

## Republic of Albania

### PROGRESS REPORT

#### on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (1<sup>st</sup> half 2012 or - November 2011 / Sarajevo till June 2012 / Tirana)

#### 1 Policy actions

During the academic year 2011-2012 (September 2011 – May 2012), Albanian MOES, has undertaken these policy actions:

- Financed modern development of the students teaching and training.
- Provided service for the PhD students, with the proceeds of the scientific research funds.
- Funded with priority the projects of language and history (*the priority has been given to the candidates who have come from the Centre for Albanologic Studies, in order to become a center of excellence for studies in Albanology.*)
- In the context of increasing investment for scientific research at the level of HEIs, the new model of financing the basic research at department level is being implemented, thus providing an opportunity to the scientific researchers of departments to select and decide upon the projects based on various calls. This financing method is going to support directly and promote effective scientific initiatives that come from departments.
- Enhanced the external mobility of the students and academic personnel through the **Excellency Fund**.
- The new call is open for candidates who want to pursue for the upcoming academic year in the priority fields, along with the engineering sciences, information technology, mathematics, physics, biotechnology even fine arts and national security field, as defined by Decision of Council of Ministers No 345, dated 29.04.2011 and No 438, dated 22. 06. 2011.
- Action has been taken, thorough approved “**Rules of ethics in research and publishing**”. Such regulation stipulates the European standards in all research activities and publishing scientific master studies and further on doctoral studies and scientific research activities of publishing in general.
- Is intensifying bilateral cooperation in education and science with the People's Republic of China.

#### 2. Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) has taken initiatives for:

- The establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IWG) by Prime Minister Order (No. 104, dated 28 December 2011), with the primary goal: "Drafting the Albanian Action Plan to the Open Government Partnership".
- One Action Plan on Open Government Partnership Initiative, April 2012

### 3. Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

- The Ministry of Education and Science In the framework of the program "Quality and Equity in Education", with the support of the Albanian Government, World Bank, European Bank for Investment and Development, Bank of the Council of Europe, **held on 3 April 2012, the Conference "Albanian Education in digital age."** This Conference intended to introduce the reforms undertaken by the Albanian government aiming at the integration of ICT in Education.
- Minister of ES, attended **a roundtable discussion** with senior representatives of academic and scientific world **of Austria**, where they exchanged views and information on the possibility of expanding scientific cooperation under bilateral and multilateral cooperation of university expansion.
- Minister of ES visited the University of Foreign Languages of Beijing in the People's Republic of China.
- Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Polytechnic University of Tirana organized **on 26 March 2012, the 7th Seminar "E-Infrastructure developments in Albania and its future."** The purpose of the workshop was to analyze the current situation of e-infrastructure in Albania and discuss about the role and cooperation of stakeholders involved in the development of e-Infrastructure.

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy (METE) organised and participated in some activities as:

- Tirana 4-5 April, Workshop of WBC Best Practices on Innovation
- National Conference on Information Society 22.02.2012
- TIRANA, November 2011 an alliance among the Albanian-American Development Foundation (AADF), the Government of Albania, USAID, Microsoft Albania, Hewlett-Packard, Cisco, and Altelecom, was formally announced in a ceremony held at the Ministry of Innovation and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This public-private partnership will establish Albania's first ICT training and resource center, PROTİK, to support the development and use of ICT innovations for small businesses and promote ICT sector growth in Albania.
- Albanian Investment Development Agency In Cooperation With The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana and Durrës organized The Workshop "Presentation on Innovation And Competitiveness Fund"

During the reporting period, AKTI's representatives participated in the following activities, trainings, and workshops:

- In September 2011, in Tirana, it was organized the training of European Enterprise Network. ARTI as part of the Albanian Consortium which applied for EEN membership was part of this training.  
The aim of the training was to kick-off the partnership between the project partners, to have the first consortium meeting and to agree on how to work together between the partners. Training addressed EEN management issues, processes, etc.

The EEN with more than 49 countries around the globe, represent a huge opportunity, but also competition.

- On 15 September 2011, in Brussels, it was held the meeting of the Ministers of Science and Research of the Western Balkans. Meeting was focused on EU support preparations for Innovative Union of Western Balkans and Framework Programme “HORIZON 2020”. Director General of ARTI participated in this meeting.
- On 18-21 September 2011, ARTI participated in Challenge Social Innovation Conference organised in Vienna. The objective of this conference was to establish social innovation as a major theme of work and discourse in the scientific community.
- On 8-9 November 2011, Albanian Ministry of Education and Science in collaboration with ARTI organised TAIEX Conference on EU Research and Education policy.
- On 8-12 November 2011, ARTI participated in the meeting on Steering Platform for Western Balkan Countries, organized in the framework of WBC\_INCO\_NET Project in Bečići, Montenegro. ARTI became a member of this Project, upon the decision of the Executive Board of the Project.
- On 14-15 November 2011, two ARTI representatives participated in the Financial and Legal Training organised by WBC-INCO.Net in Vienna, Austria.
- On 16-19 November 2011, Director General of ARTI participated in the World Science Forum organized by the Hungarian Academy of Science. The topic of the fifth World Science Forum was “The Changing Landscape of Science: Challenges and Opportunities”.
- On 22-23 November 2011, ARTI as Bridgehead Organization participated in the EURAXESS Bridgehead Meeting held in Brussels.
- On 29 November – 2 December 2011, ARTI participated in the regional meeting of the Balkan countries cooperating in the field of science and research. The next meeting for the Regional Platform will be organised in Tirana in June 2012.
- On 30-31 January 2012, ARTI became an Associated Partner in EURAXESS T.O.P II Project (*Enhancing the Outreach and Effectiveness of the EURAXESS Network Partners*).
- On 7-8 March 2011, an AKTI representative participated in “EUREKA for Smart Regions” Conference organised in Pecs, Hungary by Hungarian EUREKA Chairmanship. The aim of the conference was the expansion of the regional dimension of the EUREKA Program. Conference focused on synergies between EUREKA Programme, regional funding initiative and networks such as SEE-ERA.NET, WBC.INCO NET and the Danube Strategy.
- On 26-27 March 2012, a representative from ARTI participated as a member of the Working Group on Regional Strategy for Research and Development Innovation, meeting organized by the World Bank in Sarajevo.
- On 2-3 April 2012, Director General of AKTI participated in the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Research and Innovation, organised by EC’s Research and Innovation DG.
- On 4-5 April 2012, AKTI participated in the seminar “Best Practices of cooperation Science - Business for the Western Balkans countries” organised under the WBC.INCO.Net Project in Tirana.
- On 24 May 2012, Albanian National Contact Point for “FP7 Research Infrastructure”, attended the meeting of the Forum “e-Infrastructure” in Brussels.

## 2 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

- The fourth executive program for **Scientific and Technological Cooperation by the Republic of Albania and the Republic of Italy 2012 - 2014** was signed on 20 January 2012. It will support 12 projects for Albanian researchers of universities and research centers, in cooperation with universities and research centers in Italy.
- In March of 2012 in Hungary was signed, the **program of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) of Albania and the Ministry of National Resources of Hungary** in the field of education and science, for the period 2012-2014 as well as the cooperation agreement for the opening The chair of Albanology and studying the Albanian language, Albanian history and literature at ELTE University in Hungary.
- **The Cooperation Program between the Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) of Albania and the Ministry of National Resources of Hungary in the Field of Education and Science**, for the period 2012-201 was signed on 19 March 2012. Eötvös Lorand University Rector (University ELTE) in Budapest, Mr. Barna Mezey and Minister Tafaj, also signed a cooperation agreement, which inter alia provides for the opening of the chair of Albanology and studying the Albanian language, Albanian history and literature at ELTE University.
- **The Agreement on Cooperation in Education and Science between the Government of the Republic of Albania and the Government of Montenegro**, was signed in April 2012 by the Albanian Deputy. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Podgorica.
- **The Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic on Cooperation in Education and science**, for the years 2012-2015 was signed in Tirana on 15 April 2012.
- On May 2, 2012, the Minister of Education and Science, signed in Vienna, Austria, the **Treaty of Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the Government of Austria**.
- The Minister of ES held an important **meeting** with the Deputy Minister for International Co-operation in the Ministry of Education of the **People's Republic of China**, Mr. Hao Ping, where he discussed the possibilities of intensifying bilateral cooperation in education and science with focus on ICT and Agricultural Universities of Tirana and Beijing.

## 3 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

During the academic year 2011-2012 (September 2011 – May 2012) the following are financed:

- **32 scientific and didactic laboratories** .
- **53 research and scientific projects** aiming at providing service for PhD students.
- The Albanian Government continues to allocate 100 million ALL to support full studies of PhD, post-PhD, master and bachelor of Albanian students and scientists in western universities.

- 109 excellent candidates were supported in academic year (2011-2012 - 85 PHD students and 24 university students).
- Early 2012, the Ministry of Education and Science contributed by a fund of 150 000 USD out of the budget of the Ministry to ensure continuity in the support for the Brain Gain program, co-financed by UNDP.
- QSA has around 300 master's and doctoral students.

#### **4 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months**

Preparation of Success Stories on FP7 –MARIE-CURIE, COST Programs and launch on ARTI's official website;

Provide training and information sessions at Public and Private Universities and Research Institutions;

Technical assistance on individual basis for all researchers that will apply on EU Programs

#### **Appendix: additional data**

*(Delete if not applicable.)*

...

