

Press release
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Bringing €100 billion to the European economy. The economic impact of the LERU universities in 2016!

In 2016, the 23 members of the League of European Research Universities (LERU) generated a collective economic value of €99.8 billion in Gross Value Added and 1.3 million jobs. These and other figures, which appear in a just published report by LERU, demonstrate the impressive contribution that LERU universities make to the European economy. The study, undertaken for LERU by BiGGAR Economics, is presented at an event in Brussels this morning.

Today LERU presents the results of the study commissioned from BiGGAR Economics that measures the impact of the LERU universities in the European economy in 2016. This report represents an update of the figures published by LERU in 2015 and provide some telling figures on the significant role that universities play in driving the European economy.

Key findings of the report

Research universities are substantial contributors to European growth and jobs

- LERU universities generated a total economic value of €99.8 billion in Gross Value Added and 1.3 million jobs across Europe in 2016.
- By extrapolating the findings, it is estimated that the entire European research universities sector contributed over €400 billion GVA (2.7% of the total GVA of the European economy), and supported 5.1 million jobs across Europe (2.2% of all European jobs).

Research and education have a high return on investment

- LERU universities generated almost €5 GVA for every €1 of income they received.

Universities are key actors in the European innovation ecosystem

- LERU universities generated €33 billion GVA in Europe in 2016 by transferring their research into industry through licenses, spin outs and services to business.

An economic impact that keeps on growing

Between 2014 and 2016, the economic contribution of the LERU universities increased by €28.2 billion GVA. While several factors are responsible for this growth, the largest contributing one is the increase in the size and scale of the LERU universities (including the fact that the League now has two additional members compared to 2014). The LERU members are not only strongly contributing to the European economy but also increasing their contribution every year.

Not only about economic impact

This report provides a snapshot of the economic contribution of the LERU universities in 2016. The long-term economic impact is, however, much bigger. In addition, it is important to recognise the wider impact (other than economic) that universities have in society, delivering talented graduates and professionals into society and acting as hubs for knowledge production, transfer and exchange. As LERU argued in a [paper in 2017](#), “societal impact has always been, is and will remain, a core task of universities”.

Prof. Deketelaere, LERU’s Secretary-General, is thrilled about these figures: “The message is clear. If you want to deliver on growth and jobs, invest in research and universities! If you want a budget focused on results, invest in research and universities! We all need to speak up for research. This report provides sound and convincing economic evidence to support our arguments.”

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About LERU

The League of European Research Universities (LERU) is an association of twenty-three leading research-intensive universities that share the values of high-quality teaching within an environment of internationally competitive research.

Founded in 2002, LERU advocates education through an awareness of the frontiers of human understanding; the creation of new knowledge through basic research, which is the ultimate source of innovation in society; and the promotion of research across a broad front in partnership with industry and society at large.

The purpose of the League is to advocate these values, to influence policy in Europe and to develop best practice through mutual exchange of experience. LERU regularly publishes a variety of papers and reports which make high-level policy statements, provide in-depth analyses and make concrete recommendations for policymakers, universities, researchers and other stakeholders.

The LERU universities are:

University of Amsterdam
 Universitat de Barcelona
 University of Cambridge
 University of Copenhagen
 Trinity College Dublin
 University of Edinburgh
 University of Freiburg
 Université de Genève
 Universität Heidelberg
 University of Helsinki
 Universiteit Leiden
 KU Leuven

Imperial College London
 University College London
 Lund University
 University of Milan
 Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
 University of Oxford
 Pierre & Marie Curie University
 Université Paris-Sud
 University of Strasbourg
 Utrecht University
 University of Zurich