

Research Performance-Based Funding in the EU

A comparative overview

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MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI ȘI CERCETĂRII



Definitions

- **Institutional funding.** the total of national budgets in a given country, attributed to a research performing organisation (university or Public Research Organisation), with no direct selection of R&D project or programmes and for which money the organisation has more or less freedom to define the research activities to be performed' (Van Steen 2012).
- **Project funding.** the total of national budgets in a given country, attributed to a group or an individual to perform an R&D activity limited in scope, budget and time, normally on the basis of the submission of a project proposal describing the research activities to be done' (Van Steen 2012)

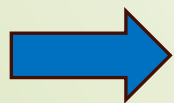
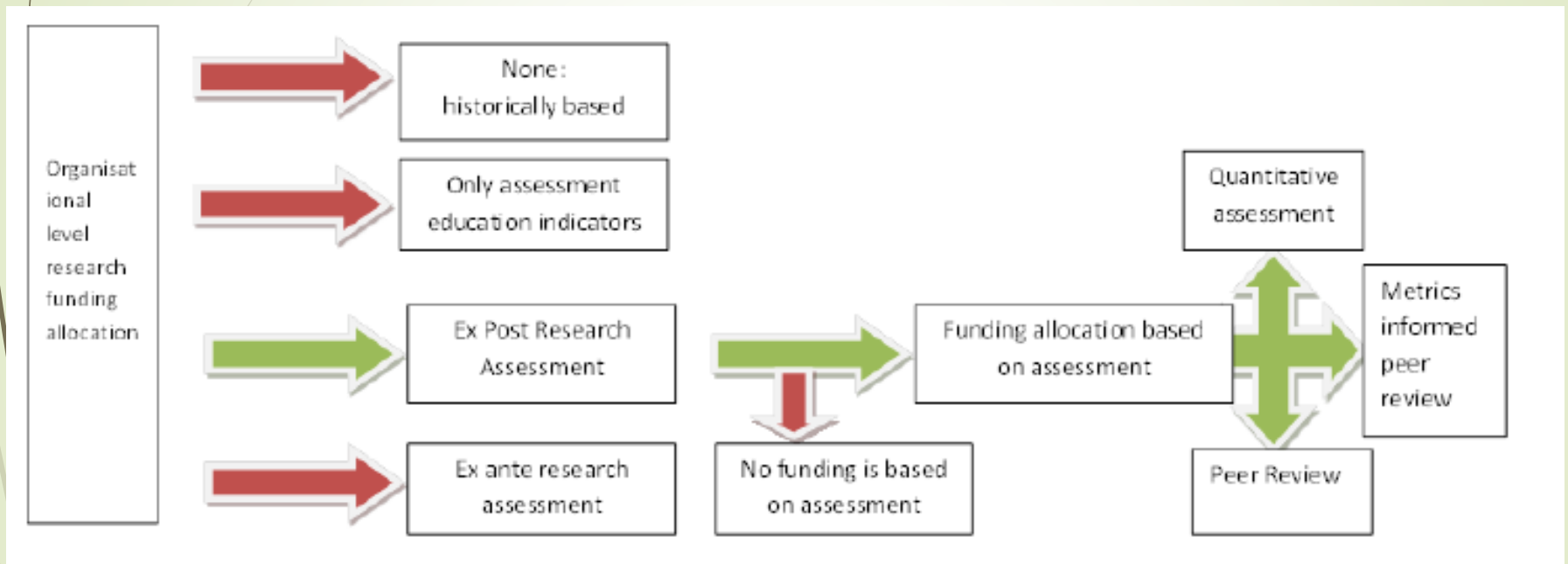


Definitions

RPBF

- **Research must be assessed**
- **Evaluation must be ex-post**
- **Part of institutional funding must depend on the outcome of the evaluation.**
- **The assessment and funding allocation considered take place at the organisation level (not individual)**
- **The performance-based funding system must be a national or regional system (no intra-organisational)**

Definitions



Provides autonomy to HEI to decide of research topics while it incentivizes improving quality and impact

Evaluation modalities

Advantages and challenges

Dimension	I Indicator-based	II Evaluation-based
Objectivity	3 More objective, based on quantitative data	2 Subjective by nature, influenced by biases
Flexibility	1 Relatively rigid	2 Flexible within a standardized framework
Cost and resources (for RDIA)	3 Relatively low costs	1 More resource-intensive, especially in time and expert labor
Cost and resources (for entities)	3 Generally less intrusive, requiring less direct input from researchers	1 Can involve heavy administrative procedures
Depth	2 May not capture the nuanced impact of research	3 Can assess difficult-to-quantify elements and provide nuanced understanding
Alignment with national goals and missions	2 May struggle to capture diverse national goals and missions	2 Can consider national context, but within standardized framework
Timeliness	3 Can be implemented more frequently	1 Often implemented with long intervals
Comparability across entities (incl. international comparability)	3 High comparability, based on standardized metrics	2 Moderate comparability, subject to variation in panel judgments

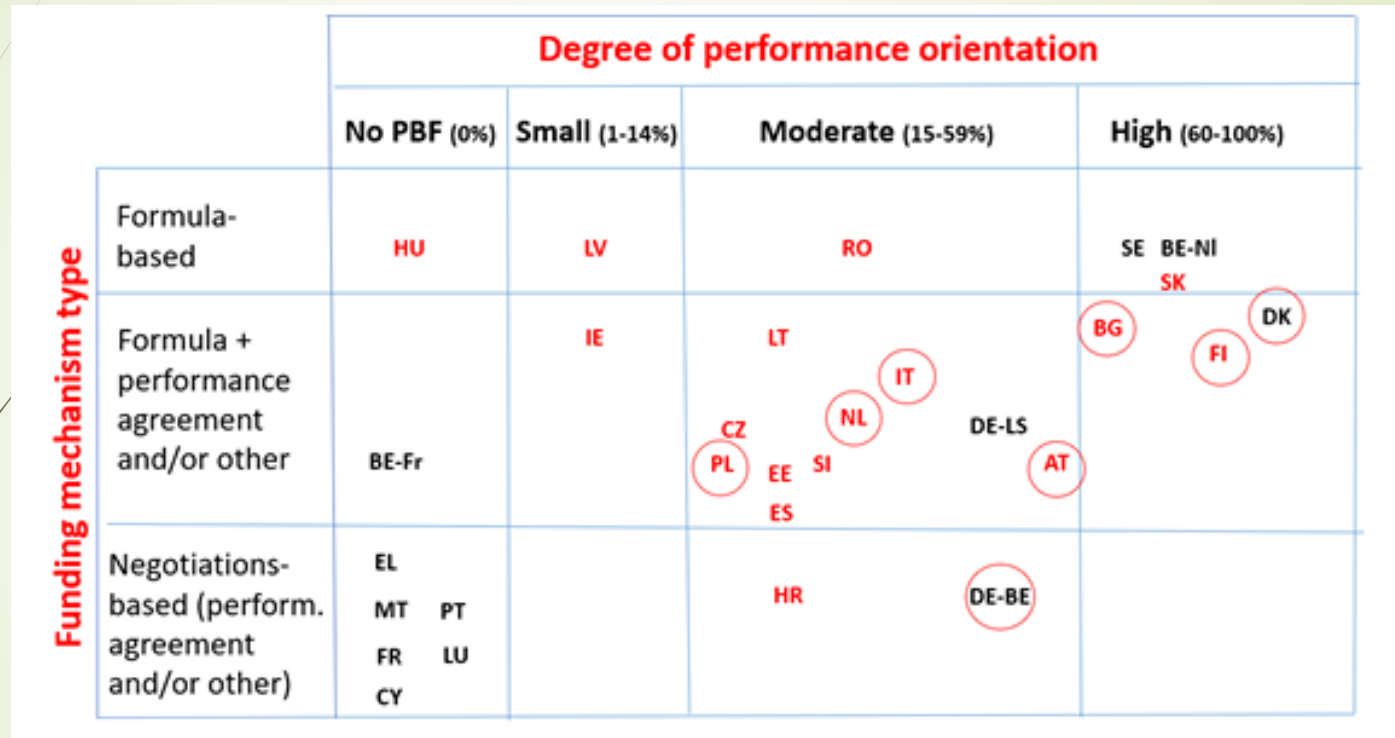
Dimension	III Performance agreement-based
Objectivity	2 Mix of objective metrics and subjective goals
Flexibility	3 Highly flexible, customizable to each institution
Cost and resources (for RDIA)	1 More resource-intensive, focused on negotiation and monitoring
Cost and resources (for entities)	1 Can involve heavy administrative procedures
Depth	3 Tailored to institutional mission and strategic priorities
Alignment with national goals and missions	3 Highly customizable to align with diverse institutional missions and strategies
Timeliness	1 Often implemented with long intervals
Comparability across entities (incl. international comparability)	1 Low comparability, due to individualized agreements

RPBF Overview in the EU

		No RPBF										Limited RPBF			Quantitative formula with Bibliometric assessment										Peer review					
Country		BG ¹	CY	EL	ES	HU ²	IE	LU ³	LV ⁴	MT	RO ⁵	SI	AT	DE ⁶	NL	BE (FI)	BE (WA) ⁷	CZ ⁸	DK	EE ⁹	FI	HR	PL ¹⁰	SE	SK	FR	IT	LT	PT	UK
Education metrics		X			X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				X					X
Historical		X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X						X	X										X	
Bibliometrics	Publications	X				X										X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Journal Impact Based	X						X								X		X	X	X	X		X				X	X		
	Citation	X				X										X	X					X		X		X	X			
Other formula elements	PhD graduates					X	X	X					X		X	X			X	X	X	X	X		X		X			
	Patents							X										X	X	X			X		X		X	X		
	Project funding						X							X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X			
	Business funding						X	X											X	X	X	X	X				X	X		
	Gender/diversity													X		X	X													
	Internationalisation														X						X	X			X	X	X	X		
Peer review																										X	X	X	X	X
Performance Contracts													X		X				X	X	X									

Source: Zacharewicz et al., Performance-based research funding in EU Member States—a comparative assessment. *Science and public policy*, 46(1), 105-115. 2019

Share of institutional funding tied to performance



Source: Jongbloed et al., Study on the state and effectiveness of national funding systems of higher education to support the European Universities Initiative, 2023

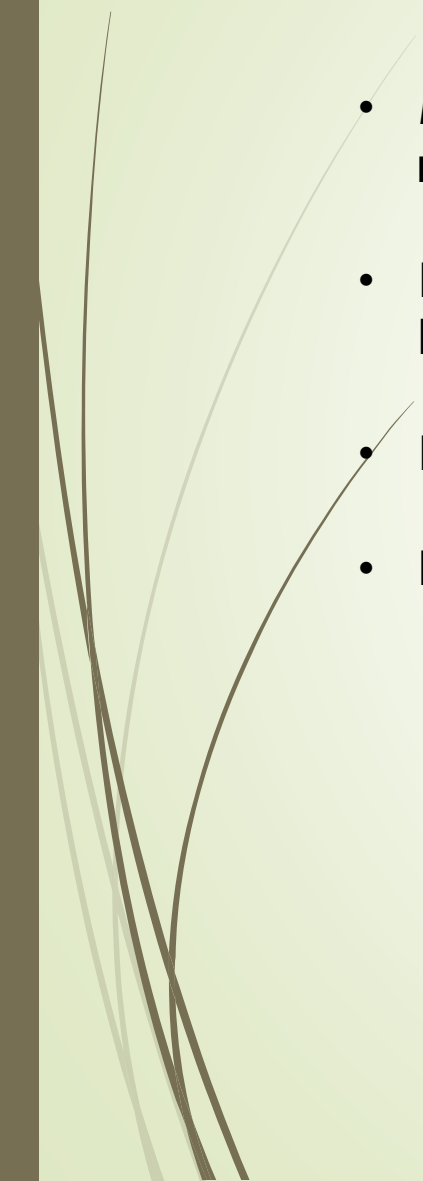
Around 30% average

Specific case-study: Greek RPBF system

- 2023: Introduction of RPBF system in Greece for HEI. 20% of institutional funding allocated on the basis of RPBF (formula-based)
- Each HEI is requested to submit an activity report focusing on its achievements and including quality indicators each year.
- Each HEI is asked to select three modules for its evaluations, consisting of one mandatory module and two out of four optional ones. Modules include
 - (1) the continuous improvement of basic academic activities (compulsory),
 - (2) research activity and excellence,
 - (3) connection with society and the labour market,
 - (4) internationalization
 - (5) quality of the university environment.



Key message for policy-makers

- Most critical variable to increase research performance is **research Budget**
 - Keep the share of funding allocated through RPBF relatively low
 - Evaluation every 4-5 years
 - Introduce some flexibility in the evaluation system
- 



Thank you!!

Any question?

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