



**DIRECTORATE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY
COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL POLICY**

**DSTI/STP/RIHR(2010)10
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Project on the Transformation of Public Research Institutions: Summary and Next Steps

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This document provides an update on the RIHR project on the transformation of public research institutions. Delegates are invited to discuss progress and agree on next steps and finalising the work.

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Background

1. At the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Steering and Funding of Research Institutions (SFRI)¹ on 18-19 February 2008 delegates decided to commence work on ‘Analysing the Transformation of Public Research Organisations’ [DSTI/STP/RIHR/M(2009)1]. As outlined in the project proposal [DSTI/STP/SFRI(2008)4] and its subsequent revision following an expert meeting at OECD headquarters on 23 May 2008, the project was designed to follow various steps to investigate:

- the major changes in funding, organisation and governance of PRIs;
- the effects and long-term performance implications of these changes; and
- best practices to cope with the transformation of these institutions.

Summary of progress and main results to date

2. Firstly, a questionnaire to national governments (*i.e.* country context note) was used to build an overall picture of the number and different types of institutions as well as the organisation of national research systems. The issues discussed included: the position of PRIs in national innovation systems, particularly looking at the missions and orientations of the sector and its composite PRI groups, and the linkages between players; the major institutional changes in the sector in recent years; general governance arrangements; and the regulatory environment. Nineteen countries and the European Commission Joint Research Centre participated in this phase of the project.² At the same time R&D, patent, scientific publication and innovation survey collaboration data were analysed according to the traditional Frascati classification of the government research sector. Accompanying this work was an analysis of 12 evaluations from six countries to compare and contrast methodologies, highlight lessons learned regarding both PRI policy and evaluation processes, and to discuss how evaluation results are used in practice. These results were presented to the RIHR group at its May 2009 meeting [DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)5 and DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)6].

3. Secondly, RIHR has been collaborating with NESTI in order to analyse the statistical categorisation of government performing research institutions [DSTI/EAS/STP/NESTI(2008)30]. The country context note was used to construct a list of entities, based on the RIHR project definition, for the NESTI re-tabulation of national R&D expenditure and personnel data. A pilot data re-tabulation exercise was conducted in Norway and subsequently implemented in six countries.³ The Norwegian pilot results were discussed at the May 2009 RIHR meeting and the full results will be presented at the June 2010 RIHR meeting [DSTI/EAS/STP/NESTI(2010)13].

¹ The SFRI group’s mandate was revised and its name changed to Research Institutions and Human Resources (RIHR) on 1 April 2008.

² As of 31 January 2010, 19 contributions were received: Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, United Kingdom, Chile and Russia. Following the May 2009 RIHR meeting, contributions from Australia, Korea, the Netherlands, Spain and the European Commission Joint Research Centre were received. These results were not presented in DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)5 and will be captured in the project’s final report.

³ NESTI responses were received from Austria, Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland and the Russian Federation. Belgium (Flanders) also participated in the exercise but the data must cover the entire country for comparisons with Frascati data.

4. Thirdly, 12 case studies were undertaken at the institutional level in eight countries.⁴ The case studies looked at the rationales and main missions of the selected PRIs, their activities and role in their respective national innovation systems, their ownership and governance arrangements, their modes and channels of funding, and their external linkages and internationalisation. The case studies revealed wide diversity in PRIs both across and within countries, generally depending on the size of the institute and its position in the innovation system. The results will be presented and discussed at the June 2010 RIHR meeting [DSTI/STP/RIHR(2010)9].

5. The project's key results to date appear in the papers summarised below (Table 1).

Table 1: Key results

Outputs	OLIS document code
Country context note	DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)5
Analysis of traditional data	DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)5
Analysis of evaluations	DSTI/STP/RIHR(2009)6
Re-tabulation of national R&D data (NESTI)	DSTI/EAS/STP/NESTI(2010)13
Case studies	DSTI/STP/RIHR(2010)9

Next steps

6. The preliminary case study results and R&D data re-tabulation exercise were discussed at a NESTI/RIHR expert meeting held on 6 May 2010 at the OECD headquarters. Participants agreed that the investigations conducted so far provide interesting insights about PRIs in their respective innovation system. While the country context notes provide an overview of a country's situation, the case studies produced more in-depth knowledge on selected institutions. Participants at the expert meeting agreed that it could be beneficial to supplement the existing work with a pilot survey of institutions, as originally discussed in the project proposal. Results from a pilot survey may generate broader and more in-depth information as well as some comparability – and hence, learning opportunities – across countries. Apart from the analytical results that would emerge from a pilot survey, the results could be used by NESTI to work on the development of a full survey and a common set of indicators.

7. Therefore, participants at the May 2010 NESTI/RIHR meeting agreed that a pilot survey should be developed, for implementation in volunteer countries. In some countries this may involve surveying all institutes, while in others only a sample of institutes may be covered. There may also be an option for some countries to perform part of the survey – such as the module on internationalisation. In order for this work to proceed, a volunteer country is needed to lead this phase of the project and the development of a draft survey instrument.

8. The pilot survey would need to be completed by November 2010 in order that the secretariat can integrate the results in a final report which should be made available for RIHR comment by the end of quarter one 2011. Shifting the final delivery date of the project beyond the end of 2010 would require explicit CSTP approval. In considering such a request, the Committee is likely to wish to know what the specific revised completion date is expected to be and what the opportunity costs for the work programme for 2011-2012 might be.

9. Delegates are invited to:

⁴ Cases studies were received from Austria, Finland, Italy, Korea, Norway, Poland, Russia and Spain. Denmark provided input from an evaluation of recent mergers in its PRI sector.

- Indicate interest in leading the development of a survey instrument.
- Indicate interest in working with the lead country to develop the survey instrument; and
- Indicate interest in participating in the pilot survey.
- Agree the terms in which a request for an extension of the deadline for this project is put to CSTP.