



European Internet Forum
Political Leadership for Digital Society

16 June 2016

8:00 - 9:30

BREAKFAST DEBATE

“Scalability” of start-ups

For some a startup is just the smaller version of a large company, however while a start-up can also be a SME, not all SMEs can call themselves startups. A startup is a temporary organization designed to search for a repeatable and scalable business model. Within this definition, a startup can be a new venture or a new division or business unit in an existing company.

Scale-ups are start-ups that have been able to break the “early-stage barrier” and are a candidate to become large global companies and real job creators. The Startup Europe Partnership project under the Startup Europe initiative by the European Commission defines “a scale-up as a development-stage business, specific to high-technology markets, that is looking to grow in terms of market access, revenues, and number of employees, adding value by identifying and realizing win-win opportunities for collaboration with established companies. A startup becomes a scale-up after it has validated its business model hypothesis, solved all the start-up challenges, and thereby is ready for growth – exponential growth”.

In the last few years the EU has started to put big emphasis on closing the gap with the Silicon Valley in the US, which since 1951 has been the cradle of most of the start-ups that today are known as the Internet Giants. At the same time in the Far East some observers report that 12,000 startups are created every day in China to take advantage of the high scalability of the Chinese market. Finally India is predicted to be next big thing for start-ups. Seed funding, incubators, acceleration programmes, educational programmes and campaigns to boost entrepreneurship are now very common at EU, national, regional and local level. Startups have been blossoming across Europe for a while now. Some of them have become success stories, some can call themselves a “unicorn”, many of them are not European any longer because were obliged to move outside Europe and/ or give up ownership to find the money to scale up. The lagging European economy cannot be revived solely on the basis of a thriving ecosystem for startups. The EU need to offer an environment nursing scale-ups and just replicating Silicon Valley is not an option.

At this debate we will explore the most up-to-date data available about the European ecosystem, while offering some concrete examples of success stories. The aim is identifying the best ingredients for success and the barriers for scaling-up. Ultimately these elements should feed into policy recommendations for MEPs.

programme- 16th June 2016

Welcome and introduction:

Lambert van Nistelrooij MEP and EIF Steering Committee Member

Speakers:

Alberto Onetti, President & Chairman, Mind the Bridge

Lenard Koschwitz, Director European Affairs, Allied for Startups

Gianpiero Lotito, Founder and CEO, FacilityLive

Exchange of views with participants

(under the Chatham House rule)

Speakers



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MEP, EPP
European Parliament



Mr Alberto Onetti

President & Chairman
Mind the Bridge



Mr Lenard Koschwitz

Director European Affairs
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Mr Gianpiero Lotito

Founder and CEO
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