

Overview of the EU's future Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) and their development trends from a Finnish perspective

Specialist Lasse Laitinen



Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö
Arbets- och näringsministeriet



Background on DIHs

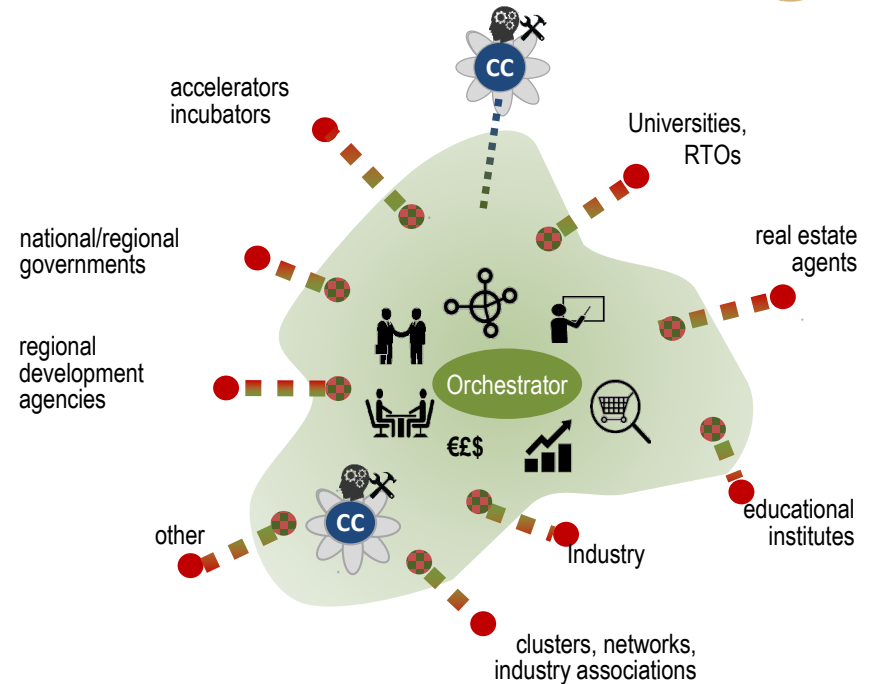
- **The Commission has set up a network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) to accelerate digital transformation, in particular for SMEs.**
- **In the 2021-27 financial period, the new Digital Europe programme will re-establish the network, with additional DIHs under Horizon Europe.**
- **TEM commissioned a study from VTT to analyse the situation and propose measures that Finland should take to implement the Digital Innovation Clusters policy.**



Digital innovation clusters



- are multi-stakeholder ecosystems with the aim of helping SMEs in particular to digitalise,
- offer a one-stop shop for a wide range of services to accelerate digitalisation,
- are often based on promoting regional business and innovation.
- There are many different types of DIH and it is one instrument among others.

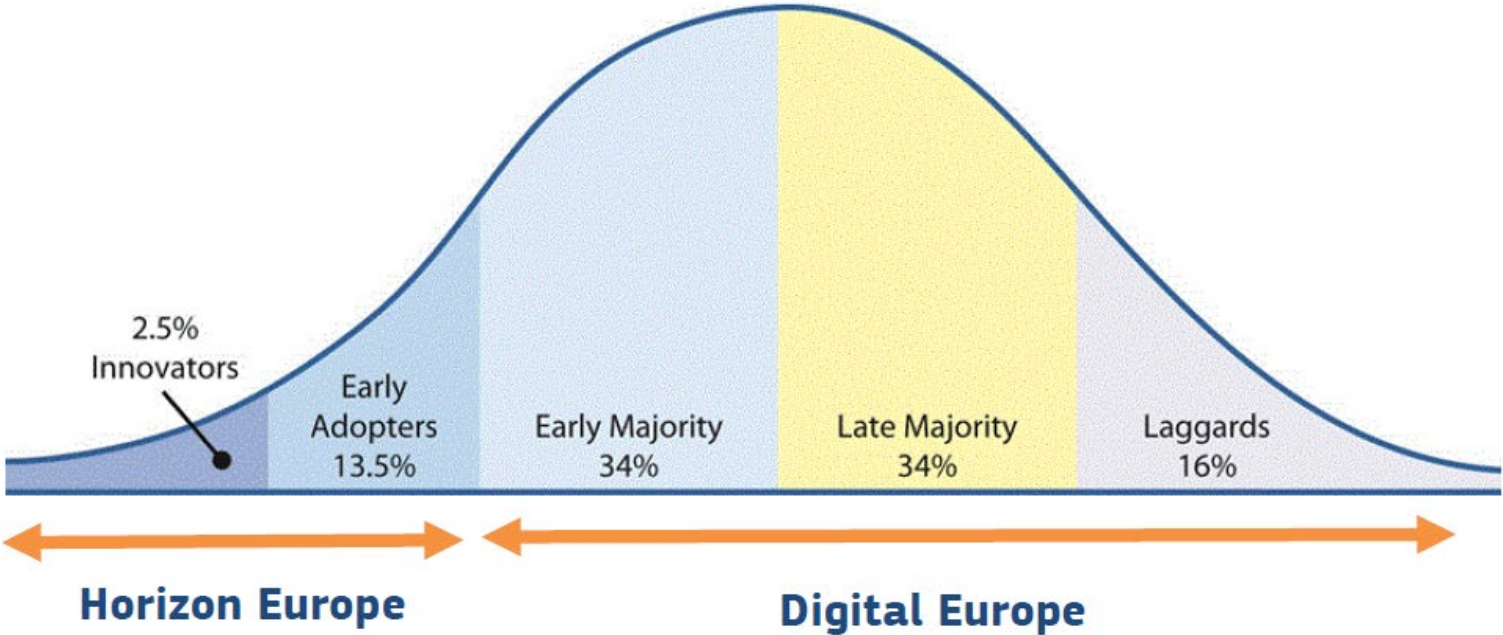


Dian author: Riikka Virkkunen, VTT

DIH concept (source TNO, Butter)

Commission description of how funding from Horizon Europe and Digital Europe would be targeted at SMEs

Technology adoption curve



Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) in the Digital Europe programme



- **Member States nominate their candidates through an open and competitive process using national procedures based on common criteria.**
- **The Commission will select the DIHs taking into account the opinion of the Member State to the greatest extent possible.**
- **If necessary, the Commission will select, through a transparent and competitive process, additional DIHs to complete the network.**
- **In parallel with the legislative process, the Commission is working with Member States to prepare the implementation of the DIH.**
- **The EU grant would be targeted at cross-border activities, but ERDF funds can be used for regional activities. National funding needed**
- **The Commission envisages in principle one DIH per NUTS2 region (4 in mainland Finland, 281 in the EU including UK) due to the volume of funding and the ERDF link.**

Conclusions of the report on concentration in Finland



- **Are visionary ecosystems, striving for international excellence**
- **Building on Finland's strengths (industries, technology strengths) and creating added value for Europe**
- **Are capable of orchestrating networks of multiple actors**
- **Combining regional, national and European objectives**
- **Offer a wide range of services to accelerate digitalisation, especially for SMEs**
- **Objective coordination is needed to enable the development of clusters and their network, as well as a goal-oriented orchestration.**
- **To be carried out by a neutral organisation that does not compete with DIHs**

Conflicts to be resolved and choices to be made



- **Regional DIHs, close to businesses, seeking expertise from further afield if necessary**
 - **The ground up: supporting the various digitalisation capabilities on which more advanced AI/HPC etc. can be built**
 - **Business- and needs-driven, focus on services with business benefits, SMEs, light national coordination of the network**
- vs**
- **Thematic/sectoral DIHs with a national dimension**
 - **Ahead of the curve: aiming more directly at building AI/HPC etc. capabilities in the business environment**
 - **Research and technology base, the role of larger companies can be highlighted, strong national coordination of the network**



Thank you!

Specialist Lasse Laitinen

lasse.laitinen@tem.fi

p. 050 359 9258

Ministry of Employment and the Economy