

CEI

PROGRESS REPORT¹

**on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC
(2st half 2012 or - June 2012 / Tirana till December 2012 / Belgrade)**

1 Policy actions

(e.g. essential changes in the political authorities, administrative bodies, agencies, institutions, personnel, development/launch of new national funding programmes, etc.)

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2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

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3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

Since June 2012, the CEI Secretariat has been very active in the field science and technology, particularly for the organization of two events held in Trieste on 19 and 20 September: the CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology and the Ministerial Conference "Renewable Energy in a Bio-Based Economy - The Option of Next Generation Biofuels". As to the former, Ministers of Science and their representatives from 18 CEI Member States, together with High Officials from the European Commission and from international scientific institutions, focused their discussion on the follow-up of the "Trieste Declaration", adopted on the occasion of the previous Ministerial Meeting (October 2011). Major steps forward were made on the development of the "Central European Research Infrastructure Consortium - C-ERIC", aimed at further enhancing the access of CEI scientific communities to the centers of excellence of the "Trieste Science System", such as the Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory "Elettra" and the free Electron Laser Laboratory "Fermi" - a CEI contribution towards the completion of the European Research Area (ERA). As to the latter, Ministers and their representatives for Science and Technology, Energy, Environment, Agriculture and Economy, together with High-level Officials of the European Commission and international experts, recognized the challenge of Next Generation Biofuels as "a multi-faceted and priority option for any eco-friendly strategy and for a bio-based economy in the CEI region". The strategic challenge of Next Generation Biofuels (NGB) was analyzed from different perspectives in two working

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 December 1, 2012.

sessions: the state-of-the-art in research/technology and contribution of NGB to rural development and to economic development. The basis for discussions was offered by the Report commissioned by the CEI to Bloomberg - New Energy Finance about the perspectives on Next Generation Biofuels and other Bio-products in the CEI Region, published in March 2012. It was agreed that it is necessary to promote not only research and development, but also concrete results stemming from pilot demonstration or industrial projects.

As a follow-up of the September ministerial events, on 28 – 30 November, a high-level delegation from the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine will visit Trieste upon invitation by the Secretariat of the Central European Initiative (CEI) and under the auspices of the CEI Ukrainian Presidency. Concrete actions will be undertaken to encourage the participation of Ukraine in C-ERIC. Moreover, further progress will be made towards Ukrainian membership in the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB). Both initiatives, facilitated by the CEI in the context of its Science and Technology Network, aim at opening up the “Trieste Science System” to the scientific communities of CEI countries, as a precondition to support further cohesion in line with the CEI mission “regional cooperation for European integration”.

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

(e.g. new bilateral/international agreements, memberships, support structures, important international projects, programmes, etc.)

The last call for proposals of the CEI Research Fellowship Programme (CERES) was finalized in late June 2012. 5 fellowships were awarded to “experienced researchers” from Slovenia, Bulgaria and Ukraine. In the time-frame 2009 – 2012, the CERES Programme has received more than 100 applications from 16 CEI Member States and has awarded a total of 30 one-year fellowships to scientists from 10 CEI Member States. The participation of scientists from the Western Balkans has been positive in terms of both submitted applications (23 research project proposals, equal to 22,5%) and selected applications (7 research project-proposals, equal to 23,3%).

Furthermore, the CEI has been very active in the design of new project applications to submit to the currently open FP7 calls in the field of “health”, “energy” and “support to international cooperation”.

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

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

(Optional personal opinion)

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Appendix: additional data

(Delete if not applicable.)

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