Definition: research from Dictionary of Computing

scientific investigation carried out in order to learn new facts about a field of study

Summary Article: research
From The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide

The primary activity in science, a combination of theory and experimentation directed towards finding scientific explanations of phenomena. It is commonly classified into two types: pure research, involving theories with little apparent relevance to human concerns; and applied research, concerned with finding solutions to problems of social or commercial importance – for instance in medicine and engineering. The two types are linked in that theories developed from pure research may eventually be found to be of great value to society.

Financing research Scientific research is most often funded by government and industry, so a nation's wealth and priorities are likely to have a strong influence on the kind of work undertaken.

In 1989 the European Community (now the European Union) Council adopted a revised programme on research and technological development for the period 1990–94, requiring a total EC finance of 5,700 million euros, to be apportioned as follows: information and communications technology 2,221 million; industrial and materials technologies 888 million; life sciences and technologies 741 million; energy 814 million; human capacity and mobility 518 million; environment 518 million.

Research, UK In the UK in 1995 £14.3 billion or 2.05% of gross domestic product (GDP) was spent on research, of which £12.2 billion was spent on civil research and development. Of the total funding for research, 48% was provided by industry and 33% by the government. A further 14% came from abroad. Between 1990 and 1995, defence spending on research and development declined from 0.5 to 0.3% of GDP.

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