



# Academia Europaea

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## Key points in the Commentary to the Commission document - "Europe 2020", April 2020

We find the document most informative, forward looking and timely, especially the emphasis on 'smart growth', based on knowledge and innovation. We would wish to stress the need for a balanced approach: where knowledge and innovation are both part of an overall view that sees the investment in 'scholarship' and education as much a cultural (or societal) good, as an economic good. The current sectoral approach should in our view, be replaced by a much more synergistic one, that sees Research, Education and Innovation (an *REI European Space*) as a balanced, integrated portfolio.

1. Education, and particularly higher-education, is vital in assuring long-term goals.
2. It is not the role of the Universities to compensate for the relative weakness of industrially driven R&D in Europe. The Universities and other public research bodies have to focus on the dual roles of education and delivering high quality science and scholarship outputs that underpin the cultural demands of the system.
3. Research in the arts and the humanities is just as essential for the future of Europe, as that of the sciences.
4. The continuing outflow of young talented Europeans overseas is a serious risk, including unbalanced migrations of talented individuals within Europe. The resulting divide may become a major obstacle to solving the economic problems of Europe.
5. 'Cohesion' actions should be a significant portion of the structural funds system much more targeted towards Europe 2020 goals, and the Framework Programme and the Structural Funds should form a more coherent frame for building a knowledge-intensive Europe.
6. The EU budget may benefit from a major 'future oriented' redirection, to be seen as a joint investment resource - a "common Community financial investment facility".

The Framework Programme is critical to aspects of the realisation of the Europe 2020 strategy. We feel that a change of focus may allow it to play much more significant role than currently is the case. We suggest construction of a future Framework Programme upon the three pillars:

- I. *A smaller number of drivers, expressed as significant European "Grand Challenges", that we and the rest of the world face;*
- II. *"Challenging Ideas - moving frontiers": leading blue skies research with the European Research Council being responsible for its implementation;*
- III. *Assistance to the member states in stimulating joint undertakings via: clear, goal- oriented networking, enabling more joint research infrastructure by appropriate financial and personnel support and finally by dedicated mobility actions.*

There remain a number of major obstacles to international and inter-institutional collaboration that still await resolution. These are not necessarily of a financial character, but rather regulatory, particularly affecting cross border mobility and human resource capacity.

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