

Looking behind the metaphors:  
How to build stairways to excellence  
in EU regions?

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University of Warsaw – with EU structural  
funds towards knowledge triangles

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# University of Warsaw facts & figures

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- ❑ comprehensive university in Humboldt university tradition
- ❑ excellent research records in natural sciences (78% of the research budget)
- ❑ teaching 120 educational programs (86% of students in humanistic and social sciences)
- ❑ 53 500 students, 3300 academic staff (out of total of 6200 employees)



# University of Warsaw in money

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- ▣ total annual budget ca. 240 M€  
(unfinished investments from EU structural funds not included)
- ▣ Budget shares: 66% teaching, 29% research, 5% other
- ▣ EU structural funds: ca. 275 M€ in current perspective; ESF 21%, ERDF 79%  
*(previously: 27 M€, ESF 33%, ERDF 67%)*

# Main projects - infrastructure

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- Center for New Technologies and Department of Physics buildings (70 M€)
- Center for Biological and Chemical Sciences (70 M€)
- participation in project consortia (equipment) for Preclinical Research (25 M€) and Advanced Materials (25 M€)
- Building for Depts. of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics (17 M€)

*(goal: a leap towards top-class university)*



# Main projects - functional

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- "Modern University" (3 M€)
- international PhD studies programs (mathematics, natural sciences, ...) (8 M€)
- trainings, courses, postgraduate studies, new programs, ....

*(goal: support for modernisation of educational programs)*



# Structural funding classified by aim

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- support for regional cooperation:  
13 projects, 4.4 M€ total  
(1.6% by budget, 12% by number)  
*(previously 6 projects, 3.5 M€)*
- capacity building:  
72 projects, 218 M€ total  
(94% by budget, 65% by number)  
*(previously 12 projects, 18 M€)*

# From "knowledge triangle" perspective

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- strict separation of infrastructural ("hard") and "soft" projects:
  - infrastructure (ERDF), rigidly separated into:
    - educational infrastructure
    - scientific infrastructure
  - personnel and HR (ESF)
- no coordinated application can be made for funding from two sources
- ...each corner of the triangle is supported separately, one at a time

# triangle perspective, cont.

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- consequences:
  - you need two good corners to get the third one supported
  - fast improvement of entire triangle is hardly possible
  
- legal obstacles: eligibility of non-recoverable VAT
  
- risk of unlawful state aid when results commercialized



# Conclusions

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- ❑ currently, structural funding mainly used for capacity building, investments will be operational in 2012/2013
- ❑ growth predominantly in infrastructure, not enough growth in human capital, unclear perspectives, no instruments for coordination of growth in both areas
- ❑ so far, capacity growth results in the increase in awarded grants (7FP, ERC,...)
- ❑ a number of enterprises show interest in regional knowledge triangles, but more support from regional authorities needed