

# **Polish R&D Potential**

***Centres of Excellence***



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## The Lisbon Strategy is one of the most important challenges

for the European Union and the Member States. Poland in particular has to considerably improve the competitiveness of its industry to create attractive employment opportunities and to develop a modern society.

We are very aware of our current deficiencies which are related mostly to an unsatisfactory research infrastructure and other problems inherited from the recent past. However, we are especially proud of our assets such as: human resources and the enormous potential of young researchers. There are now over 2 million students at Polish universities which shows great dynamism and creativity.

In order to respond to the unprecedented challenges and opportunity, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education has initiated a reform process with four main lines of actions:

- the transformation of the R&D environment by, among others, supporting Centres of Excellence and establishing the National Centre for Research and Development,
- strengthening the research efforts in strategic priorities as defined in the Polish Framework Programme,
- building closer links between academia and industry via the developing Polish Technology Platforms,
- developing human potential with a special focus on young researchers.

Centres of Excellence represent, in a spectacular way, the R&D potential of Poland. They have already received significant support from structural funds in order to modernize equipment and develop new research infrastructure. They have also joined with the best European consortia and networked with the key research centres. They are recognized as making a strong contribution to the European Research Area and we wish them many successes and deep satisfaction in implementing research projects and technology initiatives in the coming 7th Framework Programme.

This short note should also be considered as proof of our long-term commitment to support their future development.

Prof. Krzysztof J. Kurzydłowski

Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education

## Regional Contact Points





The development of Centres of Excellence began in 1999, when nine CoEs were established in Poland. Their achievements in bridging research centres from Candidate Countries with the EU were so significant that the European Commission repeated the call for proposals (NAS-2) in 2001. Poland was enormously successful in this call, which resulted in 86 new CoEs being established.

CoEs have been strengthening their links with European partners through organising mutual visits, exchanges of personnel, conferences, summer schools, networking, seminars and trainings. A special focus has been given to supporting young researchers. The great progress has been made in integrating activities and in developing interdisciplinary research activities. Nearly a half of all Polish research projects submitted to FP5 and FP6 resulted from these actions.

Centres of Excellence are a real success. Today, they are facing new challenges. The creation of the European Research Area requires innovative ideas, skilled human resources, the development of modern infrastructure and enhanced co-operation between research partners. Moreover, the Structural Funds offer significant opportunities to strengthen research potential. CoEs should do their best to reap maximum benefits from those opportunities. Accounting for their previous achievements and knowing their true commitment, I am convinced that Polish CoEs will join the family of best European research centres. What is more they will be among the most active participants in FP7, contributing to the European integration and to the development of a knowledge-based society and economy – the core objective of the Lisbon Strategy now being re-launched by the EU Member States.

PhD Andrzej Siemaszko

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "A. Siemaszko".

Director of National Contact Point of Poland

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