

Science means jobs – on the necessity of planning reliability in science

Clery¹ has portrayed the development of research funding in Europe over the last years. Although such statistics are quite interesting from a historical point of view, much like the game 'Who has won the most Nobel prizes in the 1920s?' I would cast doubt on the relevance of such figures for future strategies and positioning in science. In the light of the current economic crisis and new law initiatives, fundamental risks arise from short-term objectives/strategies and tactical manoeuvring by politicians, which makes it difficult to extrapolate from the past to the future. For instance, the most important scientific fund FWF in Austria, has stopped granting any new project applications for the whole fiscal year 2009 with immediate effect². This will reduce planning reliability for science projects

and early careers significantly and will lead to massive brain-drain in the next few months. In Germany, a new copyright act limits the circulation of electronic documents³, which will substantially decrease scientific communication and dissemination. Only recently, key European science nations such as Britain, France, Italy and Germany showed poor R&D investment by business⁴. Especially in times of crisis and political changes, important long-term goals such as the 'Lisbon strategy' of R&D intensity being 3% of the GDP should be followed consequently and with long wind. Science strategies should be well-planned and thoroughly followed. Only if the general conditions for science are reliable, will science be effective. In that case, science means jobs⁵.

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1. Clery, D., *Science*, 2009, **323**, 570.
 2. http://fwf.ac.at/de/public_relations/press/brief-des-praesidenten_20090127.html, 2009; Brief des Präsidenten from http://fwf.ac.at/de/public_relations/press/brief-des-praesidenten_20090127.html
 3. Carbon, C. C., *Science*, 2008, **319**, 1483.
 4. European Research Area, Science, Technology and Competitiveness Key Figures Report 2008/2009, 2008.
 5. Mervis, J., *Science*, 2009, **323**, 318–319.
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