

European Research Area

(more questions than answers - beginning of a discussion)

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Strengths 2009

Well educated, talented young people uniformly distributed in Europe.

Large number of universities (HEI) and research centers (RC).

All countries agree to treat education and research as a priority.

Pan-European labor market is declared

Weaknesses 2009

Different languages are used in education and research.

Reforms of HEI and RC are needed but strong resistance is observed.

In several EU countries, these declarations are not executed.

During an economic crisis it is no so evident

Opportunities 2030

We may have one common „functional’ language.

EU has large reserves in human resources in countries with poor R&D infrastructure.

Implementation of the Lisbon strategy may improve financing of research.

During an economical crisis EU has a chance to attract some top scientists from all over the world.

Threats 2030

EU members are afraid that they loose their cultural identity.

Actual asymmetries in access to good research centers may be even enforced.

Actual crisis may stop or delay implementation of the Lisbon strategy.

China and India will have also world class research facilities and will also attract scientists.

ERA – vision

(some remarks)

- The most important asset of the EU are well educated, talented young people in all EU countries. Today, we don't know yet in which place of Europe the greatest scientists of the XXI century are already or will be born.
- The EU research and knowledge institutions must be open and accessible for all of them.
- The ERA should be able to attract them to research and give a chance to become scientists.
- Creation of the ERA is not treated as an expense for EU countries but like a very profitable investment.

ERA and free circulation of knowledge

the Fifth Freedom (Georg Winkler)

- mobility of researchers, students, scientists, and university teaching staff,
- making the labor market for European researchers,
- use of intellectual property created in public research organizations - increase knowledge transfer to industry,
- encouraging open access to knowledge and open innovation,
- new generation of world-class research facilities,
- promoting the mutual recognition of qualifications,
- networking of knowledge.

Problems

- How to avoid brain drain in some member states and to enhance brain circulation for all regions in ERA?
- Knowledge produced in public research organizations, when transferred to businesses should not violate state aid rules.
 - For contract research: market price must be charged.
 - For collaborative research: full cost must be charged; „R+D+I results which result from the activity of the (public) research institutions are fully allocated to the latter“

There is a risk of having an under-financing, if knowledge is mainly a public good.

- If knowledge produced by public research institutions is freely accessible, there is the risk of an under-supply:
 - Why should a state be engaged in the provision of knowledge as nationally financed public goods, if businesses in other member states and around the globe can equally benefit from this provision due to the free access to knowledge?
 - Free riding becomes beneficial for those not bearing the cost of producing knowledge.

Polish Universities

The Times' 2008 ranking shows some dependences. In the first 200 European Universities list we have:

- Prague Univ. (110)
- 3 from Poland UJ (132) UW (152) PW (179).
- Budapest Univ. (195)
- Ljubljana Univ. (184)

In R&D we have (at present) Europe of two speeds.

All new EU members countries are in a similar situation. The process of creation of the ERA should take it into account, if not – a large number of talented young people may be excluded from ERA.

The change of this situation is in hands of governments of these countries.

- Each EU country should be responsible for creation of favorable conditions for development and financing of three levels research system:
 - research universities in important academic centers of the country; among research universities, a few “flag RU” should be selected, with extra financing for extra obligations and selected issues: for instance scholarships for all students of doctoral studies, preparation of thesis in Pan-European research centers, post-doc positions,...
 - national level research centers with strong international cooperation, open to all researchers of a country,
 - Pan-European research centers, accessible for all researchers, governed by international bodies.

Very important and political questions.

1. How many “flag RU” we need in Europe?
2. How to select them?

(Public) Research University

- Autonomous in governance and independent in research and teaching.
- Concentrating on II (master) and III (doctoral) levels of education.
- Having many candidates for each open position.
- Having more candidates to study than places.
- Having very good infrastructure for teaching and research.
- Leading fundamental research, but participating also in transfer of knowledge towards the society.
- Cooperating with others RU and RC.
- Effective in selection of best researchers.
- Having adequate financing.