The policy mix for science-industry knowledge transfer in Finland

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The case study provides an analyst perspective on the policy mix supporting knowledge transfer in Finland, describing its main instruments, actors, history, current trends, and providing recommendations.

**Topics covered**
Policy mix, ecosystem policies, governance reforms

**History of knowledge transfer and policies**
- Long tradition of knowledge transfer between technical universities and industry
- Broad consensus on importance of knowledge transfer until 2015
- High researcher mobility to the business sector
- Government rewarded industry funding early on
- E.g. Competitive funding & multiplying private sector donations to universities
- Use of foresight as policy tool supporting national agenda setting
- Importance of educational policy

**Main instruments**
- Cooperative programme funding
- Start-up policies (e.g. TUTL)
- Eco-systems policies
  - Reboot Finland programme, BioNets Programme, CleverHealth Network, One Sea Ecosystem
- Technology transfer companies (TTOs)

**Main actors**
- Ministry of Education and Culture: Higher education and research policy
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment: Innovation policy
- Academy of Finland: Research funding
- Business Finland (formerly Tekes): Cooperative programme funding
- Research and Innovation Council: National roadmap for overall governance

**Government R&D Funding 2013-2017**

**Governance reforms:**
- University Inventions Act 2007
- Reform of university funding in 2017
- Business leaders in university boards
- Merger of state research institutes 2014-2017

**Policy recommendations**
- Promote entrepreneurial orientation of universities
- Increase long-term, strategic collaboration between universities and enterprises
- Strengthen demand and user-driven innovation
- Introduce career paths for university researchers that support co-operation with the industry

**Current trends**
- Innovation and research policy is increasingly connected to societal issues
- Shift towards policies supporting start-ups, fast growth SMEs and ecosystems
- Learning from previous SHOK programme which focused on large companies
- Reduction in government expenditures on R&D
- Strengthening of role of Academy of Finland for excellence research funding

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