

Research capacity in the Western Balkans

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Overview

- Background and objectives of the study
- Methodology
- Overview of a research capacity
 - strengths, weaknesses, potential
- Main challenges
- Emerging conclusion and recommendations

Background and objectives of the study

Commissioned by EC under SPHERE contract
implemented by University Barcelona & European
University Association (EUA)

Time-line: January to December 2017

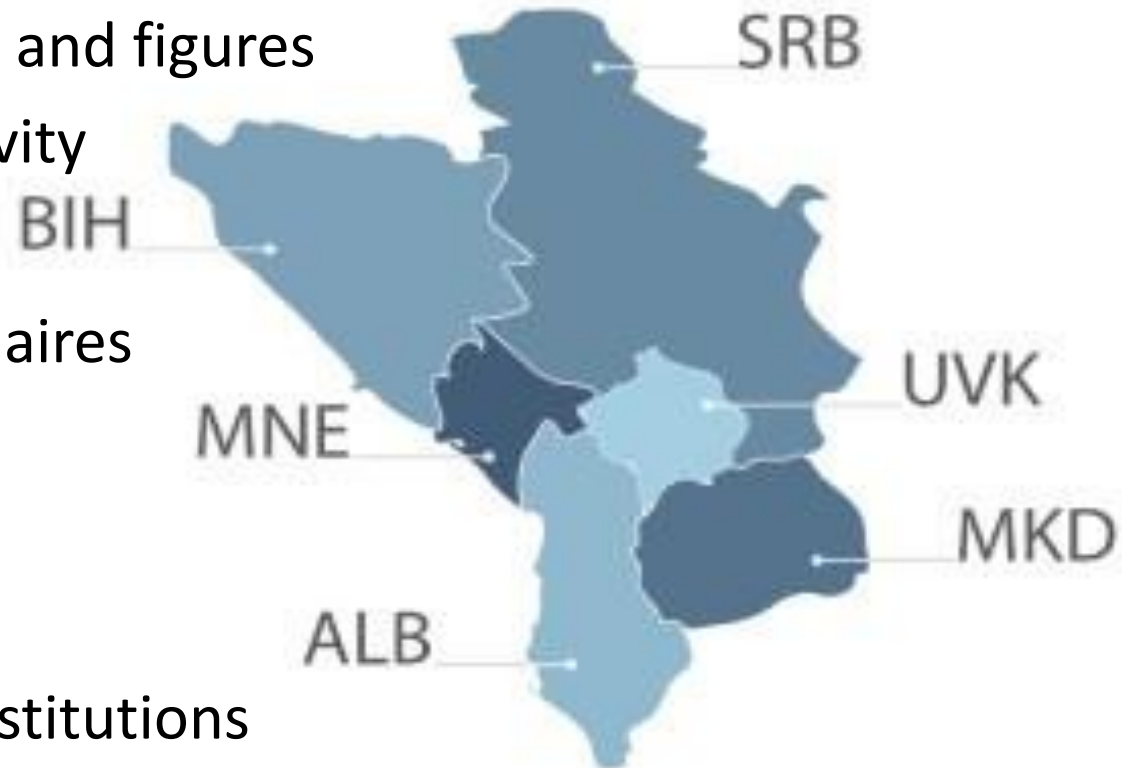
Objective:

To assess the research capacity at higher
education institutions in the Western Balkan
countries: AL, BiH, FYRM, KO, ME, SR; and

Provide recommendations to national and EU
level policy makers for improvement.

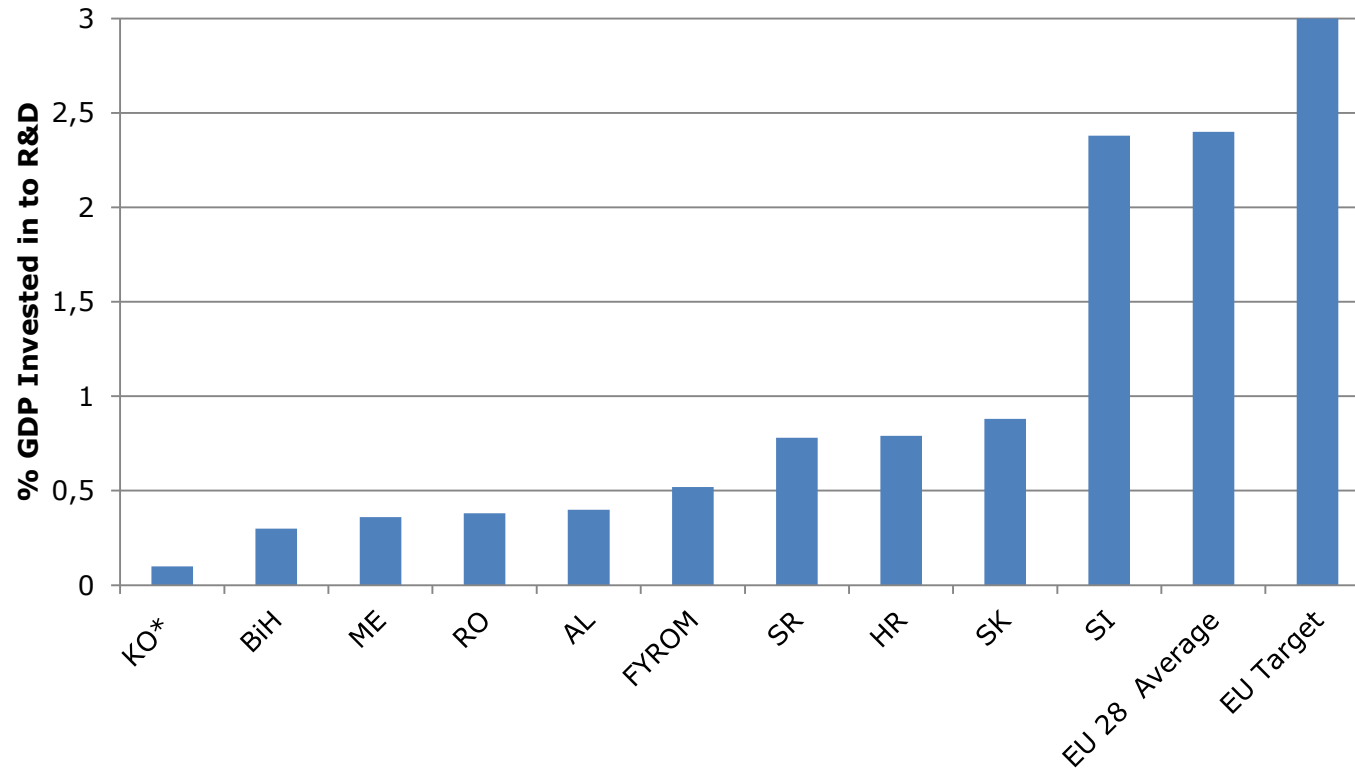
Methodology

- Desk research
 - Country level facts and figures
 - Research productivity
- Data collection
 - 3 online questionnaires
 - <1250 individuals
 - <90 HEIs
- Site visits
 - 6 countries, 15 institutions
 - interviews <100 participants



Relevant background statistics

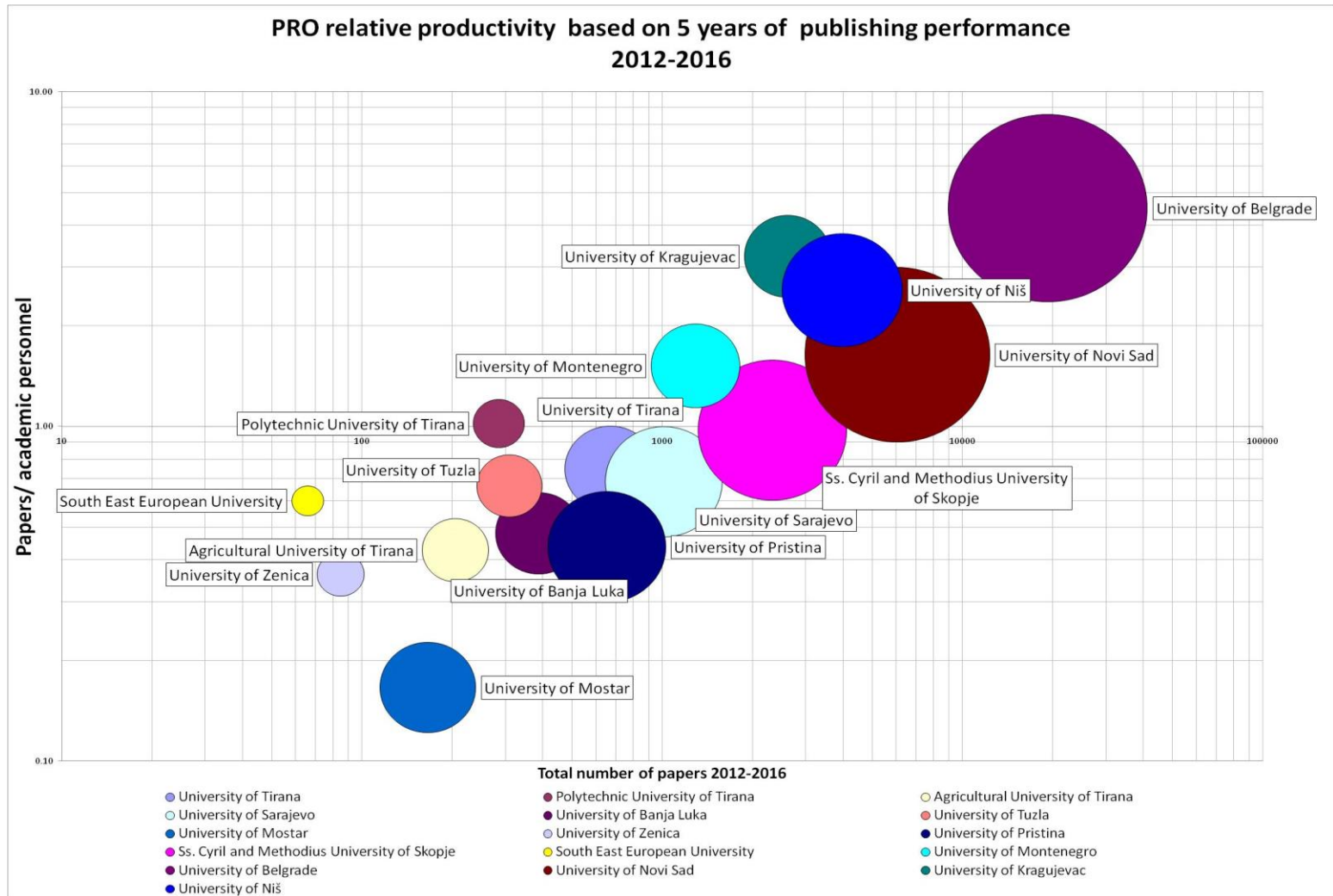
% GDP invested in to R&D in WB countries and selected EU MS



Source: EC

EU Target: 3%

Research productivity



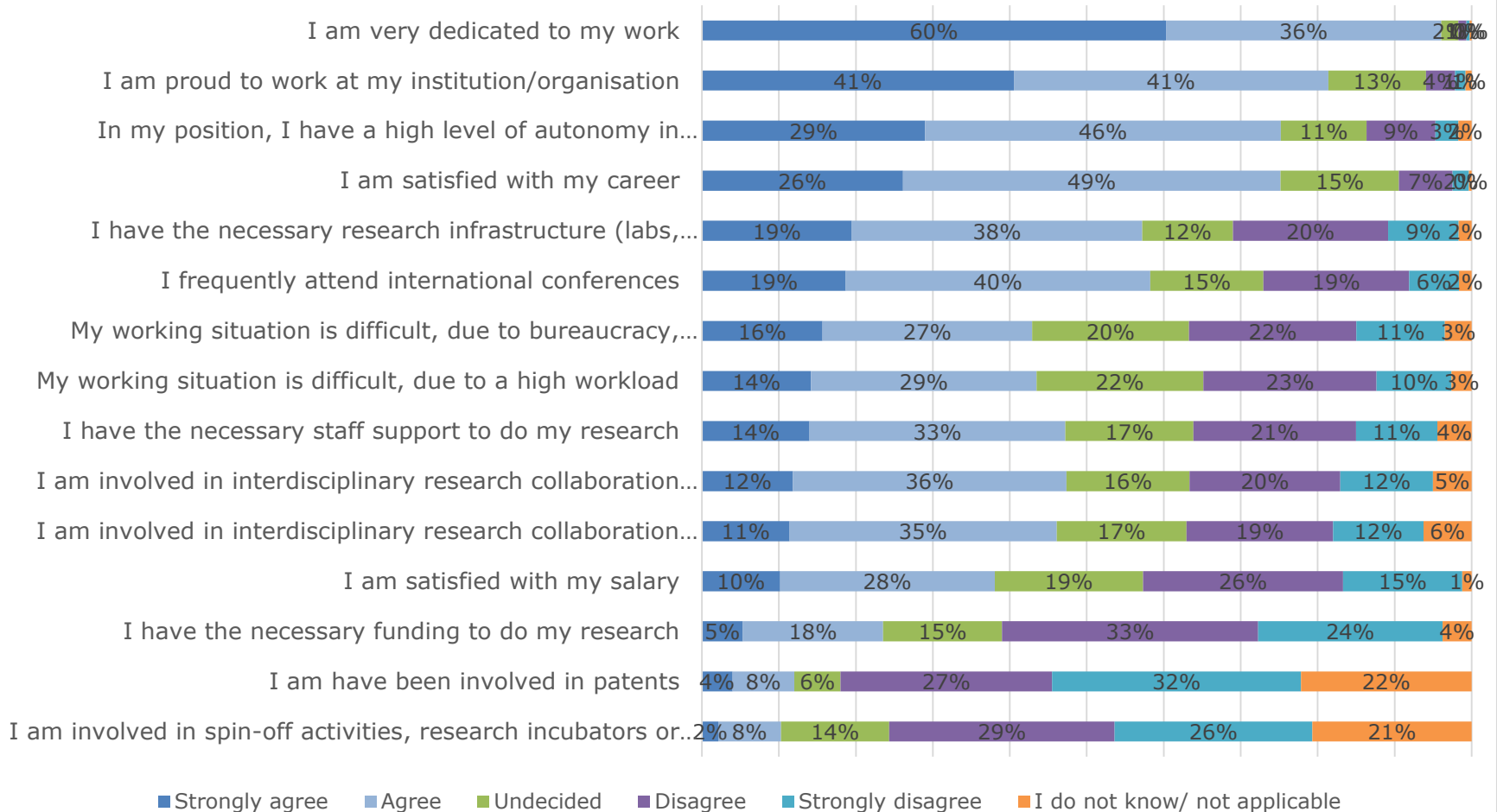
- 5 year consolidated figures

Strengths and Potential

- Examples of good practices
 - New requirements for research productivity
 - Internationalization of research
 - Development of structural documents, policies
- Successful and motivated individual researchers
- New type of leaders
- Shift of generations

Overall perception of individual situation

Q 22 Which of the following describes your situation?



Weaknesses

- Persistent and long lasting lack of funding for research
- HE a low national strategic priority and still perceived as a cost, not investment
- Slow and inadequate reform of HE system
- Decentralised universities with strong faculties
- Weak strategic research planning, no clear research policy
- Outdated research infrastructure
- Low level of administrative support
- Research subordinate to teaching
- Out-of date and inadequate development of young researchers
- Low level of internationalisation
- Low collaboration with private sector

Drivers for change

- Increase investment in to in R&D (3% EU goal)
- Change governmental and social perception of research relevance for the national economy and societal development
- Make a better use of available funding schemes
- Shift research governance to improve productivity
- Emphasize the role of research within the university system (2nd stream Mission)
- Develop a 3rd stream mission (Research Impact: Profit, People, Planet)

Improving research capacity: key policy messages

1. Research funding
2. Administrative/ management support for research
3. Research/ teaching balance and career progression
4. RI and facilities
5. Research governance
6. University mission and roles

Emerging conclusions

- The WB countries share many features related to research capacity however research conditions and environment still significantly differ among six countries.
- Although on a system level there are many weaknesses and constraints, motivated and successful individual researchers demonstrate the potential for improvement of research capacity; individuals could play an important role in change management.
- More funding is needed to unlock capacity.
- The gap between the WB and the EU27 needs to be better bridged.
- The differences between EU and WB priorities need to be better reflected.
- Examples of good practices pave the way for more widespread change and better use of existing resources.

Next steps

- Feedback from this meeting would be welcomed.
- Production of draft report.
- Study finalised December 2017
- Action?

Contact points

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