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Displaying 28 of 60 respondents

Response Type:
Normal ResponseCustom Value:
emptyResponse Started:
Monday, July 29, 2013 2:30:14 PMCollector:
Web Link
(Web Link)IP Address:
130.88.128.214Response Modified:
Monday, July 29, 2013 3:11:28 PM

1. Name:

2. Organisation (if applicable):

University of Manchester

3. Email address:

4. Address:

University of Manchester

5. In responding, it would be helpful if you could indicate whether you are responding as

an individual

6. Keeping in touch

Please keep me informed by email of the progress of this review, and other BIS Balance of Competence reviews.

1. 1. Where has EU action had a positive impact for the UK on research, technological development, innovation or space? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action encouraged national action in any areas?

Although sometimes hidden, a lot of museums in the UK have received EU funding to foster public engagement. A lot of FP7 funding is given to UK based scientists to support research. Such funding also fosters the interaction between UK scientists and scientists in other European countries. Such interactions are needed in order to keep up to date what is happening in other EU countries and in the UK it is very easy to ignore what is happening outside of the UK.

2. 2. Where has EU action had a negative impact for the UK in these fields? What evidence is there for this? Has EU action prevented potentially useful national action in any areas?

I do not know such examples. Maybe there is a lot of competitions between EU member states and a country like Germany is investing much more money into research compared to the UK. This may lead to a situation in which for example Germany is leading in research areas where the UK used to lead in the past (like engineering, car industry).

3. 3. How and where has UK engagement with partner countries or international bodies, both within and outside the EU, been helped or hindered by EU involvement?

I do not know.

4. 4. What benefits or difficulties has the objective of a European research area (ERA) delivered for the UK?

The UK research priorities are not always the same as the research priorities in other ERA countries. If isolated it is more challenging to get extra support from the EU programs.

5. 5. How has the EU sought to coordinate the policy instruments at its disposal across different policy areas to create an enabling environment for researchers and innovators? How successful has this been?

From what I have witnessed, the EU always tries to involve as many partners as possible early at the discussion stage of new research areas and if one is present during these early stages then there is a good possibility to shape the research

agenda for the future. It one is too late than it is more difficult to participate in shaping a new research agenda but there is still room to participate and to influence subareas.

1. 6. What could the EU most helpfully do to promote scientific and technological progress and innovation (including in the space sector)? - How could the EU use its existing competence differently to deliver more in your area? - How might a greater or lesser degree of EU competence deliver more in your area? - How could improvements to existing EU activities make them more effective and efficient?

One of the problems in the EU is lack of common standards. For example, the UK still does not use the metric system in many of its measurements. This is just a simple example of translations that have to be done all the time. The EU could deliver more if we would adhere to common standards. A lot of areas are very different between the EU member states (law, currency, health systems). Compared to these, science is already quite advanced and we can interact quite efficiently between the EU partners. Most of the difficulties arise because of differences between individual states and the EU tries its best to better harmonise between the EU states.

2. 7. Where might future EU level action be detrimental to your work in this area?

In case we get regulations interfering with research from the EU through pressure groups this might complicate the way we do research. It is then up to the member states to prevent this from happening

3. 8. Where might action at national rather than EU level be more appropriate / effective?

Anything related to better infrastructure is most efficiently dealt with at the national level. If infrastructure and investments are in place it will be easier to get money for research.

4. 9. How could EU and national policies and funding streams interact better?

There is already an activity in place called the ERA-net or ERA-net plus. This is the ideal way to interact between local funders and the EU where part of the money is put in from the local funders and part from the EU on one research area and the review process is done by experts in the field and not any more influenced neither by the EU nor by the funders

5. 10. What impact would any future enlargement of the EU have on this area of competence?

It all depends of the future enlargement would attract competitive research infrastructure or not. If it does it will strengthen the ERA. If it does not, most likely it will not have any impact (positive or negative)

6. 11. Are there any other points you wish to make which are not captured above?

The language used in the UK is biased like talking about UK and Europe as two independent entities. The use of language is a subtle way to suggest that sometimes the UK is not part of Europe. Within the UK similar subtle language exists, like GB, which does not really exist as a country but is sub-divided in England, Wales and Scotland. In a way the UK (and GB) is like a little Europe with special rules in its parts. The UK and the EU would profit so much more if the UK would be more Pro-EU and gets really involved with the EU in a positive forward thinking way.

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