

Production versus productivity

Editorial

It has become a sign of our times (maybe a negative sign) that science is taken, and measured, as another economic enterprise. The work undertaken in our laboratories needs to go through a process of evaluation that measures us (researchers) and what we do (publications, patents, theses, etc) in quantitative terms. While I do not deny that laboratories and research teams need to be accountable to our funding agencies, here I would like to dispute the notion that output should be measured as “gross production”. “Production”, whatever different metrics we use to gauge it (most are highly unsatisfactory; particularly the “overrated” Impact Factor; lately criticised in well-recognized journals such as Science and Nature), does not reflect the efficiency of our research teams. Economists use a far more useful measure of what is being produced: “productivity”, which is the ratio of “gross production”/“money invested” or, if you prefer, the ratio of output to input. In order to better (more fairly) evaluate the efficiency of our teams, I think that funding agencies should start relying in the value of our productivity instead of our gross production. Implementation of such an approach would, for instance, treat smaller groups in a far more balanced way than how they are currently treated.

Volume 3 Issue 1 - 2016

Pedro Martinez

Department of Genetics, University de Barcelona, Spain

Correspondence: Pedro Martinez, Department of Genetics, University of Barcelona and Institutio Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avancats (ICREA), Barcelona, Spain, Tel 349 3403 5302, Email pedro.martinez@ub.edu

Received: July 14, 2016 | **Published:** July 29, 2016

Acknowledgements

None.

Conflict of interest

Author declares that there is no conflict of interest.