrepreneurs do not act the policy window is likely to close and the opportunity to solve an issue is missed, at least for the moment. Policy entrepreneurs are skilled in coupling the streams. This means that they are not passive but active in creating opportunities to act. For example, entrepreneurs have the ability to couple a political force to a problem and after this to develop a solution. They are, so to say, the right persons under the right circumstances at the right time and place. Kingdon (1984: 204) states that the probability of an item rising on a decision agenda is dramatically increasing when the three streams are coupled.

2.3 Choice for the stream model of Kingdon

Two models of agenda setting have been described in paragraph 2.2: the barrier model and the stream model. Van de Graaf & Hoppe (1989) describe situations in which the barrier model can be used best, and situations in which the stream model can be used best. When an item attracts a lot of attention in the public opinion, it is preferable to use the barrier model. When this does not seem to be the case, the stream model seems more adequate. When the question is: 'where in the agenda setting process an item failed', the barrier model can be used best. When the question is: 'how did an item fail in the agenda setting process', the stream model is the best choice for an explanation (Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 201-202).

In this thesis I will analyse the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology with the stream model of Kingdon. I do not think that the EIT has attracted a lot of attention of the public. The idea of a EIT did not enter the political or policy agenda because of public pressure or a debate in the media. Concerning the questions about 'where' or 'how' an item failed, I am more interested in the question 'how': I will analyse how and why the alternative that is now presented by the European Union, and not other alternatives, made it up to the decision making process. Therefore, I will use the key concepts of Kingdon's stream model in my analyses. These concepts are the problems stream, the policy stream and the political stream, the policy windows and the policy entrepreneurs.



3. The European Institute of Technology

After having set the theoretical basis, the second research question will be answered in this chapter. This question is: *What is meant by the European Institute of Technology?* I will first describe the context of the EIT, next I will sketch the role and objectives of the EIT and finally the organization of the EIT will be outlined.

3.1 Context

The idea of establishing a European institute which involves education and research is not completely new. Already in the fifties and sixties there has been a discussion about the creation of a 'European University'. Starting in 1955 at the Messina meeting³ this discussion continued for more than 15 years. At last, in 1971 the Ministers of Education of the European Community agreed to set up a European University Institute in Florence. This University Institute was a pale reflection of the original proposal to set up a 'full university' (Corbett, 2003: 319).

I will describe the context of the EIT taking the 'Knowledge Triangle' as a starting point. The three elements of the knowledge triangle are (higher) education, research and innovation. These elements cannot be seen as individual policy areas nowadays; as they become more and more integrated. However, their history in the European policy making is not the same. I will first briefly describe the context of the individual policy fields. After that I will try to define a more integrated context in which the European Institute of Technology can be allocated.

'*Higher education* is a policy domain that falls outside the EU competences' (De Boer, 2007: 16). The competences in this field belong to the member states of the European Union. Until the second half of the 1980's, there was no cooperation in this policy field. The first EU cooperation programmes were mainly focussed on mobility (e.g. Erasmus 1987, Tempus 1990). By the end of the 1990's, the cooperation in the field of higher education was boosted by the Bologna process⁴. This intergovernmental process is aimed at the realisation of a European Higher Education Area (Bologna declaration, 1999). An interesting aspect about the success of the Bologna process is that it is not an EU-initiative.

³ On June 1 1955 the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the six countries of the European Coal and Steel Community (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg and the Netherlands) met in Messina (Sicily), Italy

⁴ 'The Bologna Process' is named after the Italian city where 29 European Ministers responsible for higher education, signed a declaration on 19 June 1999. In 2007, 46 countries are participating in the Bologna Process.

European cooperation in the field of *research* has a much longer tradition compared to the field of higher education. Already from its beginning the European Community has been active in the policy domain of research and technology (Van Vught, 2007: 19). Ever since 1984 the EU has worked with multi-annual research and technological framework programmes (FP's) in order to strengthen the European competitiveness in the area of research. The current framework programme FP7 (2007-2013) has a total budget of 54 billion euros. Other recent research and technology initiatives are the development of the European Research Area (2000), the European Research Council (2006) and the introduction of the Joint Technology Initiatives (2007).

Innovation as an EU policy domain is relatively new. In 1995 the European Commission launched an 'Action Plan for Innovation'. Since that action plan innovation has increasingly become a part of the framework programmes and other EU-initiatives (e.g. the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP) 2007-2013). In 2006, the European Commission launched a 'broad-based innovation strategy for the EU'. One of the core elements of this document is the conviction that 'the EU can only become comprehensively innovative if all actors become involved' (European Commission, 2006f: 3).

The policy areas of the three elements of the knowledge triangle described above have become more and more important in the Europe of today. 'Research and innovation has moved to the heart of the EU policy-making' (Van Vught, 2007: 27). A mile-stone that contributed largely to this movement was the spring 2000 European Council in Lisbon. The European Heads of State agreed to create a 'Europe of knowledge' and set the goal that by 2010 the EU should be 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'⁵ (European Council, 2000). Higher education, research and innovation are core elements to build the Europe of knowledge.

The goals of the Lisbon strategy appeared difficult to reach. This is why the European Council halfway the Lisbon strategy adopted a new start for the Lisbon Strategy. A relevant passage in this revised Lisbon Strategy is: 'In advanced economies such as the EU, knowledge, meaning R&D, innovation and education, is a key driver of productivity growth' (European Commission, 2005: 21). The European Institute of Technology as a 'Flagship of knowledge' is an integral part of this revised Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs.

⁵ The actions of the EU in relation to the spring 2000 European Council is often referred to as the 'Lisbon Strategy'.

3.2 Objectives

One of the objectives of the EIT is to become a flagship in the Europe of knowledge. EIT should inspire and drive changes in the European institutions of education and research. Another objective of the EIT is written down in the proposed regulation of the competitiveness council: ‘...to contribute to sustainable European economic growth and competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of Member States and the Community. It shall do this by involving and integrating innovation, research and higher education of the highest standards’.⁶ The relationship between innovation, research and education is often referred to as the ‘knowledge triangle’.

This triangle can be visualised by figure 3.

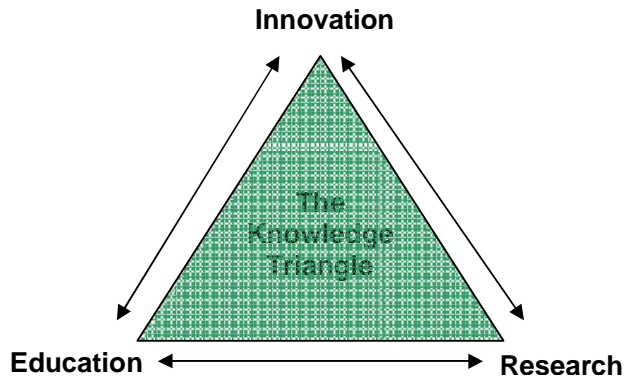


Figure 3: The Knowledge Triangle

The European Institute of Technology should integrate the three elements of the knowledge triangle by:

- facilitating innovation partnerships
- translating research and technological results into business opportunities
- promoting entrepreneurial initiatives
- enriching higher education through directly applicable knowledge

⁶ Outcome of proceedings of the Council (Competitiveness), 2007: 8

3.3 Organization

The EIT will compose of two levels. The first level is a Governing Board (GB) and the second level concerns the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC's). EIT will be organized both top-down and bottom-up. The first level is top-down and the second level is bottom-up.

The Governing Board will have 19 members. 15 members will be appointed experts with business, innovation, research and academic experience. 4 members will be representatives of staff and students. The members of the Governing Board will have a term of six years, which is not renewable. The main tasks of the GB are selecting and evaluating the KIC's and strategic decisions. The latter will be driven by the making of a Strategic Innovation Agenda.

The KIC's are autonomous partnerships between universities, research organizations, companies and other stakeholders in the innovation sector. These partnerships will be linked to EIT by a contractual agreement with a timeframe of 7-15 years. The first 3 KIC's will be established in less than two years after the GB is appointed. The KIC's will fully involve higher education, research and innovation activities with a European added value.

The EIT will be financed by public and private funds. To establish the organization of the EIT there will be invested € 0.3 billion out of the communitarian budget. There was a ministerial agreement on this budget on 23 November 2007. The overall goal is to maximize the share of the private contributions.

The future location of the seat of the EIT is yet unknown. There are a few EU member states that have shown interest in hosting the head of EIT. These member states are Poland (Wroclaw), Hungary (Budapest), Slovakia (Bratislava) and Germany (Aachen, Nurnberg and Karlsruhe). The political decision where the seat of EIT will be located will be taken within one year after the EIT regulation is adopted.

4. The agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology

Now that it is clear what is meant by the European Institute of Technology, this chapter focuses on the agenda setting process of the EIT. The research question that will be answered is: *How did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union?* The information in this chapter is based on interviews⁷ and literature study.

The time span of the agenda setting process is about three years. The idea of the EIT dates back from 2005 and the political decision is expected in Spring 2008. Four phases can be distinguished in the agenda setting process of the EIT. These phases are:

- The roots of the EIT (paragraph 4.1)
- From communication to regulation (paragraph 4.2)
- The German intervention (paragraph 4.3)
- Towards a political agreement and beyond (paragraph 4.4)

Each phase will be elaborated in a separate paragraph.

4.1 The roots of the EIT

The first time that the European Institute of Technology was mentioned in official EU-documentation was in February 2005. At that time, the European Commission⁸ put forward the document 'A new start for the Lisbon Strategy' (European Commission, 2005). This document was a communication to the spring 2005 European Council and a reaction on the outcomes of the midterm review of the Lisbon strategy.⁹ According to the midterm review there is a 'general consensus that Europe is far from achieving the potential for change that the Lisbon strategy offers' (European Commission, 2005: 7). To make sure that the Lisbon goals came back in sight again the European Commission proposed amongst other things that knowledge and innovation should be the beating heart of European growth. One of the policy proposals to realize that ambition is the establishment of a European Institute of Technology. The EIT should 'act as a pole of attraction for the very best minds, ideas and companies from around the world' (European Commission, 2005: 21). The spring 2005 European Council asked the Commission to explore the idea further of a European Institute of Technology.

⁷ The interviewed people and interview questions can be found in Appendix I and II

⁸ The directorate-general of the European Commission that is responsible for the EIT is Education and Culture (EAC). Because of the intelligibility in this thesis there will be only referred to the European Commission.

⁹ A High Level Group chaired by the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Wim Kok conducted the midterm review of the Lisbon strategy from May till November 2004.

Agenda setting is not only about official documentations and publications. Agenda setting is also a political process and in politics not everything is official. There are unofficial contributions to the agenda setting process of the EIT as well, starting with the roots of the EIT. It was the chairman of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, who can be pointed out as the *founding father* of the European Institute of Technology.

The story goes that Barroso's son Luís told him one day that he was thinking about studying at MIT¹⁰. Since Barroso was recently appointed as president of the European Commission, he wanted his son to study in Europe. Luís told his father that there is no such institute as MIT in Europe and that this was the reason he wanted to study in the United States. From that day onwards Barroso wanted to develop a European variant of MIT. It is also said that the success of the Indian Institutes of Technology¹¹ inspired Barroso.

After Barroso had the idea to set up a European Institute of Technology he made several phone calls with some heads of government of the member states of the European Union. Barroso received a lot of support for his idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology. During their informal meeting in Hampton Court in October 2005, the European heads of state stressed the urgency of achieving world-class excellence in the fields of research and education. The EIT became a central idea after the Hampton Court meeting. In the same period as the European heads of state met, the European Commission held a public consultation about the EIT. The subjects of the public consultation were the mission, added value, structure and priorities of the EIT (European Commission, 2006a: 4). The European Commission used the public consultation as input for the communication¹² 'Developing a knowledge flagship: the European Institute of Technology' in February 2006 (European Commission, 2006b: 4).

4.2 From communication to regulation

The communication of the Commission as regards the spring 2006 European Council was directed towards proposing to establish a physical European Institute of Technology. The best students and researchers should be attracted to a, later to be decided upon location, place where is a knowledge landscape with a European identity. One of the core activities of the EIT should be 'to perform postgraduate education, research and innovation in emerging trans- and inter-disciplinary fields' (European Commission, 2006b: 7). The Commission had in mind that masters students and PhD candidates should be enrolled on the EIT. After graduation they would receive an EIT-degree.

¹⁰ MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) is one of the most prestigious universities in the world. MIT is situated in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.

¹¹ The Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) are a group of seven universities in India. They are known for world-class research.

¹² The European Commission has the possibility to initiate and propose new ideas or visions via 'Communications'

The Spring 2006 European Council recognised that ‘a European Institute for Technology – based on top-class networks open to all Member States – would be an important step to fill the existing gap between higher education, research and innovation’ (European Commission, 2006c: 3). The European Council asked the Commission to present further steps towards the creation of the EIT in June 2006. In March 2006 the Commission started a consultation process with the stakeholders of the EIT.

During formal and informal meetings with stakeholders (universities¹³ and companies¹⁴), the European Commission discussed their EIT-proposal. The vision of the Commission on the EIT received a lot of critical notes from all over Europe. The arguments of the stakeholders and member states against the Commission’s EIT-proposal can be categorized as follows:

- *institutional arguments*
- *legal arguments*
- *financial arguments*

The *institutional arguments* are regarding the physical aspect of the EIT-proposal. Both member states and universities were not in favour of an EIT in the way of a physical, ‘brick-building’. The idea that universities would ‘lose’ their best researchers and staff to a European institute resulted in a lot of resistance. Member states were not in favour of a large European institute because it would, according to their views, lead to a lot of bureaucracy and overhead. Another institutional argument was that it is not possible to ‘plant’ a European variant of the MIT. A reputation of an institute needs to grow and cannot be created by a political decision.

The *legal arguments* came from member states and universities. Education is a political sensitive subject in the European policymaking scene (Van Vught, 2007: 11). Education is and has always been under the authority of the member states of the EU. There is no legal basis for the awarding of degrees on a European scale; to be more accurate, there is no legal basis to award degrees under the flag of the European Union.

Financial arguments came from the European business and from the Ministers responsible for the budgets of the member states. The Commission was in its communication not clear where the funding of EIT should come from.

The budget of the European Union, the financial perspectives 2007-2013, was already determined when the EIT-proposal reached the agenda.

¹³ With ‘Universities’ in this thesis, moreover the point of view of the European University Association (EUA) is represented. Another point of view came from the IDEA-league, a consortia of European Universities. They stated that the EIT is redundant.

¹⁴ Companies in Europe are represented by BUSINESS-Europe and the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT).

The ministers responsible for the budget were not in favour of additional funding for the EIT. The representative organizations of the European business were not in favour of the large private contributions that the Commission had in mind.

After the consultation process, the Commission reported to the June 2006 European Council with the communication 'The European Institute of Technology: further steps towards its creation'. The major difference between the first (February 2006) and the second (June 2006) communication is that in the second communication the EIT will have a 'network structure' in stead of being a 'brick-building' (physical structure). The Commission retained the idea that the EIT would be able to award degrees and diplomas.

The June 2006 meeting of the European Council reaffirmed the importance of the establishment of the EIT (European Commission, 2006d: 3). Overall, the Council agreed with the direction in which the EIT-proposal was developing. The Council asked the Commission to come forward with a formal proposal in the autumn of 2006. Before the legislative (formal) proposal of the Commission was presented, the Commission accomplished an Impact Assessment (European Commission, 2006e). The Impact Assessment of the European commission of October 2006 distinguished five policy options:

1. *the centralized EIT*; (more or less the EIT of the communication in February 2006)
2. *the distributed EIT*; (completely autonomous networks (KIC's) using 'joint degrees')
- 3. *the integrated EIT*; (a mix between options 1 and 2)**
4. *the funding-labelling EIT*; (a funding body which awards EIT-labels)
5. *the status quo*; (no EIT, only existing policies)

Policy option 3, 'the integrated EIT', is reproduced bold because this is the preferred option of the European Commission in the Impact Assessment. The integrated EIT is set up as follows: The Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC's, see previous chapter) will have a high level of autonomy in the legal entity of a joint venture. These joint ventures are functioning within a strategy and a common framework of principles and guidelines set by another legal entity, the EIT Governing Board (GB). 'The Integrated EIT'-option is also proposed by the European Commission in the 'EIT-regulation' proposal of 18 October 2006. Two days later the European heads of state agreed with the regulation on an informal meeting in Lahti (Finland). They urged the competitiveness council of the EU and the European Parliament to come to an agreement on the EIT by the end of 2007.

4.3 The German intervention

What happened after the Council adopted the EIT-regulation in October 2006 is referred to as unique in EU-history. During their presidency of the council of the European Union in the first half of 2007, the Germans more or less 'stole' the EIT-file from the European Commission. Before January 2007 the European Commission was leading the discussions about the EIT but from January up to and including June the Germans took the lead.

Despite the fact that Germany was critical about the EIT-regulation, they proposed some remarkable political compromises. These compromises where:

1. an initial phase for the EIT (2008-2013) in stead of a permanent regulation
2. a lower budget for the EIT in its initial phase

These two compromises (the compromises mentioned above are only the most important ones) were crucial in the agenda setting process of the EIT. Because of the earlier mentioned financial struggles concerning the EIT, the compromises were necessary to 'save' the EIT. An actor that greatly stimulated the agenda setting process of the EIT was Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel. She played a large role in the political negotiations regarding the EIT. One of the things she did (together with EC-president Barroso) was to link the worldwide problems of climate change and energy with the future activities of the EIT. The support for the EIT substantially increased when Merkel and Barroso suggested that the first KIC's of the EIT could deal with issues like renewable energy and climate change. Merkel said in a German newspaper: *'Europa muss hier Motor bei der Entwicklung neuer Technologien werden, um diese an andere Länder verkaufen zu können, dies gilt auch für Technologien zur Steigerung der Energie-Effizienz'* (Tagesthemen, March 2007). The European Commission and the German presidency stressed time and again that Europe could have a leading role concerning those issues. In June 2007, the efforts of the German presidency were leading to a general agreement in the council of competitiveness of the EU.

4.4 Towards a political agreement and beyond

After the general agreement, the European Parliament held its first session on the EIT-regulation in the summer of 2007. The parliament did not play a major role in the agenda setting process of the EIT. The European Parliament proposed to change the name into 'European Institute of Innovation and Technology' (the abbreviation remains 'EIT') in order to emphasize the innovative character of the EIT. Also the Parliament amended that the EIT-degrees will be replaced by EIT-labels. There was a political agreement on the amended EIT-regulation in the competitiveness council of the EU on 23 November 2007. At the same day, the European Parliament and the Council agreed on the funding of the EIT (See chapter 3.2). In 2008, the agenda setting process of the EIT will reach its final phase. Most likely, the definitive regulation of the EIT will be adopted in the Spring 2008 European Council.

5. The analysis

The agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology was described in the previous chapter. Based on this description the agenda setting process of the EIT will be analysed in this chapter. The research questions that will be answered are: *What are the alternatives considered and why did these alternatives of the European Institute of Technology did not reach the policy agenda of the European Union?* and *Why did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union in its present form?* The analysis of the agenda setting process of the EIT will be conducted by using the stream model of Kingdon. First of all, the three process streams (problem, policy and politics) will be covered. After that, the coupling of these streams will be defined. Finally, the alternatives of the EIT will be specified.

5.1 The problems stream

Kingdon says about the recognition of problems: 'People must become convinced that something should be done to change a condition' (1984: 119). In the European Union, this applies for the absence of European activities that integrate education, research and innovation. Amongst other things because of the absence of these integrated activities the competitiveness of the European Union lacks behind compared to the economies of the United States, India and China. There is an EU-wide understanding that something should be done in order to integrate the elements of the knowledge triangle. According to the willingness to change the described condition, the following problem can be recognized: *the European Union lacks competitiveness and needs activities that integrate education, research and innovation.*

Another condition that becomes clear in the agenda setting process of the EIT is the issue of 'climate change and energy'. There is not only a European, but a worldwide conviction that this condition should be changed. Prominent figures like Al Gore and Tony Blair have contributed to the awareness of the public that the climate developments are alarming. Therefore, *climate change and energy*, can be recognized as a problem.

5.2 The policy stream

In the 'policy soup' of the agenda setting process of the EIT two alternatives can be distinguished. The first EIT-alternative is *a concentrated, physical institute with degree awarding powers and educational activities*. This alternative was proposed by the European Commission in their communication of February 2006. The second EIT-alternative is *a network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities*.

This second alternative is the alternative where the political agreement on 23 November 2007 was reached upon. The two described alternatives predominated the political discussions in the agenda setting process of the EIT.

To be complete, there are next to the two mentioned alternatives a few policy options in the agenda setting process that should not be omitted. Their impact in the agenda setting process, however, has been marginal.

- the idea to establish the EIT in the building of the European Parliament in Strasbourg¹⁵.
This idea touches very sensitive national feelings and was not seriously discussed.
- the remaining policy options from the impact assessment of October 2006.
These was not a large discussion on the remaining options because the preferred option was immediately adopted by the Council.
- the idea to establish a cluster EIT was not proposed but mentioned as a policy option¹⁶.
This idea came forward in March 2007 which was too late to play a role.

5.3 The political stream

There have been two main political events that have influenced the agenda setting process of the EIT. Before these events will be described it should be noticed that the agenda setting process of the EIT is a highly political process. The decisions about the EIT have been taken on a high political level. Knowing this it is easier to understand the short time span of the agenda setting process of the EIT (For example, the agenda setting process of the European Research Council, an issue in the same policy field, took over seven years). Because of political pressure, the agenda setting process was accelerated.

The first main political event that influenced the agenda setting process was the fact that the idea to establish the EIT came directly from the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. The EIT is sometimes called the 'pet project' of Barroso, which made the EIT very political. Others say that the EIT was 'Chefsache', which is German for 'business for the bosses'. Also used terms about EIT as 'Europe's Flagship for Excellence in Research, Education and Innovation' contributed to the high political level of the EIT.

The German presidency of the council of the European Union in the first half of 2007 is the second main political event in the agenda setting process. First, because they took over the EIT-file from the European Commission. Second because they made important political compromises during their presidency.

¹⁵ The 'position paper on the future seat of the European Parliament' was written by Jorgo Chatzimarkakis in June 2005.

¹⁶ The 'Assessment of the feasibility and possible impact of the establishment of a European Institute of Technology' written by Tindemans and Soete was requested by the European Parliament (committee of Industry, Research and Energy).

5.4 Coupling the streams: policy windows and entrepreneurs

A policy window is an opportunity in the agenda setting process to push proposals through and to put an address on problems. These opportunities are taken by policy entrepreneurs. In the agenda setting process of the EIT, five policy windows can be distinguished. The first three policy windows are couplings of two streams. In the fourth and the fifth policy window all of the three streams come together.

Policy Window 1: Barroso calls European Heads of State about his EIT-idea

Coupling of the Streams: Problems stream and political stream

Policy Entrepreneur: José Manuel Barroso

Description: In 2005, the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, made several phone calls with European Heads of State. He received a lot of support for his idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology aimed at the integration of the elements of the knowledge triangle in order to boost the competitiveness of the European Union. Barroso coupled with his phone calls the problem stream (lack of competitiveness) and the political stream (his political desire to create a 'pet project').

Policy Window 2: The European Commission put forward the first EIT-communication

Coupling of the Streams: Problems stream and policy stream

Policy Entrepreneur: European Commission

Description: In February 2006, the European Commission put forward the communication 'Developing a knowledge flagship: the European Institute of Technology'. With this document, the European Commission coupled the problems stream (lack of competitiveness) with the policy stream (a concentrated, physical institute with degree awarding powers and educational activities).

Policy Window 3: Successful lobby of stakeholders and member states

Coupling of the Streams: Problems stream and policy stream

Policy Entrepreneurs: Companies, Universities and Member States

Description: In 2006, after the first EIT-communication of the European Commission, the consultation process started. The policy entrepreneurs agreed on the problem, but not on the policy solution that the Commission proposed. On the basis of institutional and legal arguments¹⁷ they coupled the problem stream (lack of competitiveness) and the policy stream (in the direction of a network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities).

Policy Window 4: The coupling of the EIT and climate change and energy

Coupling of the Streams: Problems stream, political stream and policy stream

Policy Entrepreneurs: Angela Merkel and José Manuel Barroso

Description: Under the German presidency in the first half of 2007 the three streams were coupled. Angela Merkel and José Manuel Barroso proposed to couple the first activities of the KIC's of the EIT (a network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities) with the worldwide problems of climate change and renewable energy. According to them, the EU could play a major role in the future developments of these policy fields. The support for the EIT increased a lot because of this 'coupling'.

Policy Window 5: An initial phase for the EIT

Coupling of the Streams: Problems stream, political stream and policy stream

Policy Entrepreneurs: Angela Merkel and the budget Ministers of the member states

Description: An important political compromise was established by Angela Merkel during the German presidency of the Council of the European Union. There was a lot of political pressure from the budget Ministers of the member states because of the financial aspects of the EIT. Angela Merkel proposed to start the EIT in an initial phase. This meant a lower budget and an initial in stead of a permanent regulation on the EIT. This compromise resulted in the general agreement of June 2007.

¹⁷ See paragraph 4.2

5.5 The alternatives specified

As described before, there are two alternatives that can be distinguished in the agenda setting process of the EIT. The first alternative is a *concentrated, physical institute with degree awarding powers and educational activities*. The second alternative is a *network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities*.

I will use Kingdon's criteria¹⁸ to explain why the second alternative *did* and the first alternative *did not* reach the policy agenda of the European Union. These criteria are *technical feasibility*, *budget adaptation* and *political acceptance*. According to Kingdon, the chance on survival enlarges when alternatives meet as much as possible these criteria.

Concerning the *technical feasibility* criterion, the second alternative was preferred because, according to universities and member states, it is not acceptable and not possible to award degrees under the flag of the European Union. Another issue that made the first alternative less technical feasible was the sceptics about 'planting' an institute that could rival MIT.

The *budget adaptation* criterion is very important in relation to the EIT-alternatives. There was no budget reserved for the EIT in the financial perspectives of the European Union. The second alternative is concerning a lower budget than the first alternative, which made it easier to accept. Furthermore, member states were not in favour of the first alternative because of expected high overhead costs. Finally, the aimed private contributions were not to the advantage of the first alternative.

The third criterion is *political acceptance*. The proposed physical institute in the first alternative was not acceptable to universities. The second alternative, on the other hand, was acceptable to universities. Another important political issue is the political sensitivity of educational activities at the EU-level. Especially member states were therefore not in favour of the first alternative. At last, member states were more in favour of the second alternative because of the expected bureaucracy of a physical institute in the first alternative.

¹⁸ See subparagraph 2.2.2

6. Conclusion

The objective of this thesis is to shed light on the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology. The problem definition that I want to answer in this thesis is:

How and why did the European Institute of Technology reach the policy agenda of the European Union?

This problem definition can be answered based on the research questions that were raised in the introducing chapter of this thesis. In chapter two, the research question about (the importance of) agenda setting was discussed. The stream model was introduced as the leading instrument to look at the agenda setting process of the European Institute of Technology. Chapter three dealt with the second research question by sketching the objectives, organization and the context of the European Institute of Technology. In an attempt to give a chronological overview of the agenda setting process, chapter four answered research question number three. The analysis of the agenda setting process in chapter five provided the answers to the fourth and fifth research question. With the answers to the five research questions the problem definition of this thesis can now be answered.

“The European Institute of Technology has reached the policy agenda of the European Union through five policy windows. These policy windows are crucial moments in the agenda setting process where problems, policy alternatives and political events are coupled to each other. Policy entrepreneurs are creating opportunities to open policy windows.

The first policy window opens when the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso calls the European Heads of State in 2005 about his idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology. In this policy window, Barroso coupled an EU-wide problem ‘lack of competitiveness’ to a political ‘pet project’ of the European Commission.

When the European Commission puts forward the first EIT-communication in February 2006, the second policy window opens. In this window the problem ‘lack of competitiveness’ is coupled to a policy alternative: ‘a physical EIT with degree awarding power’.

In a reaction on the EIT-communication, the lobby from stakeholders and member states opens the third policy window. Stakeholders (universities and companies) and member states agree on the problem of the ‘lack of competitiveness’, but do not agree on the proposed policy alternative. Their lobby couples the problem with another policy alternative; ‘a network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities’.

The flagship sets sail

During the German presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2007, Merkel and Barroso opened the fourth policy window by coupling the European Institute of Technology to the problem of 'climate change and renewable energy'. In this policy window the support for the European Institute of Technology increased a lot.

The fifth and last policy window opened when Merkel achieved a political compromise to start the EIT in an initial phase. This compromise was necessary towards the budget Ministers of the member states because of the funding aspects of the EIT. During the political event 'German presidency' the problem 'lack of competitiveness' was coupled to the policy alternative 'a network structure with autonomous knowledge and innovation communities'."



References

Bachrach, P. and M.S. Baratz (1970) *Power and Poverty. Theory and practice*, New York

Boer, H.F. de (2007) *European higher education, research and innovation*, Unpublished manuscript, Enschede

Bologna declaration, (1999) *The European Higher Education Area, Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education*, Bologna

Cobb, R.W. & C.D. Elder (1972) *Participation in American Politics; The Dynamics of Agenda-Building*, Baltimore/London: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Corbett, A. (2003) Ideas, Institutions and Policy Entrepreneurs: towards a new history of higher education in the European Community, in: *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 38, No. 3

Council of the European Union (2007), Outcome of proceedings of the Council (Competitiveness) on 25 June 2007, 11058/07

Dahl, R.A. (1961) *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*, New Haven: Yale University Press

Dearing, J.W. & E.M. Rogers (1996) *Agenda-Setting*, Thousand Oakes (CA): SAGE Publications

Eijk, C. van der & W.J.P. Kok. 'Nondecisions reconsidered', in: *Acta Politica*, 10 (1975), p.277-301

European Commission (2005) *Working together for growth and jobs: A new start for the Lisbon strategy*, COM(2005) 24, Brussels

European Commission (2006a) *Commission staff working document, Results of the public consultation on a concept of the European Institute of Technology*, SEC(2006) 368, Brussels

European Commission (2006b) *Implementing the renewed partnership for growth and jobs , Developing a knowledge flagship: the European Institute of Technology*, COM(2006) 77, Brussels

European Commission (2006c) *The European Institute of Technology: further steps towards its creation*, COM(2006) 276, Brussels

European Commission (2006d) *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the European Institute of Technology*, COM(2006) 604, Brussels

European Commission (2006e) *Commission Staff Working Document, accompanying the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Institute of Technology: Impact Assessment*, SEC(2006) 1313/2, Brussels

European Commission (2006f) *Putting knowledge into practice: A broad-based innovation strategy for the EU*, COM(2006) 502, Brussels

European Council, (2000) *European Council Presidency conclusions*, Nr. 100/1/00, Lisbon European Council

European Parliament (2007) *Assessment of the feasibility and possible impact of the establishment of a European Institute of Technology*, (IP/A/ITRE/IC/2006-157), Brussels

Kingdon, J.W. (1984), *Agenda's, alternatives and public policies*, Boston: Little, Brown

Koppenjan, J.F.M., A.B. Ringeling & R.H.A. te Velde (1987) *Beleidsvorming in Nederland; een vergelijkende studie naar de totstandkoming van wetten*, 's Gravenhage: VUGA

Mills, C.W. (1956) *The Power Elite*, London

Rosenthal, U. et. al. (1996), *Openbaar Bestuur beleid, organisatie en politiek*, Alphen aan den Rijn: Samsom H. D. Tjeenk Willink

Schattschneider, E.E. (1960) *The semisovereign people: A realist's view of democracy in America*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Van de Graaf, H. & R. Hoppe (1989) *Beleid en politiek, een inleiding tot de beleidswetenschap en de beleidkunde*, Bussum: Coutinho

Vught, F.A. van (2007) *A supranational European university policy? A history of the European Union's higher education and research policies*. Unpublished manuscript, Enschede

Source of images and figures:

Title page: Photo Brett Yates; www.barkeuropa.com

Page 7 : Figure 1: Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 187

Page 10: Figure 2: Van de Graaf & Hoppe, 1989: 198

Page 12: Eit Flyer European Commission (2007), DG EAC (NC-X1-07-005-EN-D)

Page 15 : Figure 3 : Drawing of the author

Page 28: Eit Flyer European Commission (2007), DG EAC (NC-X1-07-005-EN-D)

Other Sources:

Website about EIT of the European Commission:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eit/index_en.html, visited frequently

Website Council of the European Union: Council configurations

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>, visited 26 November 2007

Website European Parliament: <http://europarl.europa.eu>, visited frequently

Website community research and development information services:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/eit_en.html, visited 21 November 2007

Website Massachusetts Institute of Technology: <http://web.mit.edu/>, visited 18 January 2008

Website Indian Institutes of Technology: <http://www.iit.org/iit/>, visited 18 January 2008

Appendix I: Interviewed persons

Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science:

Margo Keizer
Policy officer international affairs
Wednesday 9 January 2008, 14:00h

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Ozgur Ulutas
Policy officer European Integration
EU internal affairs division
Wednesday 9 January 2008, 14:00h

Neth-ER: Netherlands house for Education and Research¹⁹

David Bohmert
Policy advisor
Thursday 10 January 2008, 11:30h

The confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers: VNO-NCW²⁰

Joke van den Bandt
Secretary of technology, innovation and science policy
Friday 11 January 2008, 11:00h

European Parliament:

Lambert van Nistelrooij
European People's Party
Substitute member of ITRE-committee (Industry, Research and Energy)
Monday 14 January 2008, 9:00h

European Commission; Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Maria Getsiou
Policy officer Taskforce EIT
Monday 14 January 2008, 15:00h

¹⁹ Neth-ER (Netherlands house for Education and Research) is an international association of Dutch organisations in the fields of education, research and innovation based in Brussels.

²⁰ The Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (known as VNO-NCW) is the largest employers' organisation in the Netherlands. VNO-NCW represents the common interests of Dutch business, both at home and abroad and provides a variety of services for its members. 180 (branch) associations are members, representing more than 115,000 enterprises. They cover almost all sectors of the economy, including more than 80% of all medium-sized companies in the Netherlands and nearly all of the larger, corporate institutions. (Source: www.vno-ncw.nl)

Appendix II: Interview questions

- **Part one: General Information**

1.1 How are (were) you involved in the agenda setting process of the EIT?

- **Part two: Agenda setting**

2.1 When did the EIT reach the agenda for the first time?

2.2 How did the EIT reach the agenda?

2.3 Which crucial moments (decisions/political agreements/etc.) can you distinguish in the agenda setting process of the EIT?

2.4 Which important actors were involved?

2.5 Which role did these actors play and what were the outcomes of their actions?

- **Part three: Alternatives**

3.1 Which alternatives of the present EIT-proposal can you distinguish in the agenda setting process?

3.2 Can you explain for each of the alternatives why they did not survive the decision making process?

Final question: Which problem will be solved with the establishment of the EIT?

Appendix III: Summary (Dutch)

Het vlaggenschip zet koers

Een analyse van het agendavormingsproces van het Europees Technologisch Instituut.

De Europese Commissie heeft in 2005 voorgesteld om een nieuw Europees Technologisch Instituut (EIT) in het leven te roepen wat als een 'vlaggenschip van kennis' zou moeten bijdragen aan het concurrentievermogen van de Europese Unie. In het najaar van 2007 werd er in de Raad van Ministers van de Europese Unie een politiek akkoord bereikt over het EIT. Het instituut wat nu wordt opgericht heeft een totaal andere vorm dan het idee wat de Europese Commissie had in 2005. De vraag waarom de EIT in zijn huidige vorm op de beleidsagenda is gekomen ligt aan dit bacheloronderzoek ten grondslag. De probleemstelling van dit onderzoek is: *Hoe en waarom heeft het Europees Technologisch Instituut de beleidsagenda van de Europese Unie bereikt?* Deze vraag heeft betrekking op het proces van agendavorming. Het agendavormingsproces van het EIT wordt onderzocht met behulp van het stromenmodel van Kingdon. Dit model gaat er van uit dat de agenda wordt gevormd door de koppeling van stromen van problemen, politieke gebeurtenissen en beleidsalternatieven. Deze koppelingen worden beleidsvensters genoemd en worden geopend door beleidsentrepreneurs. In het agendavormingsproces van het EIT zijn er vijf beleidsvensters te onderscheiden welke hebben geleid tot het bereiken van de beleidsagenda van de Europese Unie. Het eerste beleidsvenster is geopend door de bedenker van het EIT, de president van de Europese Commissie Barroso, wanneer hij in 2005 enkele regeringsleiders en staatshoofden opbelt om hen enthousiast te maken over zijn EIT-plannen. In dit beleidsvenster koppelt Barroso het probleem 'gebrek aan concurrentievermogen' aan de wens om een politiek 'paradepaardje' van de Europese Commissie te creëren. Het tweede beleidsvenster wordt geopend door de Europese Commissie wanneer zij in een communiqué voorstelt om het probleem 'gebrek aan concurrentievermogen' aan te pakken met het beleidsalternatief 'een fysiek technologisch instituut'. De lobby van lidstaten van de Europese Unie, universiteiten en bedrijven opent vervolgens een derde beleidsvenster waarin het probleem 'gebrek aan concurrentievermogen' wordt gekoppeld aan een tweede beleidsalternatief 'een netwerk van autonome kennis- en innovatiegemeenschappen'. Het Duitse voorzitterschap van de Raad van de Europese Unie is een politieke gebeurtenis waarbij het EIT wordt gekoppeld aan de problematiek van de klimaatverandering. Dit vierde beleidsvenster is een belangrijk moment geweest voor de steun voor het EIT. De Duitse bondskanselier Merkel is tenslotte verantwoordelijk voor het openen van het vijfde beleidsvenster wanneer zij een belangrijke politieke compromis bereikt door het EIT te starten in een aanvangsfase met een beperkter budget.