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**Author**

WENDE, Marijk van der

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**Abstract**

The growing global competition in which knowledge is a prime factor for economic growth is increasingly shaping policies and setting the agenda for the future of European higher education. With its aim to become the world's leading knowledge economy, the European Union is concerned about its performance in the knowledge sector, in particular in the nexus of research, higher education institutions, and innovation. A major concern is to solve the 'European paradox': whereby Europe has the necessary knowledge and research, but fails to transfer this into innovation and enhanced productivity and economic growth. Further complicating the matter, policy responses are formulated

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and implemented at different levels within the EU: at the European-wide level, the national, regional, and institutional levels. Moreover, the formulation of policies are often underpinned by different perceptions of the meaning of globalization, the nature of global competition for the higher education sector, and by differences in the current ability of institutions to effectively promote innovation in the private sector. This paper offers an overview of relevant European higher education policies and responses to global competition, and considers how global competitiveness can best be stimulated and achieved; what role competition and cooperation-based strategies at the national and European level play in this respect, and what is the best mix. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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