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Crossing longitudes: how homogenous is the approach, mentality and perception to research across Europe

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Although EU funding provides an extraordinary cross-fertilization platform beneficial for the advancement of multi- or cross- disciplinary research and methodologies, we know that European research is significantly different in terms of national funding strategies, approach, mentality, perception and societal relevance. Furthermore, national research priorities are significantly different, while the approach to research and organization is variable in terms of cross-boundary system knowledge and implementation. The variable rate of success in west to east European funding leads to polarization rather than integration of science and research approach in an European landscape that becomes less homogeneous. Although at significant lower level, polarization tends to follow national politics, while scientific nationalism increases gradually and significantly eastwards combined with the opposite well-known migration of scientific excellence. One other trend observed is scientific colonization, where top research national strategies are defined by borrowing either European ones or the ones of another country, no matter if fits or not the national specificity. What can we do to fertilize a truly beneficial combination between cross-boundary research collaboration and true national strategies by avoid polarization, scientific nationalism and colonization? Such a beneficial combination can be achieved only by knowing and understanding the national specificity of each other in both directions, east- and west-wards. In this talk, I share my crossing longitudes experiences in particular in mentalities and approach to research in Europe, while underlying a few possibilities for better and more beneficial integration.