

NVL; meeting March 13th in Copenhagen on the subject:

*Research on Innovation within the area
of adult learning and competence
development in the Nordic countries*

Presentation for Iceland:
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Adult Education; the policy and strategy in Iceland

- Law on Adult Education on 31 March 2010
 - focusing especially on providing increased opportunities to individuals with short formal education.
- The parliament (Althingi) provides financial contribution for adult education and related activities through
 - the Education and Training Fund

Innovation; the policy and strategy about research on innovation in Iceland

- Emphasis and consensus, especially now after the banking crisis hit Iceland, about the importance of keeping to the policy of not cutting back on R & D and trying to maintain the level of public funding for research and innovation as far as possible.

- According to latest statistics from 2009, Iceland now invests 3.1 per cent of its GDP in R&D., which in real terms means that it is on similar level as in 2007.

- It has been the policy of the Icelandic government to maintain the competitive part of the financing of R&D

(Interview (in Research Media August 27th 2011) with the director of RANNIS Hallgrímur Jonasson)

This reflects the notion

- that **INNOVATION** is primarily triggered by **investment in R&D...**
- ...and that the manufacturing is the sole source of productivity, growth and economic wealth, while services are unproductive and technologically backward (Windrum, 2008).

Implications of changing (expanding) focus and emphasis in research on innovation

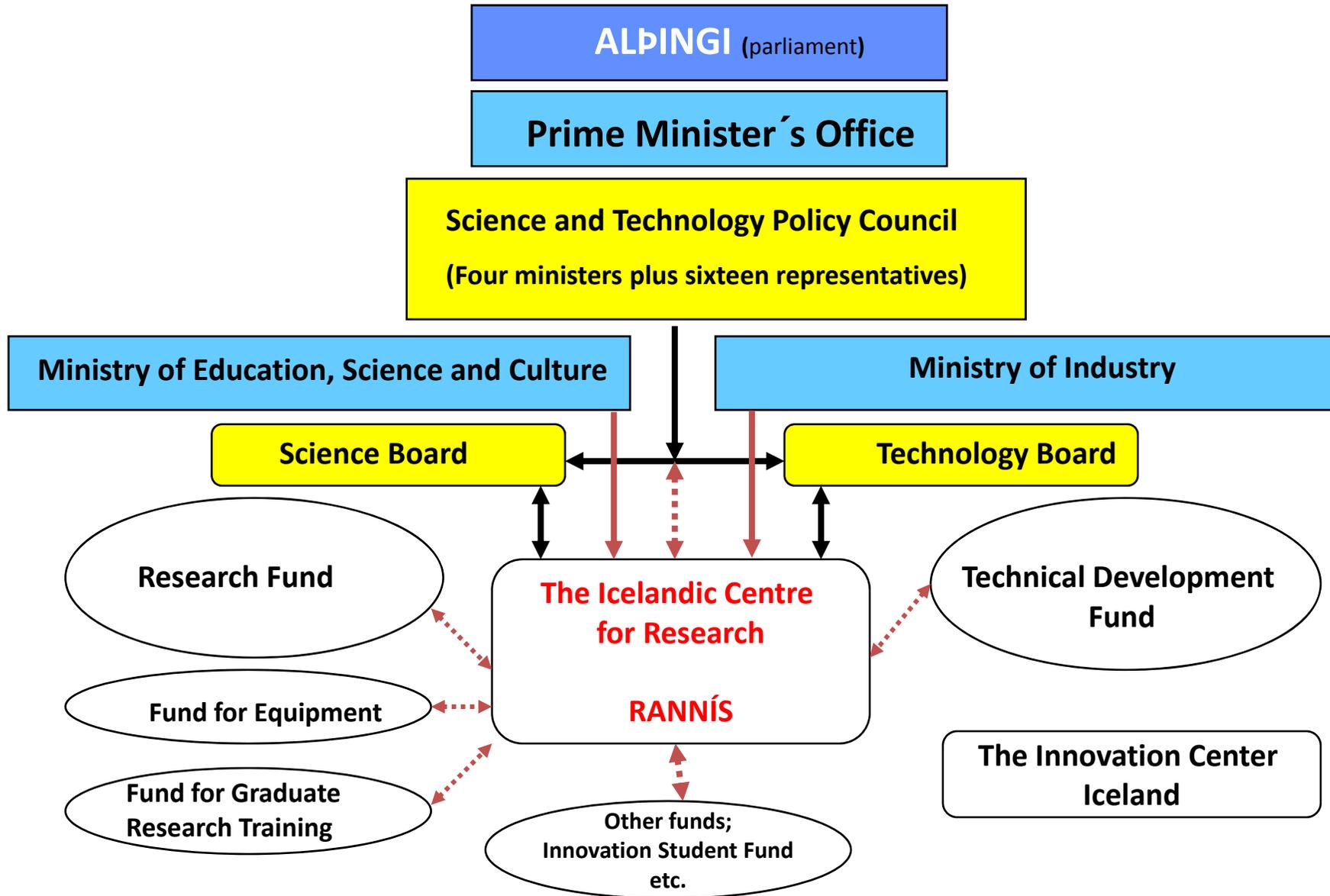
- In Iceland, in recent years there is awakening and an increased consensus about the importance of Public Sector Innovation.
- Iceland has participated in research projects about Innovation in the public sector, e.g.:
 - INTERACT research project (2006); presenting six case studies of innovation within health and social services in the Nordic countries, the Faeroe Islands included. Contains an analysis of the role of the public sector in Nordic innovation policy development.
 - MePIn project (2010); measuring public innovation in the Nordic countries...

The Icelandic Center for Research

Rannís

- **The Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS)** reports to the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Its mission is to provide professional assistance to the preparation and implementation of the science and technology policy in Iceland. Its main duties are:
 - **To operate the public competitive funding system for research and technological development**, including the Icelandic Research Fund, the Infrastructure Fund and the Graduate Education Fund on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the Technology Development Fund on behalf of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
 - **To provide services and information to the Science and Technology Policy Council** and its committees on scientific research and technology development at national and international level.
 - **To coordinate and promote Icelandic participation in international cooperation in science and technology** and interact with corresponding agencies and research councils in other countries
 - **To monitor the resources and performance of R&D**, evaluate the results and impact of scientific research, technical development and innovation and participate in international benchmarking of the results.
 - **Promote public awareness of research and innovation.**

Science and Technology Policy governance



The situation now in Iceland about the subject of the meeting

– As far as I could detect:

- Research projects on Innovation focusing on (or involving) adult learning and competence development are hard to find in Iceland
- There are ongoing PhD research projects, (including my own) which fall within the area

My own (PhD) research project

- **Working title:** The INNOVATION and work-place LEARNING in public sector services.
 - Firstly; the focus is on **how innovation in public services is triggered, conceived and implemented**, i.e. on *the expansive learning process* (the driving forces for change and new solution and what is happening in an activity (or an organization) when there are formed a new solution)
 - Secondly the focus is on *the management team* as the key subject (in modulating, facilitating and implementing the new solution). The (middle) managers' competence and learning activities (aiming at expanding theirs possibilities) will be part of the project.

My (PhD) research project

- The methodological and theoretical framework the research project is drawing on:
 - **The Activity theory (AT)** ; where an organization is seen as consisting of activity systems oriented at objects. AT attempts to investigate the gradual and overlapping nature of change in developmental cycles.
 - **Theory of Expansive learning**; models the developmental cycles in the change process....; where the learning is a collective (work)process of interactive and communicative actions sharing and creating (new) knowledge, understanding and possibly new (innovative) solutions

Two cases studied

- Represent experimentation and a new solution in traditional public services in Iceland in the beginning of the new millennium
- The selection was purposeful; both represented novelties and both have attracted attention for being an example of successful management and leadership of transformative change or innovation in public services
- Case 1: privately owned-publicly financed nursing home.
Case 2: (a new since 2005) primary school in Reykjavik