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Abstract

The future of mankind depends largely on cultural, scientific and technical development; and that this is built up in centres of culture, knowledge and research as represented by true universities. National states have the necessity and obligation to guarantee the access to financial means for a healthy functioning of universities—even if this is not a direct state support. European tradition from the 18th century for financing universities was donation of properties to the institutions and direct state support. This tradition has changed from the last quarter of the 20th century on, due to a low level of financing HEIs. The situation is most dramatic in Eastern European post-communist EHEA countries, where properties were confiscated and state support is rather scarce due to the bad economic situation. Though research grants have been more or less available, their amount does not cope with the

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infrastructural necessities and the costs of human resources. As a result, university research in the region is much less competitive compared to the more advantageous (Western) universities.

Documents of the European Research Area declared that the number of talented researchers should be the same regardless of the geographical situation, thus it is also the interest of ERA (and EHEA) to help support this handicapped region. A joint and concerted effort of national and European authorities is necessary to help the Eastern European post-communist EHEA countries to catch up with the intensity of university research and become real members of the European university community also in this respect. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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