



9th European Conference on Corporate R&D and Innovation

CONCORDi 2023

Industrial innovation for Open Strategic Autonomy

Leaving no one and no place behind

Hybrid (physical and virtual) conference. Seville (Spain) 24-26 October 2023

Conference announcement & Call for papers

Background and highlights

The biennial European Conference CONCORDi is a science-to-policy forum for leading academics and policymakers to discuss issues relevant to present and future EU policy agendas arising from frontier scientific knowledge on Corporate R&D and Innovation.

CONCORDi conferences have been organised by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) Directorate for Fair and Sustainable Economy in Seville since 2007 (for more information, see [here](#)).

The JRC will host the **9th edition of CONCORDi (2023)** in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the **Spanish Government** as the conference will be part of the events for the **Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union** during the second half of 2023.

The 2023 edition of the conference will focus on the topic **Open Strategic Autonomy** in the context of the current transition to a green and digital economy, as this is now at the core of the EU's industrial policy agenda.¹ The EU's Open Strategic Autonomy policy aims to alleviate vulnerabilities and reinforce technological sovereignty of the EU in strategic sectors of the economy, such as energy, mobility, health, food supply, digital technologies and space-defence-security.

In this context, industrial innovation is pivotal to the development of *critical technologies* for civil, defence and space applications², to a more *circular economy* and for alleviating *strategic dependencies* of the EU in *key technologies and supply chains*³. Developing stronger industrial innovation and production capabilities in the EU with appropriate partnerships⁴ will enable and accelerate the achievement of the European Green Deal (e.g. critical green technologies for zero emissions in transport, renewable energy and synergies between digital and green), and the Digital Transition (e.g. addressing dependencies, supporting technology roadmaps, cybersecurity etc.).

¹ For a definition of Open Strategic Autonomy please refer to "Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation, May 2020 – Commission Communication, COM(2020) 456 final, 27 May 2020". This concept is also well endorsed in recent documents such as the following: "European Commission (2022). "A New European Agenda". Brussels, European Commission COM(2022) 332, 5 July".

² [COM 2022 61 1 en act roadmap security and defence.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ Products in sensitive ecosystems for which the EU is heavily dependent on foreign suppliers ([link](#))

⁴ See European Partnerships in *Horizon Europe*: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/european-partnerships-horizon-europe_en

Achieving European Open Strategic Autonomy and delivering on the twin green and digital transition require holistic analyses of industrial innovation ecosystems that look at industrial, product and technological capabilities at global, national and regional levels. This includes the proper involvement of actors at the different territorial levels in the identification of industrial innovation investments in areas relevant to strategic autonomy and technological sovereignty, including in regional **innovation strategies for sustainability**. This is relevant to the new **Partnerships for Regional Innovation**⁵ initiative promoted by the European Commission in cooperation with the Committee of Regions, as part of the EU's climate, cohesion and innovation agendas.

Achieving Open Strategic Autonomy should also be compatible with the EU's economic competitiveness and social inclusion policy objectives - the creation of high-quality jobs within the EU, smooth transitions to new jobs, and the development of workers' skills able to bridge the "digital divide", both within and across EU regions and Member States.

The twin transition requires disruptive innovation more than incremental, business-as-usual strategies. Companies exploiting scientific and technological advances in pursuit of competitive sustainability goals can play a particularly important role in helping the EU to attain Open Strategic Autonomy –e.g. start-ups and scale-ups⁶ in prominent technological fields such as energy, clean-tech, digital, advanced materials, advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, blockchain, robotics, photonics, electronics, and quantum computing.

In light of the above, CONCORDi 2023 will focus on the role of corporate investment in Research & Innovation (R&I), sustainable practices and related policies, and how they can address issues relating to open strategic autonomy and technological vulnerabilities in key sectors and technologies.

It is expected that the conference will inform the on-going pursuit of the EU's policy priorities including the Industrial strategy for Europe, the New European Innovation Agenda, the European Green Deal and the recent Green Deal Industrial Plan, as well as Strategic Autonomy and Technological Leadership policy objectives.

Based on its traditional science-to-policy emphasis, CONCORDi 2023 will inform policy-makers and economic players on how corporate R&D and innovation strategies could best contribute to competitive sustainability and how relevant policy interventions could guide and support it. The conference will aim at providing relevant and action-oriented evidence supporting the development and coherence of future EU policy initiatives. The publication of evidence-based outputs from the Conference is foreseen both in the form of a summary report and/or a Policy Brief as well as contributions to a peer-reviewed journal.

The Conference will be organised in both plenary and parallel sessions. The first part of the Conference will be mainly dedicated to the scientific contributions, the second part of the Conference will be focused on the policy discussion and relevance for policy of the main scientific results of the first part.

Call for papers

We invite you to submit an original paper proposal that fits one or more of the broad thematic tracks indicated below.

1. Industrial innovation to alleviate vulnerability and reinforce technological sovereignty in strategic sectors

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_3008

⁶ including so-called "deep technology (deep tech) companies (for a definition see this [link](#))

- 2. Industrial innovation in critical technologies and for the reduction of key dependencies**
- 3. Identification of territorial opportunities linked to industrial innovation for competitiveness, regional cohesion and social inclusion**
- 4. Creation and growth of firms in prominent technological fields.**

The selected papers will be presented by the authors in the parallel sessions of the Conference. Please note that the presentations are scheduled to be in-person, whereas attendance of the audience may be either presencial or virtual.

Submission of extended abstracts

Original research work containing robust quantitative and/or qualitative evidence in the form of extended abstracts may be submitted. JRC welcomes submissions by scholars who are members of under-represented groups. Original research on the topics of the conference and aimed at bridging micro and macro domains is especially welcome.

The maximum accepted length of the extended abstract is **2000 words**. Please, go to the following link to submit the extended abstract [CONCORDi 2023 Submission template-v2.pdf](#)

Note that the authors of the accepted long abstracts will be required to send the full paper by the date indicated below.

Important dates

- Opening of submissions for extended abstracts: 13 February 2023
- Closing of submissions for extended abstracts: 31 May 2023
- Announcement of selected extended abstracts: 26 June 2023
- Authors' provision of *full papers*: 25 September 2023
- Conference: 24-26 October 2023.

Registration

Registration to the conference will open on the 31st of July 2023 on the CONCORDi website. There will be no conference registration fee.

Best Paper Award

The Scientific and Steering Committees will evaluate the manuscripts submitted and a best scientific paper award will be offered at CONCORDi 2023 to authors whose work represents path breaking and policy relevant research in the area

Scientific Committee

Román Arjona (European Commission, EUR)

Michele Cincera (Université Libre de Bruxelles, BEL)

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- Chiara Criscuolo (OECD)

Website

<https://iri.jrc.ec.europa.eu/concordi-2023>

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