

INFORMALITY AND SELF-GOVERNMENT IN POST-SOCIALIST RESEARCH SYSTEMS

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NARRATIVES OF AUTONOMY IN RESEARCH COMMUNITIES

- INPARTIALITY
- NEUTRALITY
- OBJECTIVITY
- MERIT
- PREVIOUS PRODUCTIVITY
- NEGLECTED INFORMALITY
- RESISTENCE TO INTERFERENCE
FROM OUTSIDE

CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH POLICY MYTHS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

I. Myths about **ideal meritocracy**

Self-government of scientific communities based on democracy, equal access and ideal meritocracy.
Informal contacts and dependencies don't play any significant role, therefore detailed external control is not necessary

II. Myths about **objectivity in international networks**

small communities versus large networks

III. EU research projects as **marketplaces of objectivity**

equality of modernization frontlines

EMPIRICAL STUDY AT THE ACTIVE FRONTLINE IN RESEARCH COMMUNITIES

Survey of project leaders:

sample of 1000 Hungarian researchers with
international and national grants in the last 3
years, fall 2003

2/3 in Budapest, $\frac{3}{4}$ middle aged man

Fields: natural sciences and technology

$\frac{1}{2}$ of them with European research experience

INFORMALITY IN THE GRANT SYSTEM

	No influence	Moderate influence	Strong influence	together
OTKA –nat. fundam.res.grants	41.1	39.5	19.4	100 %
NKFP-nat.applied res.grants	28.1	45.6	26.3	100 %
Ministerial grants	22.1	43.0	34.9	100 %
Other national grants	30.7	48.3	21.0	100 %
EU 5-6.fram.	40.4	34.9	24.7	100 %
American gr.	52.0	35.4	12.6	100 %
Other international	53.6	35.0	11.3	100 %

FACTORS OF INFORMALITY IN THE GRANTS DISTRIBUTION

IMPORTANT, IN %	National grants	International grants
Personal professional contacts	57.9 %	44.4 %
Personal non-professional contacts	24.1	13.6
Institutional prestige	32.0	28.9
Media support	3.9	3.8
Interests of the national research bureacracy	12.2	12.4
Business interests	10.5	13.2

CHANNELS OF INFLUENCE IN THE GRANT SYSTEM

IMPORTANT, IN %	NATIONAL GRANT SYSTEM	INTERNATIONAL GRANTS
State-related structures	59.6	32.6
Research administration	37.9	31.4
Scientific elite [intellectual]	32.2	27.4
Business actors	8.8	15.0
Intellectual fashions in science	23.9	30.4
Public opinion [non- professional]	0.9	3.3

THE ROLE OF EXPERTISE IN THE GRANT DISTRIBUTION

	IGNORABLE 1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	DOMINANT 5.00	TOGETHER
NATIONAL	1.5	6.1	31.1	42.4	18.9	100.0%
EU	0.5	4.0	21.9	48.7	24.8	100.0%
THE ROLE OF COMMITTEES	1.7	4.9	17.7	35.8	40.0	100.0%

INTERNATIONAL LOBBYING- CENTRE- PERIPHERY

FACTORS	BUDAPEST	PROVINCIAL ACADEMIC CENTRES	TOGETHER
PERSONAL PROFESSIONA L	47.2%	39.2%	44.4%
PERSONAL OUT OF PROFESSION	16.2	9.2	13.6
INSTITUTIONA L PRESTIGE	32.0	23.2	28.9

IMPORTANT INFORMAL ACTORS IN INTERNATIONAL GRANT DISTRIBUTION I.

	LIFE SCIEN.	OTHER NATUR. SCI	TECHNO LOGY	OTHERS	TOGETH ER
GOVERN MENT	26.1%	35.9%	38.4%	26.5%	32.6%
RESEAR CH ELITE - INTELL.	28.9	32.2	16.2	23.5	27.4

IMPORTANT INFORMAL ACTORS IN GRANT DISTRIBUTION II.

	NATION. ACADEM.	UNIVERS ITIES	BUSINES S ACTORS	OTHERS	TOGETH ER
RESEAR CH BUREAU CRACY	39.5%	28.0%	27.0%	14.8%	31.4%

CONCLUSIONS

- i. THIS IS NOT CORRUPTION, THE PRESENCE OF INFORMALITY IS NORMAL.
- ii. THE INFORMALITY AND CORPORATE INTERESTS ARE INTEGRATED.
- iii. THE DISTRIBUTIONAL SYSTEM IN RESEARCH IS ONLY PARTLY MERITOCRATIC.
- iv. POWER, PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE ARE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE EU GRANT SYSTEM AS WELL.