

CONCLUSIONS

The Catalan public research system is seen as a solid set of leading universities in Spain which, due to their results and efficiency, hold intermediate positions at an international level.

This data must be contextualised at a time in which funds for research and innovation continue a worrying descent. Non-competitive resources were significantly reduced last year, while competitive resources managed to moderate their drop thanks to the strong competitiveness of Catalan universities in European calls.

Despite this scenario, scientific production continues to be on the rise, both with regard to quantity (volume) as well as quality (impact). The same thing is happening with the training of research staff which has increased on the 2010-2011 academic year.

This high efficiency positions Catalonia in the reduced group of countries that obtain high impact research with sparse resources for R&D. In addition, the entire research and innovation system, which includes universities, hospitals and hospital research foundations and research centres, many of which are participated in by universities, are positioned in leading places internationally, despite their relatively low expense in R&D.

In the part of transfer and innovation, universities continue with their effort to transfer the knowledge generated to the productive environment, organising the necessary mechanisms to make public-private collaboration possible and to emphasise the results of their research.

This report shows the strength of the Catalan public university system, but it also makes the threat of a possible step backwards clear if the worrying tendency to decrease funding, whether competitive or non-competitive, that has been observed in recent years, does not change. Universities must continue to boost internationalisation activities and those that give value to the results of research with the aim of maintaining and improving, if possible, access to European resources. At the same time, it must make private investment in R&D and innovation more attractive and solid. There needs to be a clear commitment to research and innovation in order to continue having a public university system with worldwide standards of research excellence.