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MANAGEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE VALORISATION CENTERS IN LINE WITH EU KNOWLEDGE VALORISATION POLICY: SUPPORTING INNOVATION, STARTUPS, AND SOCIETAL IMPACT

Knowledge valorisation has become a strategic priority within the European Union's research and innovation policy, particularly under Horizon Europe and the European Research Area (ERA). The EU Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation emphasize the systematic transformation of research results into economic and societal value through structured institutional mechanisms [4]. In this context, Knowledge Valorisation Centers (KVCs) act as key intermediaries between research organizations, industry, startups, and society, and their management effectiveness directly influences innovation performance and impact.

The EU policy approach shifts from linear technology transfer models toward a comprehensive, impact-oriented paradigm that promotes openness, co-creation, and stakeholder engagement [4]. Horizon Europe reinforces this approach by embedding impact pathways, exploitation strategies, and dissemination requirements into funded research projects [3]. KVCs are therefore expected to operationalize these principles through governance structures, managerial practices, and evaluation systems aligned with EU priorities [4].

Knowledge Valorisation Centers function as institutional hubs within regional and national innovation ecosystems, facilitating interactions among universities, research institutes, startups, industry, and public authorities [6,8]. By supporting intellectual property management, collaborative research, and entrepreneurial experimentation, KVCs contribute to the development of dynamic startup ecosystems and enhance the competitiveness of regions within the EU innovation landscape.

Effective management of KVCs requires governance models that balance public research missions with market-oriented objectives. EU-aligned approaches emphasize strategic autonomy, professionalization of management teams, and multi-stakeholder governance structures [4]. Flexible and adaptive management models enable KVCs to respond to technological change, emerging markets, and societal needs while ensuring accountability and alignment with institutional strategies [6].

KVCs play a central role in translating research outputs into startups and spin-offs by providing proof-of-concept support, incubation and acceleration services, mentoring, and access to funding networks [2]. Horizon Europe further strengthens this role through dedicated instruments supporting deep-tech startups and scale-ups, positioning KVCs as operational bridges between publicly funded research and entrepreneurial activity [3].

In line with EU knowledge valorisation policy, the performance of KVCs is increasingly assessed based on societal impact rather than solely on commercialization outcomes. Management practices therefore integrate Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), sustainability, and inclusiveness into valorisation strategies [4]. This broader perspective ensures that knowledge contributes to addressing societal challenges such as green transition, digital transformation, and public health.

Despite strong policy support, KVCs face persistent challenges, including fragmented innovation support structures, limited entrepreneurial culture within academia, and difficulties in measuring long-term impact. Addressing these challenges requires capacity building, harmonization of policy instruments, and the development of standardized impact indicators consistent with EU evaluation frameworks [4].

The management of Knowledge Valorisation Centers in line with EU knowledge valorisation policy is a critical factor for strengthening innovation capacity, supporting startup creation, and maximizing societal impact. KVCs serve as strategic instruments of Horizon Europe, enabling the transformation of research excellence into sustainable economic and social value. Continued alignment between policy objectives and management practices will be essential for realizing the full potential of knowledge valorisation in the European Union.

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