ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LIFELONG LEARNING & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ (Ε.Σ.Ε.Τ.)

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (N.C.R.T.)

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The Center for Genetics, Nutrition and Health, Washington, DC, USA

Doros Theodorou
National Technical University of Athens

Διάβημα του Εθνικού Συμβουλίου Έρευνας και Τεχνολογίας προς τη Διεθνή Ακαδημαϊκή και Ερευνητική Κοινότητα

Οκτώβριος – Δεκέμβριος 2011

Τον περασμένο Οκτώβριο το Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Έρευνας και Τεχνολογίας (ΕΣΕΤ) απηύθυνε ανοιχτή επιστολή προς τη διεθνή ακαδημαϊκή και ερευνητική κοινότητα ζητώντας υποστήριξη προκειμένου να δοθεί στην Ελλάδα η απαραίτητη πίστωση χρόνου έτσι ώστε να μπορέσει να εφαρμόσει τις απαραίτητες μεταρρυθμίσεις στο χώρο της έρευνας με τρόπο ομαλό και συντεταγμένο.

Η επιστολή με τίτλο «Η Ελλάδα σε σταυροδρόμι» εστάλη από τα μέλη του ΕΣΕΤ σε ερευνητικά ιδρύματα και επιστημονικές οργανώσεις υψηλού κύρους κυρίως στην Ευρώπη και στις Η.Π.Α ενώ πρόσφατα δημοσιεύθηκε στο έγκριτο επιστημονικό περιοδικό Nature [Συνημμένα 1ο έως 3ο].

Σχετικό άρθρο του μέλους του ΕΣΕΤ, καθηγητή του London School of Economics, K. Featherstone, δημοσιεύθηκε στους Financial Times στις 18 Οκτωβρίου [Συνημμένο 4ο]. Παράλληλα, ο καθηγητής του Πανεπιστημίου της Φρανκφούρτης και μέλος του ΕΣΕΤ Μ. Χαλιάσος, έδωσε συνεντεύξεις στο ραδιόφωνο, στον ημερήσιο Γερμανικό τύπο (Frankfurter Allegmeine Zeitung, 25/10/11) [Συνημμένο 5ο].

Επιπροσθέτως με πρωτοβουλία του Ακαδημαϊκού Λ. Χριστοφόρου, εστάλη από την Ακαδημία Αθηνών ανοιχτή επιστολή προς όλες της Ακαδημίες Επιστημών των Κρατών Μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης [Συνημμένο 6ο].

Η μέχρι τώρα ανταπόκριση είναι ιδιαίτερα ενθαρρυντική και το Συμβούλιο έχει λάβει πλήθος επιστολών υποστήριξης από ερευνητικά ιδρύματα και επιστημονικές οργανώσεις.

Ενδεικτικά αναφέρονται οι επιστολές υποστήριξης από τον πρόεδρο του CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research of France) [Συνημμένο 7ο] και από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση Πολιτικών Επιστημών (ECPR- European Consortium for Political Research) [Συνημμένο 8ο].

Ο πρόεδρος του CNRS, Alain Fuchs τονίζει μεταξύ άλλων *«ελπίζω ότι οι Ευρωπαϊκές Κυβερνήσεις και οι Διεθνείς Οργανισμοί θα κατανοήσουν την ιδιαιτερότητα και τη μεγάλη σημασία της επιστημονικής Έρευνας και της Ανώτατης Εκπαίδευσης και θα κάνουν ότι είναι δυνατό για να κρατήσουν ζωντανό το χώρο αυτό στην Ελλάδα παρά την εξαιρετικά δύσκολη οικονομική συγκυρία».*

Μεταξύ των διαβημάτων της διεθνούς επιστημονικής κοινότητας ως ιδιαίτερα σημαντική κρίνεται η πρωτοβουλία που ανέλαβαν καθηγητές του πανεπιστημίου της Κολωνίας με επιστολή που απηύθυναν στην Καγκελάριο Α. Μέρκελ, επαινώντας τις προσπάθειες της χώρας για τις αναγκαίες μεταρρυθμίσεις στο χώρο της Έρευνας και ζητώντας υποστήριξη έτσι ώστε οι προσπάθειες αυτές να αποδώσουν τα επιδιωκόμενα αποτελέσματα [Συνημμένο 9ο].

Ακολουθεί συνοπτικός κατάλογος των σχετικών δημοσιευμάτων και ενεργειών του ΕΣΕΤ και των ανταποκρίσεων της ερευνητικής κοινότητας. Επισυνάπτονται ενδεικτικά δείγματα σχετικών εγγράφων [Συνημμένα 10ο έως 18ο].

Συνοπτικός κατάλογος ενεργειών & αποκρίσεων στην επιστολή του ΕΣΕΤ

«Η Ελλάδα σε σταυροδρόμι»

- Η επιστολή του ΕΣΕΤ στην Αγγλική γλώσσα, «Greece is at Crossroads», 19 Οκτωβρίου 2011.
- Η επιστολή του ΕΣΕΤ στα Ελληνικά, «Η Ελλάδα σε σταυροδρόμι», 19 Οκτωβρίου 2011.
- Επιστολή του προέδρου του ΕΣΕΤ, καθηγητή Σ. Κριμιζή και του μέλους του ΕΣΕΤ, Άρη Πατρινού στο περιοδικό Nature, *«Economic Crisis: Call to support Greek research reforms»*, 3 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
- Επιστολή του μέλους του ΕΣΕΤ, καθηγητή K. Featherstone στους Financial Times of London, 18 Οκτωβρίου 2011
- Αποστολή της ανοιχτής επιστολής του ΕΣΕΤ στο γραφείο του P. Thomsen, στελέχους του Διεθνούς Νομισματικού Ταμείου, 24 Οκτωβρίου 2011.

- Άρθρο του μέλους του ΕΣΕΤ, καθηγητή Μ. Χαλιάσου, *"Griechische Patienten nicht durch Ueberdosis toeten"* Handelsblatt, 24 Οκτωβρίου 2011
- Άρθρο του Μ. Χαλιάσου *"Don't kill the patient through medicine Overdose – Μη σκοτώσετε τον ασθενή για να πετύχει η εγχείρηση!»* http://www.greekeconomistsforreform.org, 26 Οκτωβρίου 2011
- Συνέντευξη του Μ. Χαλιάσου, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 27/10/2011
- Συνέντευξη του Μ. Χαλιάσου στο Ελληνικό Πρόγραμμα της Γερμανικής Ραδιοφωνίας, 13 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Συνέντευξη του Μ. Χαλιάσου στην International Herald Tribune, 11 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
- Επιστολή του Προέδρου της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών καθηγητή Απόστολου Γεωργιάδη, προς τις Ακαδημίες Επιστημών των Κρατών Μελών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, Νοέμβριος 2011.
- Επιστολή του Προέδρου του CNRS, Alain Fuchs, στον Πρόεδρο του ΕΣΕΤ, Σ. Κριμιζή, 4 Νοεμβρίου, 2011
- Μήνυμα της εκτελεστικής επιτροπής της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης Πολιτικής Επιστήμης (European Consortium for Political Research), 4 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Επιστολή του καθηγητή Marcello Coradini συντονιστή προγραμμάτων του Ευρωπαϊκού Οργανισμού Διαστήματος (European Space Agency-ESA), 9 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
- Συμμετοχή του προέδρου του ΕΣΕΤ κ. Σ. Κριμιζή και του μέλους του ΕΣΕΤ Γ. Παυλάκη σε συζήτηση στρογγυλής τραπέζης στην Ουάσιγκτον με εκπροσώπους της Ελληνο-Αμερικανικής Ακαδημαϊκής κοινότητας, 9 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από την Dr. C. Plainaki, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome, (INAF/IFSI), 14 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από την Dr. M. Laurenza, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome (INAF/IFSI), 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από την Dr. M. Storini, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome, (INAF/IFSI), 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από τον Dr. A. Mura, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome, (INAF/IFSI), 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από την Dr. G. Rinaldi, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome, (INAF/IFSI), 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Ανοιχτή επιστολή υποστήριξης από την Dr. R. Rispoli, National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome, (INAF/IFSI), 15 Νοεμβρίου 2011
- Επιστολή καθηγητών του Πανεπιστημίου της Κολωνίας προς την Καγκελάριο Α. Μέρκελ, 20 Νοεμβρίου 2011.
- Κεντρικό Άρθρο (editorial) στο περιοδικό Nature, vol. 480, No 5, 5 Δεκεμβρίου 2011, "Half Way There", *Spain, Italy and Greece all have new Governments and new research laws. Despite the pressures of economic austerity, investing in science now could bring disproportionate benefits*.

ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ (Ε.Σ.Ε.Τ.)

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Synthetic Genomics Inc

George Pavlakis
Researcher, USA

Artemis P. Simopoulos
The Center for Genetics, Nutrition and Health, Washington, DC, USA

Doros Theodorou
National Technical University of Athens

19/10/ 2011
REF: 81/ ESET

Dear fellow members of the academic and research communities,

Greece is at a Crossroads

We write to you as members of the National Council for Research and Technology of Greece (ESET). Our role is to provide advice on the reorganization of the Greek research landscape, as an engine for future growth and as a tool for exit from the current economic crisis. There is, of course, a lot that needs to be achieved in order for Greece to correct errors of the past and to return to a path of economic growth.

The Council has been working on orderly and realistic plans to reform the country's research infrastructure and, in doing so, we have witnessed the determination of key stake-holders to reform the entire system and put Greece on a more effective track. Indeed, a new spirit is evident in favour of radical change and there is a great determination to restructure and overcome the present calamitous situation. There is much talent, dedication, and pockets of excellence to build on within the Greek scientific community.

But, the grave present danger is that the research infrastructure, as well as many other essential institutions relevant to its upgrading, may disintegrate due to the inordinate pressures being placed on the country. Please imagine if you were asked to restructure an entire research establishment, not even in months but in only a few weeks, as is being presently demanded by Greece's international creditors. Under such inordinate time pressure, the only choice is to make financial cuts indiscriminately and without evaluation, with potentially grave consequences to future prospects for recovery. It is imperative that Greece is afforded the opportunity for an orderly implementation of the much-needed reforms: these will take time and will need appropriate support. The process of restructuring has already been initiated, is under way, and should be allowed to proceed as such, with follow-on refinements as necessary, but must not be jeopardized.

In the present critical situation, we appeal in the strongest possible terms to our colleagues in the international scientific community to lend us their support and to make representations to help convince governments and relevant international bodies to show greater understanding and to establish a more reasonable path that will enable Greece to more realistically achieve objectives which we hold in common. We would welcome your statements of support and to be informed of any representations you undertake in this regard.

S. Krimizis

ESET Chair

skrimizis@academyofathens.gr

ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΙΟ
ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ
(Ε.Σ.Ε.Τ.)

Αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι, μέλη της ακαδημαϊκής και ερευνητικής κοινότητας,

Απευθυνόμαστε σε εσάς εκ μέρους του, και ως μέλη του Εθνικού Συμβουλίου Έρευνας και Τεχνολογίας της Ελλάδας. Ο ρόλος μας είναι συμβουλευτικός ως προς την αναδιοργάνωση του Ελληνικού ερευνητικού χώρου με στόχο την μελλοντική ανάπτυξη και την έξοδο της χώρας από την οικονομική κρίση. Είναι βέβαια πολλά αυτά που πρέπει να γίνουν έτσι ώστε η Ελλάδα να διορθώσει λάθη του παρελθόντος και να επιστρέψει στο δρόμο της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης.

Εργαζόμαστε με βάση οργανωμένα και συγχρόνως ρεαλιστικά σχέδια για τη μεταρρύθμιση της ερευνητικής δομής της χώρας και σε όλο αυτό το διάστημα έχουμε γίνει μάρτυρες της αποφασιστικότητας της ηγεσίας και των κυρίως εμπλεκομένων φορέων για στοχευμένες μεταρρυθμίσεις που θα επιτρέψουν στη χώρα να επανέλθει σε μια πορεία υγιούς ανάπτυξης. Είναι πράγματι εμφανές ένα νέο πνεύμα για ριζικές αλλαγές. Ταυτόχρονα, διαπιστώνουμε ισχυρή αποφασιστικότητα για αναδιοργάνωση που θα συμβάλλει στο να ξεπεραστεί η εξαιρετικά δύσκολη παρούσα συγκυρία. Υπάρχει πολύ ταλέντο, αφοσίωση και θύλακες αριστείας ως θεμέλια στην Ελληνική ερευνητική κοινότητα.

Υπάρχει, παραταύτα, μεγάλος κίνδυνος αποσύνθεσης όλου του ερευνητικού συστήματος εξαιτίας των υπέρμετρων πιέσεων που ασκούνται στη Χώρα. Φανταστείτε να σας ζητούσαν να αναδομήσετε ριζικά μια ερευνητική δομή μέσα σε ένα ασφυκτικό χρονοδιάγραμμα λίγων εβδομάδων, όπως απαιτούν σήμερα οι διεθνείς πιστωτές της Ελλάδας.

Κάτω από αυτή την υπέρμετρη πίεση χρόνου η μόνη επιλογή είναι να προβεί κανείς σε δημοσιονομικές περικοπές, αδιακρίτως και χωρίς αξιολόγηση, με δυνητικά σοβαρές συνέπειες για τις μελλοντικές προοπτικές ανάκαμψης. Είναι επιτακτική ανάγκη να δοθεί στην Ελλάδα η ευκαιρία να εφαρμόσει τις, δίχως άλλο απαραίτητες, μεταρρυθμίσεις με τρόπο ομαλό και συντεταγμένο. Για να γίνει αυτό, χρειάζεται περισσότερος χρόνος και κατάλληλη υποστήριξη. Η διαδικασία της αναδιάρθρωσης του ερευνητικού ιστού της χώρας η οποία έχει ήδη ξεκινήσει πρέπει να συνεχιστεί απρόσκοπτα (με όποιες βελτιωτικές παρεμβάσεις χρειάζονται) και να μην υπονομευτεί και διακινδυνεύσει.

Στην παρούσα κρίσιμη κατάσταση, κάνουμε έκκληση σε εσάς, τους συναδέλφους μας στην διεθνή ακαδημαϊκή και ερευνητική κοινότητα, και ζητούμε την υποστήριξή σας προς τις κυβερνήσεις σας και αρμόδιους διεθνείς οργανισμούς για να πεισθούν να δείξουν μεγαλύτερη κατανόηση και να υποστηρίξουν μια πιο ορθολογική αντιμετώπιση της κατάστασης έτσι ώστε η Ελλάδα να μπορέσει ρεαλιστικά να φθάσει στους κοινούς μας στόχους. Κάθε κίνηση υποστήριξης προς αυτόν το σκοπό είναι ιδιαίτερα ευπρόσδεκτη.

Σ. Κριμιζής
Πρόεδρος ΕΣΕΤ

Correspondence

European stem-cell ruling is misleading

Last month the European Court of Justice ruled that inventions derived from human embryonic stem cells are largely unpatentable. This ruling will shape the development of stem-cell technology. So, to prevent confusion, we wish to point out that the ruling contains crucial errors with respect to the underlying science.

At issue is the dividing line between what does and does not constitute an individual human. Under European law, individuals are not patentable. The new ruling misleadingly classifies pseudo-fertilized eggs, or parthenotes (lumping together those made with and without nuclear transfer), as requiring the protections of personhood. This classification was made on the grounds that these eggs are "capable of commencing the process of development of a human being just as an embryo created by fertilization of an ovum can".

However, mammalian parthenogenetic embryos do not develop in the same way as normal embryos; nor are they developmentally viable if made without nuclear transplant. They are far down the sliding scale of developmental potential shared by all cells (including cells in the adult human body). It is therefore misguided for the ruling to put all parthenote-derived cells, which have technological potential (see A. A. Kiessling *Nature* **434,** 145; 2005), at the same end of the scale as cells that can fully differentiate (totipotent cells).

The ruling sensibly prevents a second confusion: inventions derived from human embryonic stem cells that require prior destruction of embryos are, it says, unpatentable. Because the technology already exists to make human embryonic stem-cell lines that preserve the viability of the donor embryo (Y. Chung *et al. Cell Stem Cell* **2,** 113–117; 2008), embryo destruction is unnecessary. The scope of the ruling may therefore be narrower than some might conclude.

Whether one is for or against biological patenting (and we have no settled view or financial interest at stake here), it will be unfortunate if the wording of the European Court's ruling should inadvertently inhibit a potentially useful, ethical technology using parthenotes just because of a lapse in scientific understanding.

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*Competing interests declared. See http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/479041a for declaration and *full author list.*

Call to support Greek research reforms

As members of the Greek National Council for Research and Technology, we appeal to the global scientific community to lend us its support in Greece's present critical economic situation. We must convince governments and relevant international bodies that we need a more realistic time frame to enable Greece to achieve the objectives that we all hold in common.

The council's role is to advise on the reorganization of Greek research as an engine for future growth and as a way out of the current crisis. There is a grave danger, however, that the research infrastructure, and many institutions essential to its upgrading, could disintegrate because of the pressures being placed on the country.

Greece's international creditors are demanding rapid restructuring of the entire research establishment, forcing financial cuts to be made indiscriminately, with serious implications for recovery prospects.

In working to reform the research infrastructure, the council has seen that key stakeholders are determined to put Greece on a more effective track and are enthusiastic about radical change. The Greek scientific community contains pockets of excellence and much talent and dedication. It is imperative that Greece is allowed time to implement the much-needed reforms in a careful and orderly way.

Stamatios M. Krimigis *Academy of Athens, Greece.*
Aristides A. N. Patrinos *Synthetic Genomics, La Jolla, California, USA.*
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Easter Island's complex history

The history of Easter Island is important because it offers a lesson in long-term survival in an isolated and resource-poor environment. In his review of our book, *The Statues That Walked*, Paul Bahn makes some potentially misleading assertions (*Nature* **476,** 150–151; 2011).

He implies that we have overlooked other people's work, but those studies are unpublished. We instead acquired our own data, controlling for content and quality.

Our excavations and radiocarbon dating indicate that Easter Island was colonized several centuries later than Bahn contends (T. L. Hunt and C. P. Lipo *Science* **311,** 1603–1606; 2006). Settlement of this and other islands in eastern Polynesia occurred over the past 800–1,000 years. On the basis of new evidence, most archaeologists working on Easter Island now reject the notion that its population collapsed before the arrival of Europeans.

It is generally agreed that the island was almost completely deforested by the time Europeans arrived in 1722. We never argued that rats were the only cause of deforestation, which happened over centuries and resulted from people burning vegetation for agriculture, and from rat predation of seeds.

Although there is skeletal evidence for some violence on the island, only a few examples indicate mortal wounding. As we explain in our book, the statues were a focus of competitive signalling that staved off lethal violence.

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Control of dengue fever in Pakistan

Five years ago the Indian subcontinent experienced its first epidemic of dengue fever, with more than 5,000 people in India and more than 2,000 in Pakistan hospitalized (M. A. Rai and H. Khan *J. Clin. Virol.* **38,** 269–270; 2007). Pakistan is now in the middle of a dengue resurgence: more than 15,000 cases have been recorded in Lahore alone. This is potentially disastrous for the country's health-care system, which is already on its knees.

Mortality is much higher this time. There have also been reports in Pakistan of resistance to agrochemicals evolving in dengue mosquitoes (H. A. Khan *et al. Parasite Vectors* **4,** 146; 2011), calling into question the current massive fumigation drive. Last year's record floods have aggravated the situation.

Dengue experts have been flown in from Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the World Health Organization, but they may be too late. Prior planning and policy formulation by Pakistan's health-care authorities are key to the prevention of future dengue outbreaks.

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Hasty, indiscriminate cuts will not help Greece

From Prof Kevin Featherstone.

Sir, The debt crisis demands deep reforms by the Greek government. What it doesn't require is a ham-fisted insistence on public expenditure cuts that stifle future prospects for recovery.

I write as a member of the Greek National Council for Research and Technology, which provides advice to the Ministry of Education on policies towards universities and research institutes. We are busy putting in place reforms that will radically alter the research landscape, helping to find an exit from the crisis and to establish an engine for future economic growth.

There are many inherited problems, built up over successive governments, to overcome, including inertia, poor monitoring and the misallocation of resources. Yet, we have witnessed the determination of key stakeholders to engage in serious reform. A cross-party consensus is evident on future research policy. There is much scientific talent and dedication, with pockets of excellence, to build on.

But the danger today is that the research infrastructure, as well as many other related institutions, may disintegrate due to the inordinate pressures being placed on the country. I ask your readers to appreciate being asked to restructure an entire research establishment, not even in months but in only a few weeks, as is being currently demanded by Greece's international creditors. Under the inordinate time pressure of the "troika", the only choice is to make financial cuts indiscriminately and without evaluation, with potentially grave consequences to the future prospects for recovery. Already, there is a worrying brain-drain; scientists have faced drastic cuts; and there is an imminent and general threat of salaries not being paid.

Greece's creditor governments need not doubt the will to engage in deep-rooted reforms, but it is imperative – indeed, in the interests of both Greece and Europe – that the country be afforded the opportunity for an orderly implementation of such measures.

Kevin Featherstone, London School of Economics, U

http://www.faz.net/-gqu-6ukzd

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON WERNER D'INKA, BERTHOLD KOHLER, GÜNTHER NONNENMACHER, FRANK SCHIRRMACHER, HOLGER STELTZNER

Im Gespräch: Michael Haliassos

25.10.2011

„Zu viel Druck kann den Patienten töten“

Griechenland benötigt Reformen. Aber es hat keinen Sinn, den öffentlichen Dienst völlig zu „enthaupten“, sagt der griechischstämmige Ökonom Michael Haliassos im F.A.Z.-Interview.

Artikel

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Michail Haliassos, geboren 1959, besitzt die griechische Staatsbürgerschaft

Michael Haliassos ist Professor für Makroökonomik an der Universität Frankfurt. Es gebe erfolgreiche Unternehmen, aber vielen Griechen fehle die richtige Qualifizierung, sagt er im Gespräch.

Professor Haliassos, wie sehen Sie die aktuelle Lage in Griechenland?

Griechenland braucht Reformen. Die Politik hat unter dem Druck von Interessensgruppen, der Opposition und des Widerstands in den eigenen Reihen zu lange mit Reformen gezögert. Insofern ist es gut, wenn nun auf die griechische Regierung Druck ausgeübt wird. Aber zu viel Druck kann den Patienten töten.

Was meinen Sie damit?

Man verlangt jetzt von Griechenland, innerhalb kurzer Zeit umfangreiche Reformen umzusetzen. Das ist kontraproduktiv, weil die Gefahr besteht, dass durch übertriebene Eile künftiges wirtschaftliches Wachstumspotential beschädigt wird.

Können Sie ein Beispiel nennen?

Natürlich ist der öffentliche Dienst in Griechenland personell überbesetzt und wenig effizient. Er muss kleiner werden. Aber es hat auch keinen Sinn, den öffentlichen Dienst zu enthaupten. Es besteht die Gefahr, dass durch zu rasches Handeln gute Leute entlassen werden und schlechte an ihren Plätzen bleiben. In Griechenland erhalten die Beschäftigten im öffentlichen Dienst grundsätzlich sehr gute Arbeitsbewertungen, die nicht unbedingt ihre tatsächliche Leistung reflektieren. Es braucht etwas Zeit, um die produktiven von den weniger produktiven Mitarbeitern zu unterscheiden.

Was meinen Sie mit der Enthauptung des öffentlichen Dienstes?

Um die Auflagen zu erfüllen, will die griechische Regierung vor allem ältere Beschäftigte entlassen. Damit würde man sich zwar durchaus auch von korrupten und wenig leistungsfähigen Leuten trennen, aber eben auch von fast allen leitenden Mitarbeitern. Das verstehe ich unter einer Enthauptung.

Wo liegt die Zukunft?

Die griechische Wirtschaft braucht einen effizienten öffentlichen Dienst, um ihre volle Leistungskraft zu entfalten. Um in Griechenland ein Gerichtsurteil zu erwirken, braucht es acht bis zehn Jahre. Wir benötigen auch einen effizienteren öffentlichen Dienst, um gegen Korruption und Steuerflucht vorzugehen, und vor allem, um Investitionen und das Entstehen von dynamischen, qualitäts- und exportorientierten Unternehmen zu fördern. Generell haben sich die Bedingungen für Unternehmen in den vergangenen Jahren im Vergleich zu anderen Ländern verschlechtert. Außerdem muss sich die Abhängigkeit der Privatwirtschaft vom Staat verringern.

Ist sie so groß?

Sie hat in den vergangenen 20 Jahren deutlich zugenommen. Viele griechische Unternehmen haben sich vor allem um Staatsaufträge bemüht, zum Beispiel die Bauunternehmen. Das grundsätzliche Problem der griechischen Wirtschaft besteht in einer zu geringen Produktion hochwertiger Güter und Dienstleistungen. Es geht hier nicht um ein zu hohes Preisniveau für solche Güter, sondern um ihr Fehlen. Deshalb könnte uns ein Austritt aus der Währungsunion und die Rückkehr zu einer Drachme, die dann deutlich abwerten würde, nicht viel helfen. Heiße Luft kann man nun einmal in keiner Währung verkaufen.

Sie klingen nicht sehr optimistisch.

Potential ist vorhanden. Die griechische Wirtschaft kennt auch Erfolgsgeschichten.

Zum Beispiel?

Kretafarm ist ein auf der Insel Kreta ansässiges, international tätiges Unternehmen, das für gesundheitsbewusste Verbraucher einen Teil der tierischen Fette aus Fleisch entfernt und durch pflanzliches Fett in Form des auf Kreta verbreiteten Olivenöls ersetzt. Das Unternehmen verfügt über ein für griechische Verhältnisse sehr hohes jährliches Forschungsbudget von 30 Millionen Euro. Ein anderes auch international erfolgreiches Unternehmen ist Korres, das Kosmetika auf der Basis von Naturprodukten herstellt. Corallia, ein Cluster aus Unternehmen aus der Mikroelektronik, hat unter anderem einen Auftrag von der Nasa erhalten.

Wie steht es mit der Ausbildung?

Es gibt in Griechenland das Phänomen einer Überqualifizierung. Viele Griechen haben das Abitur und an der Universität studiert. Allerdings haben sie nicht immer Fächer studiert, mit denen sich in der Wirtschaft viel anfangen lässt. So existiert ein Mangel an Ingenieuren. Auch fehlt es zum Beispiel an kompetenten Klempnern. Das vorhandene Potential muss richtig verteilt werden.

Wie soll dies geschehen?

Das wäre eine Aufgabe für die Politik. Aber die Griechen haben kein großes Vertrauen in ihre Politiker. Das große Problem besteht darin, dass niemand langfristige Visionen für Wirtschaftswachstum entwickelt und der Bevölkerung wirkungsvoll vermittelt. Stattdessen fragt man sich nur, was Griechenland kurzfristig erledigen muss, um die nächste Rate Hilfsgelder zu erhalten. Dieser Vorwurf trifft Griechenland, wo man sich lange um Reformen drücken wollte, ebenso wie seine Geldgeber, die über das geringe Reformtempo verständlicherweise frustriert sind. Beide Seiten sind wütend aufeinander und reden aneinander vorbei. Das ist wie in einer Ehe kurz vor der Scheidung.

Wird man die Scheidung vermeiden?

Keine der beiden großen Parteien will die Währungsunion verlassen. In einer Umfrage unter der griechischen Bevölkerung sprachen sich kürzlich 80 Prozent für einen Verbleib im Euro aus. Die Griechen machen nicht den Euro für ihre Lage verantwortlich. Eine Scheidung ist auch gar nicht notwendig, wenn alle Beteiligten stärker an die langfristige Entwicklung des wirtschaftlichen Potentials in Griechenland durch geeignete Reformen denken würden.

Das Gespräch führte Gerald Braunberger.

Frankfurter Allgemeine
ZEITUNG FÜR DEUTSCHLAND

ΑΚΑΔΗΜΙΑ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ

ACADEMY OF ATHENS

To the National Academies of Sciences and Arts of the EU Member States

November 2011

Dear Fellow Academicians,

We are certain that you are aware of the difficult times our country is currently facing. Regrettably, this situation is expected to continue for some time and to impact all sectors of the country, including our Academic and Research Institutions.

Indeed, the vitality of Greek Universities and Research and Technology Institutions is threatened by the crisis, the very survival of some of them is in doubt, and programs aiming at upgrading and innovation come to a standstill. The very institutions the country needs to find its way out of the crisis, through development, are deprived of resources and their infrastructure is deteriorating, while their most valuable asset, the capable young scientists, is forced to leave the country.

The health of the Greek University and Research and Technology Institutions must be preserved at any cost. The country is blessed with many excellent scientists and engineers whose expertise and dedication Greece needs, especially now. Admirably, both the Institutions and the Scientists are determined to maintain their high standards, their competitive programs and their international reputation. We are all committed to these goals, but the road ahead seems exceedingly difficult and uncertain.

We thus appeal to your Academy and its membership to intercede with your government and EU bodies to lend their support to the Academic and Research Institutions of Greece at this critical moment. This, we believe, is to the best common interest and indeed a meaningful way of helping Greece on its road to recovery. *We specifically ask for your endorsement of the following statement, which our Academy will forward to the European Commission.*

"To the European Commission
Recognizing the utmost importance of science and technology in the development of Greece, we urge the European Commission to urgently enact a special program in support of the Academic and Research Institutions and of the young scientists of Greece."

Your support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Prof. Apostolos S. Georgiades
President

ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥ 28, 106 79 ΑΘΗΝΑ. ΤΗΛ.: 210 3664700, FAX: 210 3634 806

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Paris, november 4, 2011

Le Président
www.cnrs.fr
Campus Gérard Mégie
3, rue Michel-Ange
75794 Paris cedex 16
T. 01 44 96 40 00
F. 01 44 96 49 13

Dear Professor KRIMIZIS,

I am writing to you as the head of CNRS, in support of the french scientific community to our Greek collegues in these times of severe economical difficulties.

It is common wisdom today in scientific developed, as well as in the strongly emergent countries, that Science and Technology will greatly help us to develop a knowledge-based global economy, in order to find the path towards a sustainable economic growth. In this respect, we are faced, in many countries, with the necessity of reshaping and reorganizing our research and higher education system. This is the case in France, where the government has launched an ambitious-10 years long-excellence initiative plan in order to set out a few elite, research-oriented multidisciplinary universities.

As we all know, Greece is full of talented scientists and excellent research centers, and your higher education system certainly deserves the kind of middle-to-long term restructuring effort that many other countries have launched these last few years. But restructuring is by no means equivalent to a destruction today, followed by a reconstruction some time in an undecided future when economy will do better.

I certainly hope that governments and relevant international bodies will understand the specific nature and the importance of keeping scientific research and higher education alive in Greece, despite the present difficulties.

With all my best wishes,

Alain FUCHS

Professor Stamatis KRIMISIS
ESET Chair

Response from the Executive Committee of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)

The ECPR remains committed to working with all Greek institutions to make more manageable the funding cuts to the political and social sciences in Greece. Already, in the last month, the ECPR, aware of the difficulties confronting Greek and other European universities, adjusted its membership policy to provide assistance to those member institutions which are finding it difficult to meet the standard membership fees. In difficult times such as these, the political and social sciences are essential to the maintenance of social cohesion and retention of policy expertise, without which ongoing political challenges cannot be faced easily. ECPR will maintain its cooperation and solidarity with Greek academics during the period ahead.

University of Cologne

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Bundeskanzlerin
Dr. Angela Merkel
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Köln, 20.11. 2011

Restructuring of the scientific landscape in Greece

Dear Chancellor Dr. Merkel,

Greece and Europe are facing difficult times due to the financial crisis, which also leads to a very demanding situation for the German government. We are glad to see your efforts to master the current crisis and sincerely appreciate your commitments for a strong, unified and prosperous Europe.

Our scientific colleagues from Greece informed us that their country is expected to restructure in many areas, which they largely support. In particular, they also see the necessity to reshape their scientific landscape. But we also learned that the Greek scientific community is exposed to enormous pressure to set these plans in place immediately. With this letter we like to stress our conviction that reasonable changes to a scientific system must only be made after careful assessments and deliberate considerations. Such assessments need to be allocated sufficient time to arrive at prudent and balanced decisions and to not jeopardize any existing well functioning structures and local centers of excellence. We would also like to stress that some core financial allocations to science and education need to be maintained in Greece as well since one of the most important investments in the future of a country are the investments in education and basic science. Therefore we would like to ask you - in case a possibility arises to you on an European policy level - to support the restructuring of the Greek scientific landscape based on reasonable core finances and based on a sensible time schedule. We assume that you as a former scientist and due to your contacts to the scientific world through your husband Prof. Dr. Joachim Sauer will be very understanding of our requests.

Visiting Address:
Zülpicher Str. 49a
50674 Köln

Postal Address:
Albertus-Magnus-Platz
50923 Köln

In addition to the German version of our letter we provide an English copy, which we will also send as a sign of our support to Dr. S. Krimigis, the Head of the National Council for Research and Technology of Greece.

Sincerely,

Prof. Joachim Saur
(Univ. of Cologne)

Prof. Fritz M. Neubauer
(Univ of Cologne)

Dr. Norbert Krupp
(Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research)

17. November 2011

Handelsblatt

» Drucken

ÖKONOMEN

„Griechischen Patienten nicht durch Überdosis töten“

Noch ist die Griechenland-Rettung nicht unter Dach und Fach. Unklar ist, wie stark Banken und Versicherer einbezogen werden können. Griechische Forscher warnten, ihrem Land zu viel abzuverlangen.

Frankfurt. Griechische Wissenschaftler haben einen dramatischen Appell an die internationale Forschungsgemeinde gerichtet. Wegen der Krise ihres Landes sorgen sie sich um den dortigen Wissenschaftsstandort. Mit ihrem Aufruf versuchen sie, Regierungen und internationale Organisationen für die Situation der griechischen Forschungslandschaft zu sensibilisieren. „Die geordnete Durchführung der dringend benötigten Reformen braucht Zeit“, heißt es in dem Appell des Nationalen Rates für Forschung und Technologie, dem Michalis Haliassos, Professor für Makroökonomie und Finanzmärkte am House of Finance der Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, angehört sowie weitere renommierte Forscher u. a. des MIT, der London School of Economics und der Ecole Normale Superieure Paris. Eine Restrukturierung innerhalb weniger Wochen, wie von der internationalen Gläubigergemeinschaft gefordert, ließe sich nur durch willkürliche Kürzungen erreichen. Eine solche Maßnahme ohne vorherige Evaluationen würde jedoch die erhoffte zukünftige Erholung des gesamten Landes gefährden.

„Es besteht kein Zweifel, dass umfangreiche Reformen auch in der griechischen Forschungsinfrastruktur nötig sind“, sagt Michalis Haliassos. Eine flächendeckende Kürzung von Forschungspersonal sowie unbedachtes Schließen oder Fusionieren von Forschungszentren hätten indes katastrophale Folgen für das langfristige Ziel, die Grundlagen für künftiges Wachstum zu schaffen. „Die internationalen Gläubiger müssen Druck ausüben für Reformen, sie dürfen jedoch nicht ungeduldig und unvernünftig sein, was den Zeitrahmen angeht. Der Patient muss geheilt und sollte nicht durch eine Überdosis getötet werden“, so Michalis Haliassos.

Die EU-Kommission zeigte sich derweil zuversichtlich für das zweite Griechenland-Hilfspaket. „Wir sind relativ nahe an einer Abmachung“, sagte der Sprecher von EU-Währungskommissar Olli Rehn am Montag in Brüssel. Details nannte er nicht.

Die Kommission bleibe bei ihrer Haltung, dass Privatgläubiger wie Banken und Versicherungen auf freiwilliger Basis an dem Paket beteiligt werden sollen.

Beim EU-Gipfel am Sonntag war deutlich geworden, dass Banken und Versicherer weit stärker an der Rettung beteiligt werden sollen. Bisher wollen sie freiwillig auf 21 Prozent ihrer Forderungen verzichten. Die Politik pocht aber auf 40 bis 60 Prozent.

Das zweite Rettungspaket mit öffentlichen Hilfen von 109 Milliarden Euro muss neu verhandelt werden, weil sich die Finanzierungsbedingungen für das Land verschlechterten. Ein Gipfel der Euro-Staats- und Regierungschefs soll sich am Mittwoch auf das neue Paket einigen.

dne/rtr

Μη σκοτώσετε τον ασθενή για να πετύχει η εγχείρηση!

Posted on Οκτωβρίου 26, 2011 by M_Haliassos

Το Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Έρευνας και Τεχνολογίας (ΕΣΕΤ), το ανώτατο ανεξάρτητο συμβουλευτικό σώμα προς το Υπουργείο Παιδείας σε θέματα που σχετίζονται με την ερευνητική υποδομή και χρηματοδότηση, έδωσε στη δημοσιότητα μια ανοικτή επιστολή προς την διεθνή επιστημονική κοινότητα, που αναφέρεται στην τρέχοντα μέτρα. Το βασικό μήνυμα είναι το εξής:

Δεν υπάρχει αμφιβολία ότι εκτεταμένες μεταρρυθμίσεις είναι απαραίτητες και στον τομέα της έρευνας και της διασύνδεσής της με την τεχνολογία και την παραγωγή. Το ΕΣΕΤ εργάζεται συστηματικά για την αναμόρφωση αυτού του τομέα και μπορεί να διαβεβαιώσει την διεθνή κοινότητα για την αποφασιστικότητα αυτών που μετέχουν στη διαδικασία να προωθήσουν την ερευνητική αριστεία. Με βάση την παρούσα ερευνητική υποδομή και τους θεσμούς που διέπουν την έρευνα, υπερβολική πίεση για ριζική αναδιάρθρωση (όπως κλείσιμο και συγχωνεύσεις ερευνητικών κέντρων με μείωση του προσωπικού) σε μερικές μόνον εβδομάδες μπορεί να υποσκάψει τον απώτατο στόχο της δημιουργίας των κατάλληλων συνθηκών για μελλοντική ανάπτυξη. Αυτή την κρίσιμη στιγμή, οι διεθνείς πιστωτές μπορούν να είναι σαφείς ως προς την ανάγκη προώθησης των μεταρρυθμίσεων αλλά όχι ανυπόμονοι και παράλογοι στις χρονικές πιέσεις που ασκούν. Ο ασθενής πρέπει να θεραπευθεί, όχι να σκοτωθεί από υπερβολική δόση φαρμάκων!

Το πλήρες κείμενο της επιστολής εδώ. Μια σχετική συνέντευξη του Μιχάλη Χαλιάσσου στην Frankurter Allgemeine Zeitung εδώ.

Roma, 14 November 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to urge you to support the plan that is currently being designed and will be soon laid out by the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece regarding the modification of the legislative and operational structure of scientific research in Greece. Sustained support for science and research is critical to the future success and competitiveness of any country and especially under situations of extreme need for technological development and financial sustainability, which currently need to be encouraged in Greece. Constant funding will translate into new insights, treatments, and technologies that will improve health, technology and enhance the well-being of Greek citizens.

If the process of restructuring is not allowed to proceed in an orderly manner, important scientific investigations will be terminated, graduate training stunted, and young scientists discouraged, who will most probably emigrate to other countries, with apparent aggravating consequences on the age composition of the manpower and eventually on the economy of the country. We must avoid further erosion of research and training programs generating the knowledge and scientific advances that expand the quality of life and result in new high technology and high-wage jobs.

The broad program of consolidation of Greece′s research infrastructure is currently being designed and will be implemented within the next 12-18 months with the assistance of the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece. The new structure is essential for enabling innovations, but more importantly provides investments from European Union structural funds that neither Greece nor the private sector could afford to undertake. Thus I urge you to make representations to help convince governments and relevant international bodies to show greater understanding and to establish a more reasonable path that will enable Greece to more realistically achieve objectives, so that the restructuring can proceed with proper evaluation procedures.

This will allow the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece to succeed in putting in place a viable and lasting process that will definitely make an important contribution to the "new Greece′ that will hopefully emerge from the present calamity.

Sincerely,

Christina Plainaki, Ph.D

Planetary Scientist at Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome

Roma, 15 November 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

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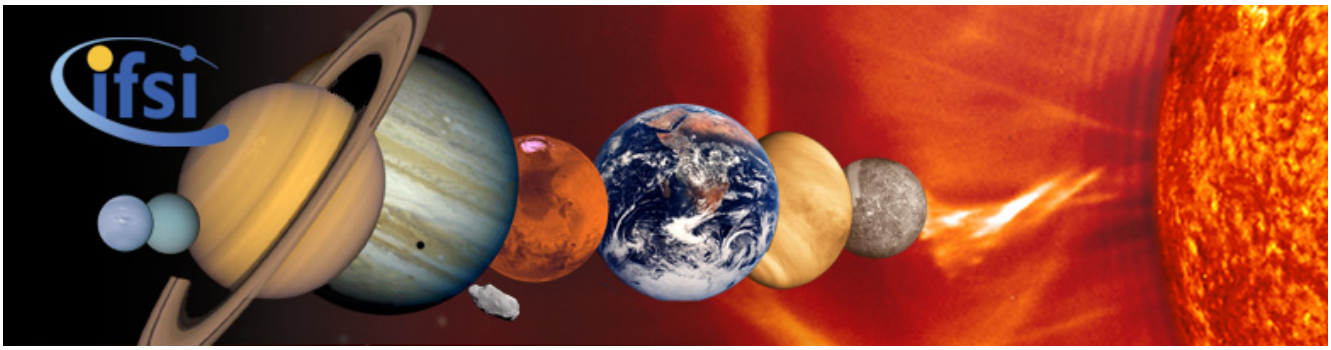
Sincerely,

Dr. Monica Laurenza

Researcher at the Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome.



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Sincerely yours.

Dr. Marisa STORINI_IFSI-Roma

Senior Researcher

Italian National Institute for Astrophysics

Roma,
November 15th, 2011

To Whom It May Concern

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Sincerely,
Alessandro Mura, Ph.D
Planetary Scientist at Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome

Roma, 15 November 2011

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Sincerely,

Giovanna Rinaldi, Ph.D
Planetary Scientist at Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome

Roma, 15 November 2011

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I am writing to urge you to support the plan that is currently being designed and will be soon laid out by the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece regarding the modification of the legislative and operational structure of scientific research in Greece. Sustained support for science and research is critical to the future success and competitiveness of any country and especially under situations of extreme need for technological development and financial sustainability, which currently need to be encouraged in Greece. Constant funding will translate into new insights, treatments, and technologies that will improve health, technology and enhance the well-being of Greek citizens.

If the process of restructuring is not allowed to proceed in an orderly manner, important scientific investigations will be terminated, graduate training stunted, and young scientists discouraged, who will most probably emigrate to other countries, with apparent aggravating consequences on the age composition of the manpower and eventually on the economy of the country. We must avoid further erosion of research and training programs generating the knowledge and scientific advances that expand the quality of life and result in new high technology and high-wage jobs.

The broad program of consolidation of Greece's research infrastructure is currently being designed and will be implemented within the next 12-18 months with the assistance of the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece. The new structure is essential for enabling innovations, but more importantly provides investments from European Union structural funds that neither Greece nor the private sector could afford to undertake. Thus I urge you to make representations to help convince governments and relevant international bodies to show greater understanding and to establish a more reasonable path that will enable Greece to more realistically achieve objectives, so that the restructuring can proceed with proper evaluation procedures.

This will allow the National Council for Research & Technology of Greece to succeed in putting in place a viable and lasting process that will definitely make an important contribution to the "new Greece' that will hopefully emerge from the present calamity.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rosanna Rispoli,
Planetary Scientist at Italian National Institute for Astrophysics, Rome

THIS WEEK

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Half way there

Spain, Italy and Greece all have new governments and new research laws. Despite the pressures of economic austerity, investing in science now could bring disproportionate benefits.

Three of the Mediterranean countries hit hardest by the debt crisis — Spain, Italy and Greece — have little in common beyond a shared coastline and an inappropriately low level of investment in research and development. But in the past few years, all three have shown a desire to reform their sclerotic research systems. And in the past month, each has acquired, one way or another, a new government.

The priority for these governments is to haul their countries back from the brink of disaster, and thereby help to prevent the collapse of the euro. Given the enormity and international significance of these endeavours, does it make any sense to lobby for science to be favoured, financially and politically, in the tough austerity packages the new governments will have to enact?

It does, for two reasons. First, any developed country without a reasonable science base faces a bleak future — a familiar mantra, but true. Scientists in all three countries have for years seen little national money available for research projects, and almost no new academic recruitment. The best scientists have just about survived on international grants, particularly from the European Commission. Greek and Spanish researchers have the most to complain about, as austerity measures have cut into their pay packets, along with those of other civil servants in their countries. It is not hard to imagine that further cuts could lead to a dangerous level of demoralization.

Second, all three countries are now somewhere along the process of enacting or implementing new laws governing how research is organized and evaluated, which will bring them into line with scientific norms elsewhere in Europe. There is every reason to devote political resources to ensuring that these reforms are carried through properly — and, given that it won't cost much, little reason not to.

These Mediterranean countries have tended to be opaque in their science funding and academic recruitment, and so cronyism has often been able to rule over meritocracy. The new laws should help to fix this, primarily by introducing peer review and evaluation. In Spain and Greece, the new laws would also introduce for the first time much-needed independent national agencies for the competitively allocated funding of basic research, along the lines of the European Research Council or the US National Science Foundation.

These laws have taken years of discussion — Greece's long-promised science law has not even been approved yet, although its university law was passed in August. In Italy, a law for research was approved at the end of 2009 and a law for universities one year later. Spain's science law was approved in June.

All these laws differ in scope and detail, and they are not perfect in every clause. In all three countries, for example, most academics will remain civil servants with jobs for life, disappointing those who had hoped that universities and publicly funded laboratories would gain more hiring flexibility. But whatever their shortcomings, if appropriately implemented, each of the laws will make science higher quality and better value for money.

All this matters even more because a handful of internationally competitive institutes, along with smaller pockets of excellence, have sprung up in each of these three countries, despite a lack of political support. The leaders of these institutes have chosen to operate through meritocracy; imagine how much will be achieved when this approach becomes mandatory for the entire scientific enterprise in these countries.

"Pockets of excellence have sprung up in each country, despite a lack of support."

Improvements in science in southern Europe will not only benefit the individual countries in which they occur, but will make Europe as a whole more competitive. Yet without new money, the legal frameworks may not be able to work the wonders expected of them. A new research funding agency won't be much help without a budget.

Now is not the time to expect huge increases in science investment, but small increases could make a disproportionate difference. Half way to reform, science in Spain, Italy and Greece needs to be supported. Like fiscal reform, it promises a long-term pay-off for those countries, and for the continent. ■

False economy

The Danish government's plan to axe technology assessment is ill-conceived.

Liberal democracy and science combined so successfully in the twentieth century that the nations and societies in which they were strongest rose to economic and cultural dominance. Nothing suggests that the recipe might lose its appeal as the twenty-first century proceeds, with democracy and science gaining ground in parts of the Arab world and some developing countries. But advances in science also raise ethical and environmental concerns that need to be taken seriously.

Denmark, a small but technologically advanced country that in January will take over the rotating presidency of the European Union, has pioneered the use of participatory methods to assess the risks and societal impact of new technologies. But plans to disband the Danish Board of Technology (DBT), which has been a leader in studying public views and expectations of science and technology, suggest that Denmark's new government is not quite aware of the country's formidable tradition in democratizing science. If it proceeds with the plan — which, ironically, is intended to preserve funds for research — it risks destroying a critical piece of Europe's science-policy system.