

International Co-operation of Competence Research Centres - a study for COMPERA

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Patries Boekholt

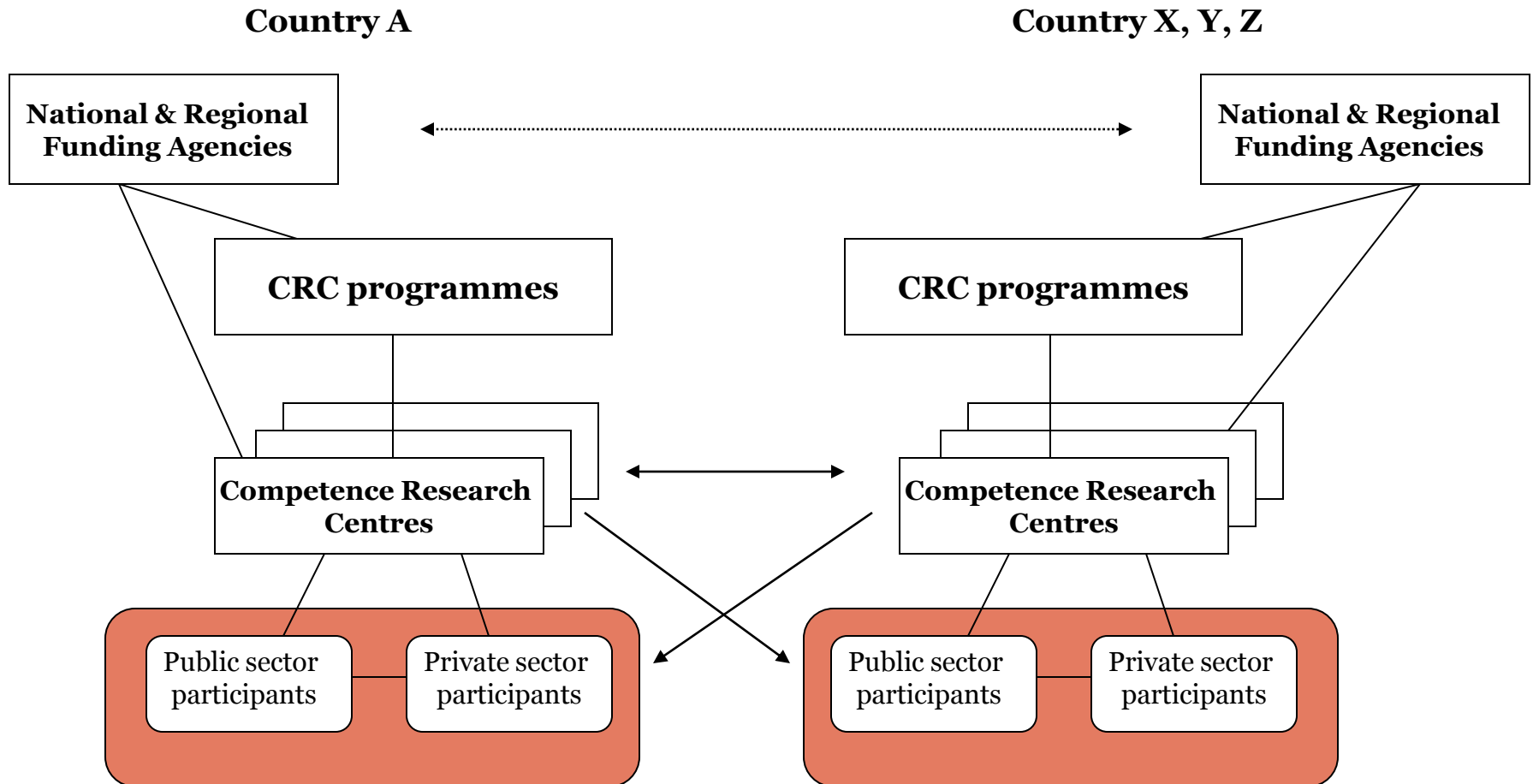
This presentation

- Background of the study
- Our findings on internationalisation of CRCs
- Conclusions
- What could be done to help CRCs internationalise?

Background of the study

- ERA-NET COMPERA - nine of the partners supported the study
 - The key research questions:
 - *The needs and opportunities of individual CRCs in relation to international cooperation*
 - *The barriers, if any, that exist at the level of the funding agencies and Ministries in order to respond to these needs*
 - In many of the countries under review CRC-programmes are still young - Sweden and Austria have the most 'mature' programmes
 - CRC defined as: “*structured long term Research, Technological Development and Innovation collaborations in strategic important areas between academia, industry and the public sector*”
 - Study components: survey, interviews programme managers, case studies of individual centres, literature review
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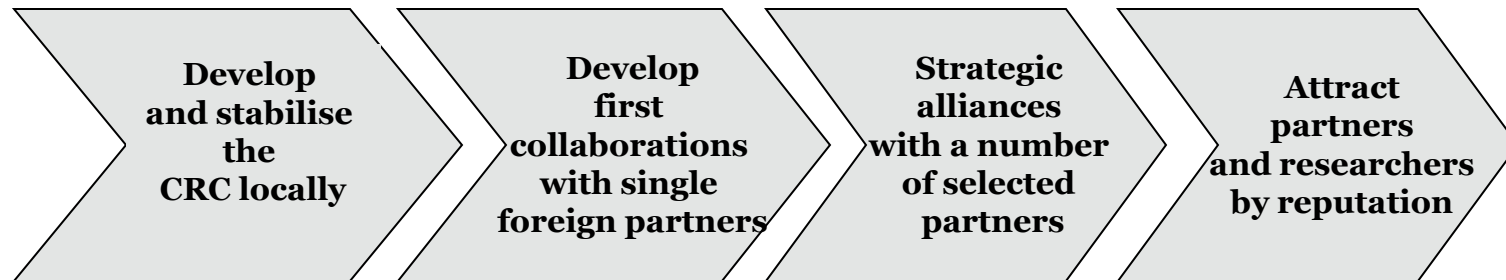
Attention to different levels of actors



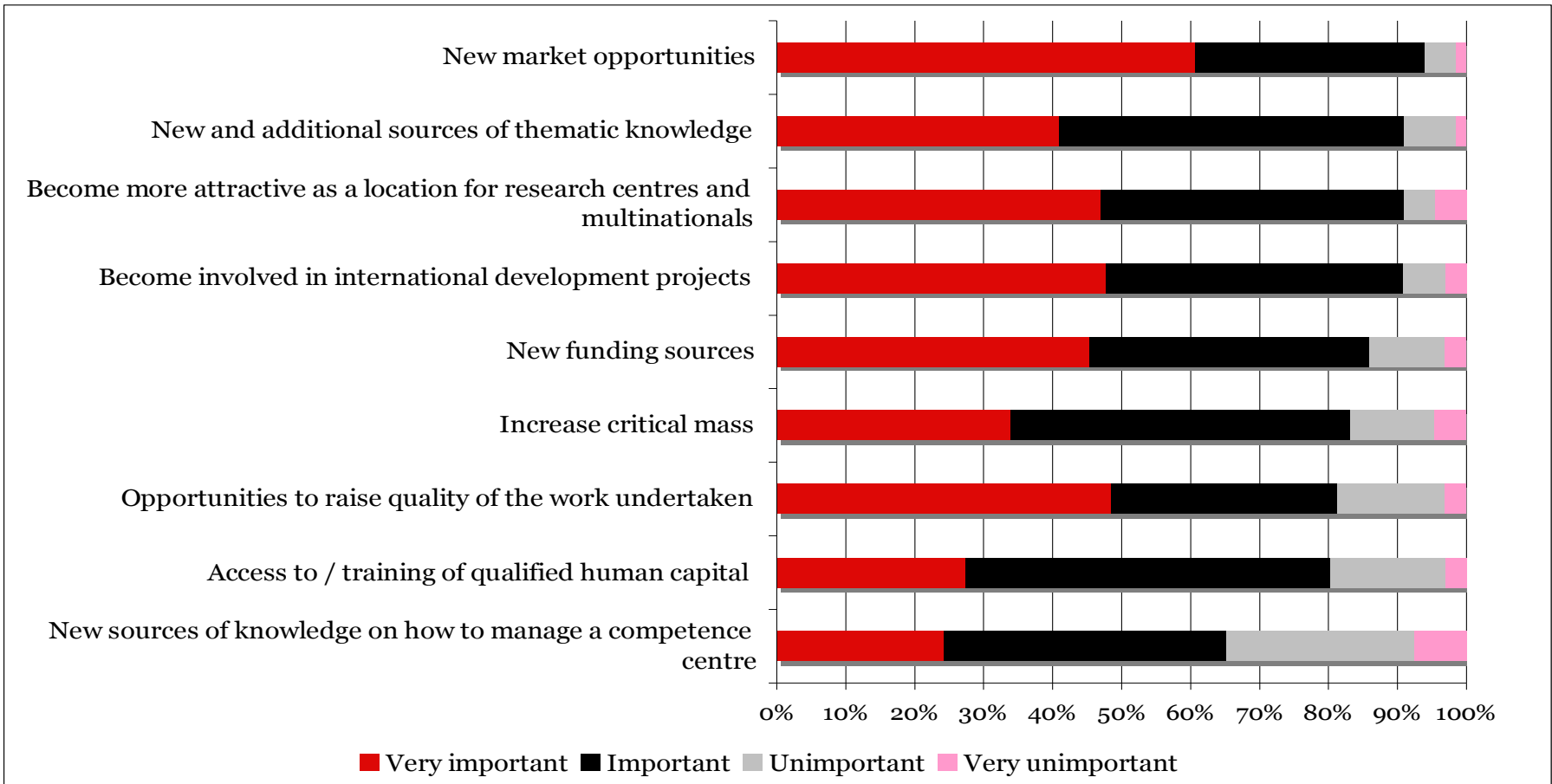
Is international collaboration already common practice?

- In a majority of the national and regional CRC-programmes the involvement of foreign partners is not allowed or there are no explicit views/rules on this
- National public funding to partners across borders is still an exception despite a widespread support for internationalisation of R&D
- Of the CRCs 75% have some form of international cooperation
- In practice most of the internationally oriented CRCs do not have a formal, codified strategy but do have 'internationalisation' integrated in their overall management plans
- CRCs with an explicit international co-operation strategy tend to have more actual co-operations than those centres without a strategy
- An explicit international strategy helps the centre to:
 - *Influence the mindsets of (industrial) stakeholders*
 - *Become more selective and strategic towards co-operations*

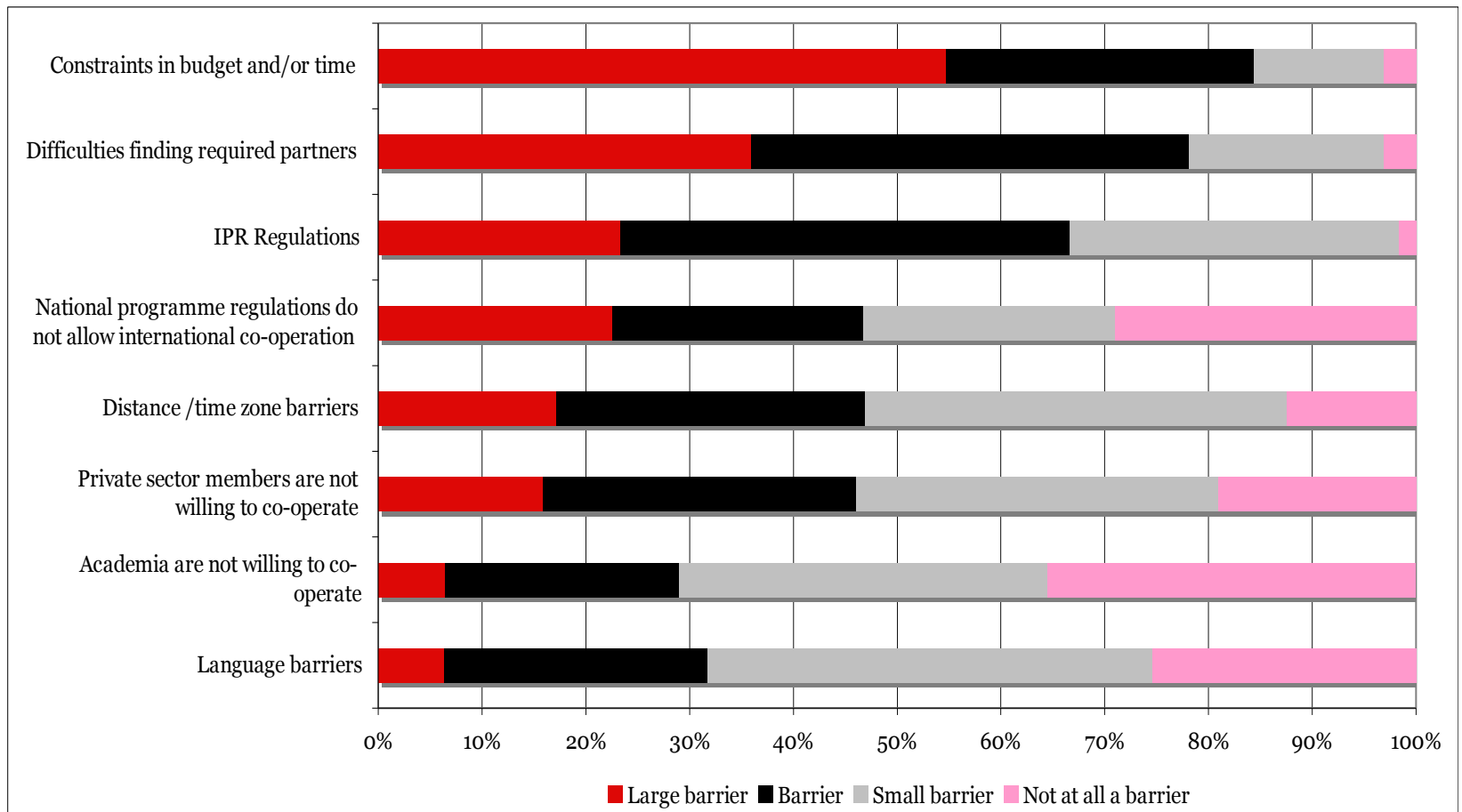
Development stages of CRC-internationalisation



What are the drivers for international co-operation?



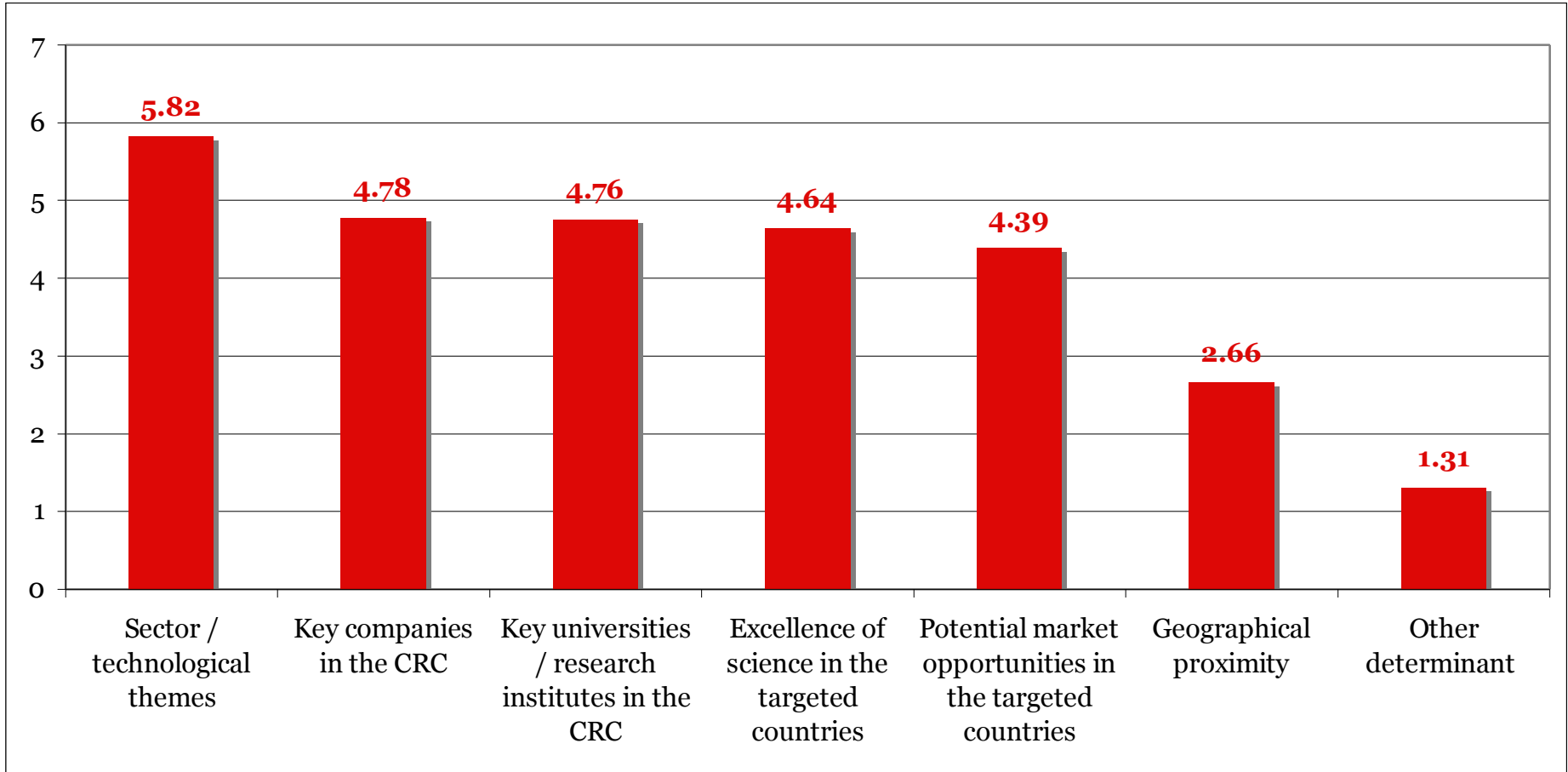
Barriers to co-operation: survey of CRCs



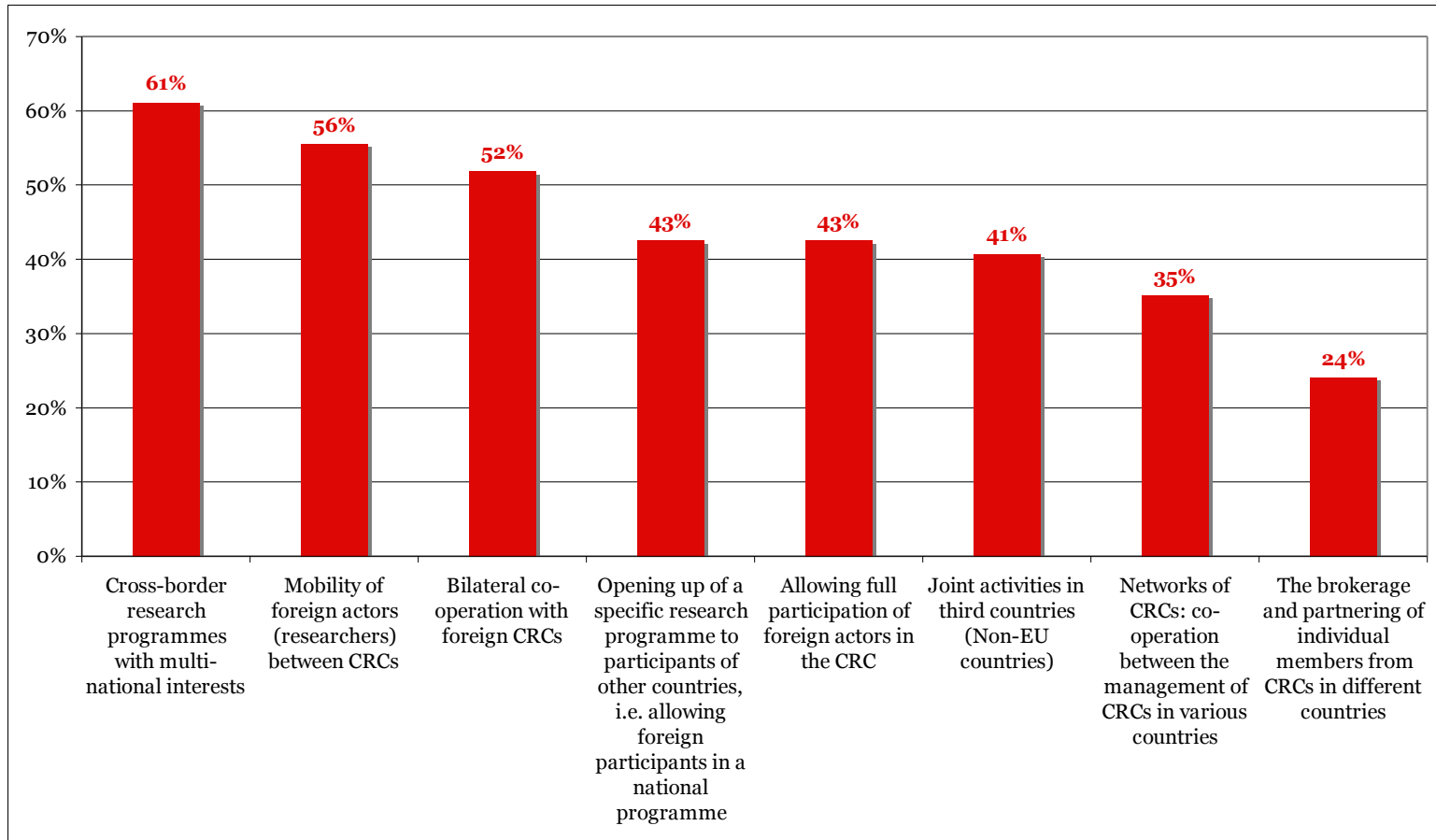
Barriers to co-operation: case studies

- Barriers in case studies dependent on their development stage
- Problems finding the right partners (of less concern to centres in well defined niches)
- Time needed for trust-building
- Constraints in time & budgets (difficult to find funding for foreign partners)
- Modes to overcome constraints in budgets:
 - *EU projects*
 - *Membership fees and industry contributions*
- IPR was not a major constraint for the CRCs with international experience

Selection criteria for foreign partners



Used mechanisms for international collaboration



Effects of international co-operation

- The increase in the **number of partners** due to the larger international coverage of the CRC;
- The increase in **visibility and reputation**, which leads to a more prominent position in European activities (e.g. leading EU-consortia, organising international symposia), attracting foreign researchers to the centre or in the network;
- **New market opportunities** for the member companies through their networking activities and strategic alliances;
- **New funding sources**, particularly international (EU) funding and a higher level of member fees as a result of broadening the membership.

Overall conclusions

- Internationalisation is an emerging feature in national CRC-programmes but not common practice yet
- Only a few CRCs have foreign (industrial) partners as full members in their centre
- Explicit demands from the CRC-programme level does help to provide an additional incentive to the centres to become more pro-active
- Internationalisation does not depend on an explicit internationalisation strategy; however internationally advanced CRCs have integrated it in their overall management plan and governance
- The key reason for searching foreign partners is to find complementary knowledge or specific business activities that add to the value chain
- Real international alliances take time to build up
- In the future CRC-managers are seeking to expand their bilateral co-operations with other CRCs.

What can be done to help CRCs internationalise?

- CRC public funders: provide clear guidelines on the programme level what degree of international involvement is expected / allowed
- Ask mature CRCs to build internationalisation in their overall strategy and define performance indicators accordingly
- Offer a flexible 'globalisation package' (e.g. Vinnova's globalisation grant) on a competitive basis for specific actions for individual CRCs
- Provide international exchange platforms for CRCs on a thematic basis
- Support CRCs in partner search through a COMPERA-type network
- Explore exchanges and partnerships with CRC-programmes outside Europe (US, Canada, Australia, etc..)
- Link the internationalisation activities of national CRC-programmes more closely with existing support structures for internationalisation
- CRC-management training courses on key aspects of international co-operation (e.g. IPR, foreign companies as members, ...)

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Thank you

patries.boekholt@technopolis-group.com

Technopolis Group has offices in Amsterdam, Ankara, Brighton, Brussels, Frankfurt/Main, Paris, Stockholm, Tallinn and Vienna.
