



A little gedankenexperiment

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The DFG (German research association) had a budget of about 2.7 billion Euro in 2014. Let us take half of it, i.e. 1.35 billion Euro.

In 2015, German Universities (including Hochschulen) have about 28 000 graduations, i.e. there should be about the same amount of PhD students (at least we assume this for here). Additionally, we have about 190 000 people employed in main part of science (docents + assistants, scientific and artistic personal, lecturers for special tasks – did not count professors or side-jobbers). This includes postdocs of all sorts.

In total, we need to pay 218 000 people per year. In Germany, there is a table for this (in Euro per month). Let's assume E13Ü, level 6 for everyone, i.e. 5500 Euro per month.

That are 1.2 billion Euro plus some overhead (administration/bureaucracy). So 1.35 billion Euro could be enough, couldn't it be?. Of course, this was only half of the budget. For the other, we could just spend time to apply for equipment and stuff. Or... we just pay everyone (or for everyone, i.e. research group leader) 5500 Euro research money per month (plus some overhead). Also, there could be some mechanism, which allows you to take money in advance, so you can buy a mass spectrometer or something similar expensive. This certainly needs some more thoughts – but in principle?

I know and hope that someone will come around the corner and tell me why this is a *naive assessment of the situation (Milchmädchenrechnung)*. If not, I do not understand why we just waste our time with discussions about how long contracts should be, why we are spending too much time (equals work time and salary money) on applications for research money, why we underpay our *Doktoranden*, and why there are even researchers, who do not get payed at all.