

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation in FP9



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An adapt or die case

- The knowledge economy changes everything
- Globalisation has pushed the boundaries and changed traditional growth strategies
- Global value chains have redrawn the map for conceiving and producing products and services
- Countries and regions not able to adapt (will) see their economies being marginalised
- Global (re)positioning necessary - Need for a new growth proposition based on knowledge assets

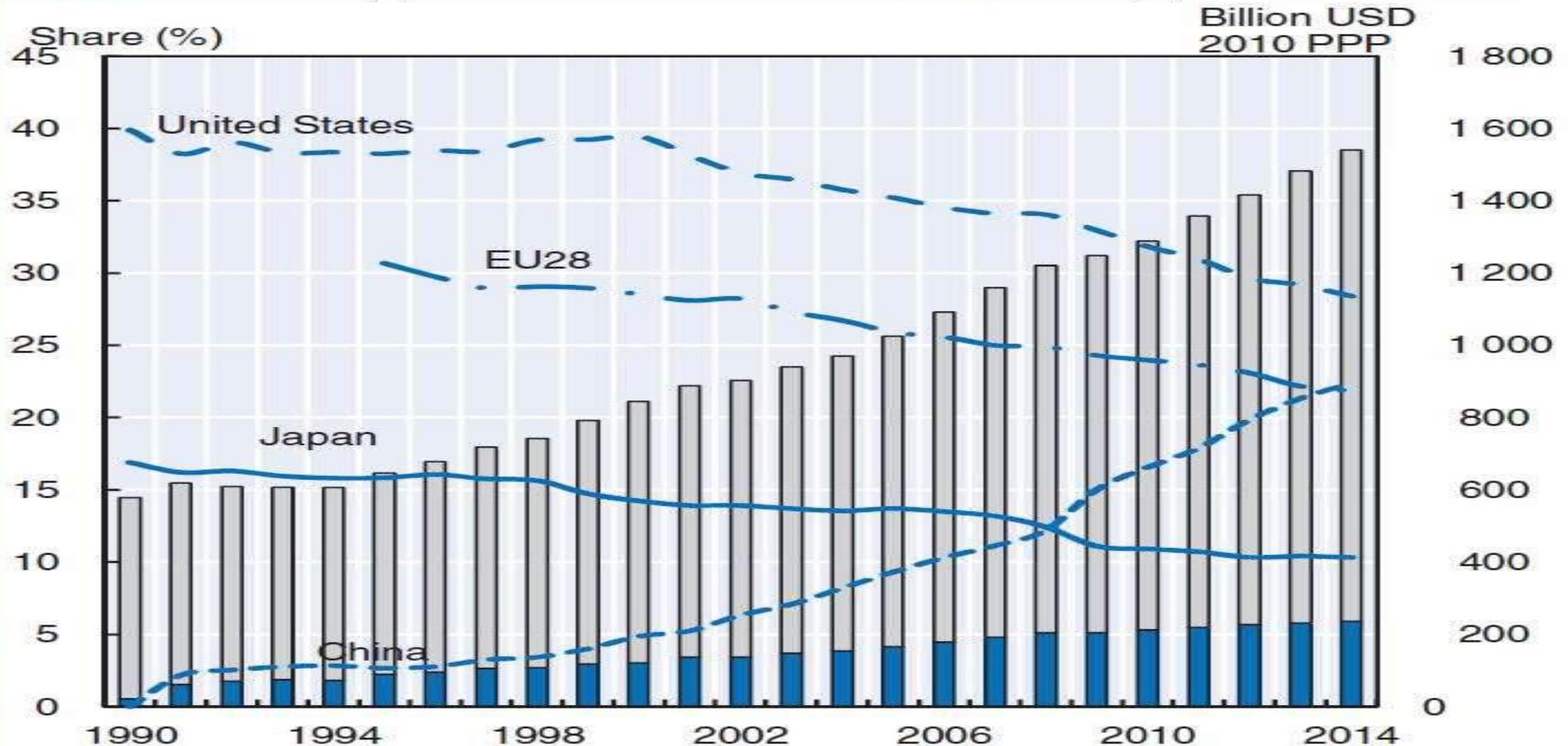
A Global Pressure on National Research and Innovation Systems

- Global competitive pressures on National Research and Innovation Systems drive new responses for excellence initiatives worldwide
- Focus is on capacity building for excellence, on science productivity and efficiency and innovation
- Diverse schemes introduced so-far shifting direction towards more competitive funding, in most cases using a project-driven approach
- Such schemes favour international cooperation that goes beyond traditional forms; long-term working relationships are thus introduced between institutions

World competition intensifies (OECD STI 2016)

Panel 1. Growing research capacity worldwide
GERD, USD billion 2010 PPP and % of total

GERD by top 10 countries
Japan (%)
EU28 (%)
GERD Rest of the World
United States (%)
China (%)



The issues with catching-up economies

- Moris Abramovitz has summarised issues as follows:
 - *Countries that are technologically backward have a potential for generating growth more rapidly than that of more advanced countries, provided their social capabilities are sufficiently developed to permit successful exploitation of technologies already employed by the technological leaders.*
 - *The pace at which potential for catch-up is actually realized in a particular period depends on factors limiting the diffusion of knowledge, the rate of structural change, the accumulation of capital and the expansion of demand. ”*
 - *Catching Up, Forging Ahead and Falling Behind, The Journal of Economic History, Vol. 46, No 2, The Tasks of Economic History (Jun.1986), pp. 385-406*

The issues with catching-up economies (II)

Some would argue that there at least two (2) types of catching-up strategies:

- One that *“...assumes that technology is easily available/transferable, not very demanding in terms of skills or infrastructure and that market forces are able to take care of the necessary coordination without large-scale involvement of external “change agents”....”*
- *Another view is that technology transfer is so demanding in terms of skills/infrastructure that market forces, if left alone, are considered unlikely to lead to success, and some degree of active intervention in markets by outsiders, being private organisations or parts of government, is consequently deemed necessary.”*

Directions toward catching-up

- “...Arguably, to avoid being stuck along an inferior path and never catch up, **“institutional instruments”** may be needed to compensate for some of these **“latecomer disadvantages”**.... In particular what the developing country firm may need are **“institutional instruments”** that improve:
 - links with the technology frontier,
 - links with markets (and sophisticated users),
 - supply of needed skills, services and other inputs,
 - the local innovation system/network...”.
- *Jan Fagerberg and Manuel Mira Godinho in Paper presented at the Workshop “The Many Guises of Innovation: What we have learnt and where we are heading”, Ottawa, October 23-24.2003, organized by Statistics Canada.*

Enter Widening !

Institutional joint-ventures for
research excellence

Widening actions in Horizon 2020 respond to strategic needs for catching-up countries

- Development of scientific capacity for knowledge creation, both in terms of knowledge advancement and its management in institutional terms
- Establishment of strategic institutional connectivity between researchers across borders and scientific areas: this may have important implications for science priorities at national level
- Mediating connections between the science and innovation ecosystems for advanced technological adaptation in a fast changing world (through Triple Helix approaches linking academia, industry and government, often at regional level)

How Europe responded to catching-up: a mixed approach (top-down and bottom-up)

- Pushing European capabilities towards a leading edge (Horizon 2020)
- Using a place-based approach also needed to identify the unique opportunities of countries / regions (Smart Specialisation - key towards a true innovation ecosystem)

Widening actions so far hugely popular, effects limited by budgets available

- High response to the Calls by all parties (advanced and low-performing countries)
- Proposals showed clearly that Commission ideas found fertile ground
- Large diversity of sectors touched-upon with strong emphasis on Smart Specialisation
- Individual researchers and institutions seduced by ERA Chairs and Twinning
- Effects however limited by unrealistically low budgets (underfunding undermining widening dynamics)

Future of Widening actions

- Too early to say, as FP9 is still not on the drawing board
- Impact of Widening Horizon 2020 actions will not be visible before at least five years: this withdraws this dimension from any honest evaluation exercise
- However strong political motivation will play a role

Thanks for your attention!



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