



JRC SCIENCE FOR POLICY REPORT

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Halme, K.
Saarnivaara, V-P.
Mitchell, J.

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Executive Summary

Challenges for R&I policy-making in Finland

Enhancing the commitment to R&D, innovation and skills. The main policy responses in 2017 are the new vision and roadmap of the Research and Innovation Council, the Vision for higher education and research in 2030, and the Government, in its mid-term review, updated action plan 2017-2019 thus making decisions related to operationalize the Key project program. A practical response is the establishment of a new technical network-university, Finnish Institute of Technology in Southwest Finland are to be started in autumn 2017. The Government also decided additional capitalisation of universities. However, Finland's R&D intensity has decreased following R&D funding cuts of recent years.

New measures and resource allocation to exploit knowledge and competence for economic and societal renewal. In 2017, funding increase for business capital markets is announced (Ministry of Finance 2017, Prime Minister's Office 2017b). As part of the Government's Key projects, investments in new growth sectors are planned, including in the bioeconomy, clean and green technologies, healthcare, and digitalisation, which cuts across these areas. There will be measures to boost experimentation, ecosystem development, as well as deregulation. However incentives for business R&D and funding for strategic applied research remain low.

Improving implementation and collaboration within the innovation system. The new vision and roadmap of the Research and Innovation Council, as well as the Vision for higher education and research in 2030, aim at intensifying cooperation. The Government's action plan 2017-2019 also includes activities to improve collaboration. The merger of Finpro and Tekes into *Business Finland*, as well as its new funding criteria may also intensify collaboration.

Strengthening quality, relevance and internationalisation of science & research: There are a number of measures, which are aimed at increasing the quality of the science base through structural changes, improving financial incentives and reforming the financing models, including the further University funding model (2017). The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) prepared new guidelines for internationalisation of higher education and research, and a Vision for higher education and research in 2030, continuing by preparing a roadmap. The Government, in its mid-term review, made decisions to operationalize the Key project programme. Business Finland will start in 2018 boosting promotion of Finnish companies access to markets abroad, and bringing together all state-funded actors and the services they offer, to promote internationalisation and attract foreign investments to Finland.

Smart specialisation

In Finland, smart specialisation is tightly linked with smart regions. The Government's vision for 2025 is that regions will have created growth based on high-quality competence and sustainable development, and that smart specialisation based on regional strengths, active renewal of business structures, and a better basis for entrepreneurship and business operations have created economic prosperity. The Government plans on establishing a centre of excellence during spring 2018 to enhance innovative procurements, which especially concerns municipalities. Finland aims for every region to formulate a Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation (RIS3), which are set and overseen by the Regional Councils. In addition to smart regions, the national smart specialisation strategy of Finland focuses on developing smart cities. An analysis of regional strengths has been conducted to support the Government's efforts to enhance growth and employment through regional specialisation and to provide information for the ongoing regional development efforts.

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