

FSD3029 TUTKIMUSRYHMIEN MISSIO JA YHTEISTYÖ PORTUGALISSA, ITÄVALLASSA JA SUOMESSA 2012-2013

FSD3029 RESEARCH GROUP MISSION AND COLLABORATION IN PORTUGAL, AUSTRIA AND FINLAND 2012-2013

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Core 2 Are there any changes as to what you regard as your main tasks?

I1: Over the years, the tasks of the RU did not really change much. Perhaps in the beginning the scope of the research was less focused, but soon focused on the three aforementioned types of research. Companies were involved as partners from very early stage.

The RU is part of a bigger department, which recently acquired a new head of department. The department comprised five research units, amongst whom this RU and another one were very successful, the others less so. The new head of department was asked to restructure the activities and units of the department, which led to the discontinuation of this RU and reorganization of the others. The activities in this field were focused on a new, marginal area on which there is no national industry. The interviewee stated he was not able to follow the logic of such a decision, as this new focus was neither in line with their existing expertise nor did there seem to be industry with whom to work on applications for this area. In order for an individual to thrive, they must have an aim, a goal, and there are no longer chances for this in this institution.

After long expertise in the field, the I1 knew what industry wanted

I2: There is a discrepancy between the policy discourse, which emphasises the need of research to respond on societal needs, and the reality. This is typical of Austria, where research policy is superficial, focused on buzzwords, but lacking, or losing, the real in-depth knowledge. The de-prioritisation showed by the discontinuation of the RU may have to do also with the lack of political independence of the research institute, which is dependent on public funding. This is also the difference between Austria and Germany, although there are also good research groups in Austria, the ministry is lacking the vision and understanding needed for the research policy.

I1: The former RU comprised several smaller groups, of these one has already left, two others are supervised directly by the head of the institute who is interested in their research. Of the remaining people, some have left, some are leaving for being made redundant, and some are staying and incorporated to other units.

Core 3 What do you think knowledge society means and how does it relate to what you are doing?

I1: Knowledge society is a broad term, which concerns everyone, and all stages of man life, from schools to old age. In terms of knowledge production it means access to all kinds of knowledge, open innovation. Instead of a vertical scheme of development, it means the ability to draw from different kinds of knowledge and combine different kinds of technologies. All the technology developed by the RG is made for distribution.