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**Abstract**

The Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER) was founded in 1988 to stimulate international communication and collaboration of higher education researchers. A need was felt to offset the isolation of the small numbers of scholars in this area of expertise in many countries, as well as the isolation of individual disciplines addressing higher education, as well as to form a platform that might enhance the theoretical basis and the quality of research activities. CHER was expected to contribute to the identity of higher education researchers vis-à-vis a fuzzy mix of higher education experts. Last but not least one hoped for increasing comparative research in higher education. A 'light' network approach was advocated from the beginning in order to absorb new themes and members at ease. The majority of higher education researchers active in CHER are Europeans, though academics from other continents play a visible role. CHER was quite successful in pursuing its initial goals, but higher education researcher continue in most countries to be a small academic community facing problems of being publicly heard outside academia amidst evaluators,

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policy analysts, consultants and others claiming to be 'experts' on higher education. (HRK / Abstract  
übernommen)