

Greece

PROGRESS REPORT¹

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

1 Policy actions

With regard to a sustainable economic development five main areas of strategic importance to the country have been identified and serve as priorities. These include: 1) Agro-food, 2) Information and Communication Technologies, 3) Materials/Chemicals, 4) Energy-Environment, and 5) Health/Biomedical.

The process for meeting those priorities (and serving the country's research needs) is based on 4 dimensions/categories of calls. 1) Strengthening and supporting the scientific/research personnel and research infrastructure. This includes a variety of calls such as calls for interdisciplinary research, researcher-initiated research, support for graduate studies and for postdoctoral research. A major new initiative under this category is a call, identical to that for the ERC starting grants for young researchers (expected to be announced by the end of the year). The aim of this call is to attract top young Greek talent in Greece at a moment in time where there are many incentives for good Greek scientists to leave Greece. 2) Encouraging links between the scientific/research community and businesses and entrepreneurs. This program includes calls for spin-offs, innovative cluster creation, and collaborative efforts between private sector and public research institutions. 3) Supporting bilateral and international collaboration (and support of multilateral ERANET joint calls), and 4) Outreach and Education for research to the community (particularly youngsters).

Moreover, horizontal actions running through all thematic areas are to :

- a) encourage the mobility of researchers, thus facilitating their integration into more competitive environments abroad, and
- b) assure the transfer of "Best Practices" on RIs and Innovation developed in several EU m-s National Programmes focus on the "knowledge triangle" with emphasis on Excellence and Innovation as the cornerstones of the strategy -back -to -growth path. Hence, the promotion of the scientific and technological excellence and the selection of projects on a competitive basis are the core objectives of the national Calls.

In this respect, the Greek government has elaborated the "National Action Plan for the Enhancement of the Research, Technological Development and Innovation" aiming at:

¹ The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage (www.wbc-inco.net) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to office@wbc-inco.net until June 5, 2012.

- functional integration of the national research “fabric” with an integrated political oversight
- improvement of the investment climate for R&D
- strengthening the linkages between research and innovation
- strengthening the Greek research system and its potential for supporting the economic development of the country
- improving the effectiveness of public financing

With regard the strengthening of the Greek research system important activities relate to the development of a culture of outward orientation in the Greek scientific and technological community which will, among others, further support the achievements of the country in European research programmes. This set of activities will not be substantial in monetary terms, but it is expected to bring important benefits (6MEURO for 2011-2012).

In relation to the WB region, new opportunities for enhanced cooperation between Greece and WBC are anticipated in the context of the initiatives/actions for RTDI activities in the Framework of the GREEK NATIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (2007-2013) operational programmes.

Finally two new bilateral National co operations in the field of Science and Technology started, between Greece and China and between Greece and Israel. The public investment for those two actions is set to 6 M€ and 4M€ respectively and the interest seems to be very high.

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

The new Investment law forecasts 100million euros for investments under the category R&D, and 50 million euros for investment schemes in the category “Networking”, (Clusters). There are synergies with the R&D sector which are summarised below:

It is foreseen that the investment plans which come under the provisions of the present law shall receive aid for the following expenditure: Research, development and innovation projects and programmes relating to the enterprise's business and products implemented by the enterprise either on its own or in collaboration with research foundations and agencies and advanced and higher education establishments in Greece or the EU.

General investment plans shall be divided into 3 categories, one of which concerns investments in research and technological development. This category comprises investment plans intended for the technological modernisation of enterprises through the use of technological and operational innovations, such as quality assurance and control systems, certification, energy-saving technology, research and development projects and programmes and deployment of specialized scientific and research personnel. More specifically this category shall be granted aid in the form of grants and leasing subsidies.

Every investment plan that satisfies the requirements of this category shall be evaluated and graded on the basis of the following criteria:

- ✓ Criteria relating to technological development, innovation and new products and services.
- ✓ Application of advanced technology and innovation (expenditure on know-how, research and development, product design and marketing, quality assurance and control systems, certification and patenting).
- ✓ Development of new products and activities.
- ✓ Application of clean technologies and waste management.
- ✓ Amount of added value.

Among the categories of the special investment plans is the category of Partnerships and networking. This category includes investment plans filed by partnership and networking configurations, the aim of which is to implement programmes which either make use of the enterprises' competitive advantages or infrastructures created with national and Community financing or are designed to bring certain geographically defined production activities and services into line with the modern economic and technological environment. These configurations shall comprise at least ten enterprises in the Region of Attica and the Thessaloniki prefecture and at least five enterprises in other prefectures, operating in the form of a consortium, which may include enterprises from other Member States of the European Union. Universities, research institutions and legal persons under private law may participate up to a rate of 20%. The investment plans subsidised include joint operations, such as joint production facilities and equipment, quality control, storage, distribution networks, transport and product and service exhibition and sale facilities and equipment, joint trademarks and e-sales system, joint certification and quality marks, joint staff training etc.

3 Important events, meetings, training activities etc.

In the frame of the WBC-INCO.NET project a *High Level Review Meeting on Good Practice examples on Innovation for the Western Balkan countries* organised in Tirana on April 4 and 5, 2012. The aim of this meeting is to present selected good practice examples of innovation instruments and measures from EU Member States.

Within the framework of the WBC-INCO.NET project also, a workshop organised for "Innovation in the Western Balkan Countries: Capacity, Status Quo, and Best Practice" in the frame of ICEIRD 2012 (5th Conference on Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development) in Sofia, Bulgaria. The workshop presented an overview of the innovation landscape in the Western Balkan countries.

Furthermore, a training workshop is planned to take place in Belgrade in November 2012, on the topic of "smart specialisation" and its importance for regional development.

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

In the framework of the Bilateral Cooperation Action, the evaluation process of the 164 submitted proposals to the Greek-Serbian Call is still ongoing.

FP7 projects

I-SEE-MOB ('Inter-sectoral mobility of researchers in the South Eastern Europe') - FP7-COH-2007-2.2-OMC-NET

Coordinator GSRT, Greece

Partners_Turkey, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, Bulgaria, **Serbia**, **Croatia**, **FYROM**, Romania

The overall goal of the project is to promote the inter-sectoral mobility policy issues in South-Eastern Europe by providing guidelines and recommendations for removing remaining obstacles. Additionally, another aim is to enhance industry-academia collaboration in the region. Furthermore, the project aims at identifying the legislation gaps in national legislations on inter-sectoral mobility of researchers. The inter-sectoral mobility will be examined as a

criterion for the career development of researchers working in the region of South Eastern Europe.

Two on-line questionnaires have been developed with a view to recording the industry and academia demands for researchers. In parallel a legislation gap analysis on inter-sectoral mobility has been drafted. At the moment, the results from both surveys are being elaborated with the aim to demonstrate the regional inter-sectoral mobility as it is. Meanwhile, National Analysis Reports as well as National Guidelines for the promotion of inter-sectoral mobility policy issues have been developed as well as the final comparative reports which is planned to be presented in Ankara, Turkey within June 2012.

SEERA-EI (South East European Research Area for e-Infrastructures)

Coordinator GRNET, Greece

Partners **Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, FYROM, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey**

SEERA-EI will capitalise on this momentum and link national-level programme managers and provide an open forum for information exchange, in order to enable coordination of national programmes in e-Infrastructures, and to set the framework for a common regional agenda. The project will gather and exchange information regarding current programmes and carry out a state-of-the-art analysis; produce set of best practices and guidelines for national e-Infrastructure programmes; and identify areas for joint regional activities, ranging from short-term soft actions, mid-term policy-level actions, to preparatory activities for long-term actions. SEERA-EI will reduce fragmentation of national programmes, will create a harmonised approach to national-level initiatives in e-Infrastructures, will ensure local commitment and will pave the way towards common regional vision, strategy and sustainable cooperation. Thus a common voice on European and international stage will be given to the region, whilst the ERA will be strengthened as a whole, enabling collaborative high-quality research across a spectrum of scientific fields.

A Pilot Joint Call is launched in May 2012, in “**Research and Skill Building in Scientific Cloud Computing**”.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to promote multilateral cooperation among universities, research organizations and enterprises.

WBC-INCO.NET

Partners: **Albania, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey**

The three core objectives of the WBC-INCO.NET are:

- a) to support the bi-regional dialogue on S&T;
- b) to identify RTD priorities and potentials in a transparent and methodologically sound way; and
- c) to enhance the participation of researchers from the WBC in European projects of mutual interest and benefit.

In its ENHANCED activities (Oct.2010 - Dec.2013) the project focuses on the innovation status in the region, as described in its WP 8 "Innovation Support". In addition, the project's continuing work will also look up to the innovation aspect.

GSRT as WP4 leader is responsible for building capacities in the region, whereas as WP8 leader is in charge for enhancing activities as regards the innovation development in the region with the view to establishing a functional regional innovation system through future joint funding mechanisms and other activities described in an Action Plan.

On Friday 01 June 2012 the WBC-INCO-NET project organised the workshop "**Innovation in the Western Balkan Countries: Capacity, Status Quo, and Best Practice**" in the frame of ICEIRD 2012 (5th Conference on Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development) in Sofia, Bulgaria. SEERC led its organisation. The workshop presented an overview of the innovation landscape in the Western Balkan countries by presenting its findings on current innovation infrastructures, on the innovation capacity of the region with emphasis on joint cooperation needs and on best practice examples of innovation policy approaches.

The third Innovation Dialogue Forum (IDF) will take place in Tirana, Albania (12 & 13 June 2012) gathering together partners, the WBC Group of Innovation Experts and policy makers to discuss regional priorities and actions that should enhance Innovation activities in the region.

In the frame of T8.4 we are planning to hold a training workshop in Belgrade on the topic of "smart specialisation" and its importance for regional development.

SEE-ERA.NET PLUS

Partners: **Albania**, Austria, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**, Bulgaria, **Croatia**, France, **FYROM**, Germany, Greece, **Montenegro**, Romania, **Serbia**, Slovenia, Turkey

SEE-ERA.NET PLUS aims at structuring and expanding the European Research Area (ERA) to the Western Balkan countries (WBC) by coordinating and supporting RTD activities previously conducted predominantly at bilateral level.

The Call for Joint European Research Projects (JERPs) launched by SEE-ERA.NET PLUS has a total budget of €3.5 million. This activity engages scientists and key stakeholders in R&D policy-making in the countries participating in the broad SEE-ERA.NET PLUS consortium.

GSRT is strongly involved in this project as WP2 "Implementing the call and monitoring" leader.

The EC has approved the implementation of 23 JERPS, among which 18 with Greek participation.

Nationally funded Projects

Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

Partners: **Albania**, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, **Serbia**, Turkey and Ukraine

Coordinator country: Greece (1.5.2010 – 31.4.2012)

In the BSEC framework Greece, Albania and Serbia are involved in collaborative S&T activities following the main purposes and axes of the "2nd BSEC Action Plan on cooperation in science

and technology (2010-2014)". In this context Greece, in the end of the period as the present country coordinator of the Working Group of cooperation in Science & Technology, has organized the "First Training Summer School for the Promotion and Application of EU Marine Environmental Policy Frameworks in Non-EU Mediterranean and Black Sea Countries" in June 2012, in Chios island, Greece.

5 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months

Greece being partner in several networking projects focused on the WB region will be actively involved in future cooperative activities aiming at coordinating the national R&D policies.

A Call for funding projects within SEERA-EI project is launched in May 2012. To this end, bilateral meetings between delegations from Greece, Albania and FYROM have been organised resulting to a workshop held in Athens in January 2012 on the topic of Infrastructures. An amendment for prolongation is expected in the implementation of the program as some delays occurred.

With regard the BSEC activities a training course on aquatic and marine environment issues addressing young scientists from the BSEC m-s is scheduled for June 2012. This is held in collaboration with FP7 projects being implemented in the wider Black Sea region.