

EU-consultation on the future „EU2020“-strategy

The Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany, has discussed the Commission working document “Consultation on the Future EU 2020” strategy and would like to make the following comments and suggestions:

I. General statement:

We fully agree on the major priorities you have been identifying, namely:

- a. Creating value by basing growth on knowledge
- b. Empowering people in inclusive societies
- c. Creating a competitive, connected and greener economy.

II. Just to name a few, Eberhard Karls Universität contributes to these general priorities with themes, research centers and other structures like

- Education Research and efficient use of media for knowledge transfer
- Ageing society, considering all aspects of life like health, economy, social implications etc. Tübingen has excellent conditions for research on this topic combining the fields of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and medicine
- ‘Interfaculty Institute for Microbiology and Infection Medicine’ (IMIT) to tackle the challenge of resistance and emerging pathogens
- Center for Plant Molecular Biology (ZMBP) for understanding fundamental processes of life
- Center for Integrative Neuroscience (CIN) for research and medical care, hand-in-hand
- Interfaculty Institute for Biochemistry (IFIB)
- Medical engineering in a collaboration of medicine, natural science and engineering cooperating with technical university Stuttgart in a common research centre IZST and a bmbf national initiative for medical technology
- Centre for Applied Geosciences (ZAG) with special emphasis on the study of water circulation in a center “Water Earth System Science” (WESS).
- Partnership in EU-networks like CASCADE dealing with environmental problems
- Coordination of EU large and medium sized projects such as AQUATERRA and CARE-MAN

III. Needs identified for a successful continuation and optimization of structures and processes

As shown above, the university identifies its contribution not only in the field of higher education and research, but has also strong focus on the implementation of research results (innovation). Due to the broad spectrum of sciences developed at a classical university, such universities represent an ideal platform for tackling the central problems of the society in an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, beside the big research centers, universities should be strengthened and their specific needs should be taken into consideration for future support measures.

Accordingly, we would appreciate at European level an integrative and long-term approach comparable with the “Initiative for Excellence” (Exzellenzinitiative) in Germany or similar initiatives in other European member states possibly also extended to consortia of universities. This would help to identify and strengthen centers of excellent research on a European level. In this way, complementarities and synergies could be reached not only

within the area of single institutions, but would stimulate the potential of excellence in Europe.

In our view, the following single aspects should be part of such an integrated programme:

- The creation of European Graduate Schools as a long term measure of Education and Training Programmes
- *Knowledge transfer*: the design of pilot projects could help develop formats for non-typical learners (e.g. adding knowledge to industrial experience)
- Education and training schemes should take different types of career development into account: research vs. application-oriented careers
- Change financial rule for receipts in Research Projects: allow receipts without deduction from funding sum as one measure into sustainability
- To bridge the gap from research results to application we feel the need for:
 - A basic and long-term funding scheme for the cooperation between universities and SMEs independent from any call
 - A specific funding scheme for start-ups offered in cooperation with e.g. EIB
 - Funding not only for demonstration activities (prototype) as part of scientific and innovation projects, but also including zero series
 - Funding for screening and managing IP-rights on a collaborative level (IP-portfolio management)

These aspects should be part of an integrated program and strategy to strengthen Europe's position in global competition.