

MONTENEGRO

PROGRESS REPORT¹

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (June 2013 / Budva until December 2013 / Zagreb)

1 Policy actions

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

In order to foster innovation within the private sector, the Ministry of Science has taken the activities towards the establishment of the first Center of Excellence (CoE) in Montenegro. The Ministry of Science published the Call for Proposals for establishing a pilot CoE on 30 May 2013 and the deadline for submission was 20 September 2013. Proposals were submitted by 10 scientific research institutions from Montenegro. The evaluation of the proposals is in the process. The Status of the Pilot CoE will be awarded for a 3 - year period, beginning from March 2014 until March 2017. The requested project budget should not exceed 3.7 million €.

The Ministry of Science published the Call for grants for collaborative research and development subprojects (CRDS) on 18 October 2013, with the deadline for submission on 17 December 2013, with the aim to strengthen the excellent research teams, internationalization and link between research and industry, which will grow into the future CoEs.

The establishment of a Science and Technology Park (STP) in Montenegro represents one of the most important projects by the Ministry and is the key project for connecting the scientific and business sectors. The first step towards the establishment of the STP is creation of the Innovative Entrepreneurial Center "TEHNOPOLIS" in Niksic. The Ministry of Science published the Tender for development of the main project for reconstruction of the Army Centre of Montenegro in Niksic for accommodation of the Innovative Entrepreneurial Center "TEHNOPOLIS" on 27 November 2013.

The Ministry of Science, together with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance, is part of the Operational Structure (OP) for IPA IV Component „Human Resource Development“. Under Priority Axis 2: Enhancing Skills, Knowledge and Competences for Employability and Competitiveness, the Ministry of Science is responsible for Measure 2.2 “Supporting improvement of innovative capacities in higher education, research and economy”. Measure 2.2 has two specific objectives: to develop innovation skills of students, professors and researchers (supported by the Technical Assistance); and to transfer the knowledge and to develop the innovation skills in enterprises

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 5, 2013.

(supported by the Grant Scheme). Currently, the OS for IPA IV within the Ministry of Science is working on the ToR for the development of innovative skills of students, professors and researchers, but also on the Guidelines for Applicants for the Transfer of Knowledge Grants.

Montenegro is in the programming phase for IPA II Financial Perspective 2014-2020 and the Ministry of Science is actively involved in the programming within Sector 6: Competitiveness and Innovation and Sector 7: Employment, Social Policies and Human Resource Development of the Country Strategy Paper for Montenegro 2014-2020.

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc

Being organized by the Ministry of Science in cooperation with its partners each year since 2011, Open Science Days 2013 is the biggest science festival in Montenegro that took place in Podgorica from 23-27 September 2013. The main goal of the festival is to show young people in Montenegro that knowledge is their most valuable asset, which was achieved through a number of events like Knowledge Factory, Researchers' Night, but also through numerous exhibitions, such as Mobile Planetarium, Math Exhibition, etc, as well as various other lectures, workshops and performances, during which 80 speakers, and 200 demonstrators and exhibitors presented their ideas. It is estimated that 12 000 people visited the Festival.

As the part of the Researchers' Night 2013 (held on 27 September 2013), the EU Corner was organized. The Ministry of Science invited Ms. Katalin Alföldi, Policy Officer for Inclusiveness and Excellence in the COST Office, as well as national contact points in charge for the promotion of COSME programme and MC Actions with the aim to inform the research community about developments on the main European programmes for research and SMEs: COST, COSME and Marie Curie (MC) Actions. In order to fulfil indicators from the Plan for achieving gender equality in Montenegro (2013-2016), the Ministry gave a visibility to the successful Montenegrin female researchers during the festival (interviews and TV shows, panel discussions).

The UNESCO World Science Day for Peace and Development was celebrated for the first time in Montenegro, on 11 November, focusing on the importance of water (water protection, water scientific research, irrigation and economic importance of water). The Ministry of Science of Montenegro together with UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Venice (Italy) and the Montenegro National Commission for UNESCO organised a panel discussion at the University of Montenegro. Various aspects of the importance of water were discussed at the panel discussion "Water as the strategic resource for development of Montenegro" by the Minister of Science Sanja Vlahović, Minister of Agriculture Petar Ivanovic, Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism Branimir Gvozdenovic and the UN Resident Coordinator in Montenegro Rastislav Vrbensky.

In parallel, the "Overseas Discovery" exhibition was organised at the Delta City in cooperation with the National Parks of Montenegro. Representatives of the National Parks of Montenegro provided children-tailored information about fresh water as well as information about the national parks in Montenegro.

Minister of Science prof. Vlahovic participated at the Western Balkans Ministerial Meeting in Zagreb on 24-25 October 2013. On that occasion, the Regional Research and Development (R&D) Strategy for Innovation was adopted. Minister Vlahović underlined Montenegro's

commitment to the Strategy, noting that the country's national R&D development strategy objectives are in line with the regional document: improving research capacity, improved knowledge transfer and mobility of researchers and technology, and better cooperation between science and business.

Deputy Minister of Science, Mr Darko Petrusic participated at CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology, held on 29 October 2013 in Trieste. Special focus of the Meeting was put on the progress achieved with regard to the establishment of the C-ERIC Consortium aimed at facilitating access of Scientific Communities of CEI Member States to the Synchrotron Radiation Laboratories (Elettra) and to the Free Electron Laser Laboratories (Fermi) located in Trieste, the CEI Secretariat's efforts in promoting scientific research and innovation especially in the Balkans, the Danube Region and the Eastern Neighbourhood, as well as the activities in the field of advanced biofuels and the related development of a Bio-based Economy.

The 57. Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was held in Vienna, Austria, from 16-20 September 2013. A Delegation of Montenegro, headed by prof. Sanja Vlahović, Minister of Science, participated in the event and met the Deputy Director General (DDG) for Nuclear Science and Applications, Daud Mohamad and the DDG for Technical Cooperation, Kwaku Aning to discuss current cooperation for strengthening it in near future.

Directorate for SME Development (DDSME), through the Enterprise Europe Network promoted the open calls within CIP and FP7, as well as forthcoming COSME and HORIZON 2020 programs, with aim to provide information to Montenegrin enterprises and educational and research institutions about available funds and application procedures with practical advices (how to prepare a project, how to search for a partner, how to negotiate, etc.).

DDSME participated /organized following relevant events:

- Training EVAL-INNO "Fostering Evaluation Competencies in Research, Technology and Innovation in the SEE Region", organized in two consecutive events: first in Podgorica (June 2013), and the second one in Belgrade (October 2013), carried out by experienced RTDI evaluation trainers from six countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro and Serbia). The training introduced the participants to the theory and practice of the research and science-related evaluation of organisations, policies, programmes and institutions.

It was aimed at promoting the role of RTDI evaluations as an important element of strategic policy intelligence for the improvement of national research and innovation systems. DDSME representatives participated to two different target groups, evaluators and officers from the RTDI awarding authorities.

- Workshop "Strategic Innovation" was successfully organised in Podgorica in October 2013, by the Directorate for the Development of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (DDSME) of Montenegro, Mihajlo Pupin Institute (MPI) and Maastricht University (UNU MERIT) with the organizational support of the Task Leader German Aerospace Center, Project Management Agency European and international Cooperation (DLR) within WP 8 Innovation Support, T8.5 Task Force Meetings. Workshop participants are jointly working on preparation of the draft feasibility study in order to make possible launching of the national pilot project as first implementation of Strategic Innovation scheme in Montenegro.

- Representatives of the Ministry of Science and Directorate for the SMEs Development participated at the Follow up workshop on Smart specialization for South East European

Countries”, held in Skopje on 20-21 November 2013. The workshop was aimed at defining, discussing and presenting several topics important for successful implementation of S3 Strategy: basic concepts, S3 Platform, priority settings, assessment tools, followed by case studies and practical exercises. During the workshop the “Initial RIS3 Assessment” for FYR Macedonia is presented and discussed. The workshop participants had an opportunity to offer their opinion regarding the aims, objectives, and activities of the RIS3 strategy for FYR of Macedonia.

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.)

Following the recommendation of the European Commission (EC) and following the document entitled „Minimum standards and guiding principles”, Montenegro completed the NCP List for all areas under new Framework Programme (except Space) on 30 July 2013. Two additional nominations (Spreading excellence and widening participation; and Science with and for society), requested by EC, were also appointed in October 2013. The nominated Montenegrin NCPs attended five trainings/workshops regarding preparation for the forthcoming Horizon 2020. These are: “Initial Training H2020 for National NCP coordinators/Legal & financial NCPs” on 15 and 16 October; NCP meeting for Nanotechnologies, advanced materials and advanced manufacturing and processing on 17 November in Brussels; 15th meeting of the FP7 NCPs for the People programme and Training on Horizon 2020 on 21-22 November in Brussels; First Meeting of H2020 Societal Challenge 5 (SC5) – Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials on 12-13 November in Brussels; Meeting of NCPs for Societal Challenge 1 Health Demographic change and Wellbeing under Horizon 2020 on 21 November in Brussels.

Beside these, the representatives of the Ministry of Science attended the Workshop for 'enlargement countries' (WBCs and Turkey) on EU acquis on Research and Innovation (chapter 25) European Research Area: An open space for Knowledge and Growth, on 12-13 November 2013 in Brussels.

On 26 September 2013, the Minister of Science, prof. Sanja Vlahovic and H.E. Vincenzo del Monaco, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy in Montenegro signed bilateral agreement on scientific and technological cooperation between two governments. Before that, on 04 July 2013 Smiljana Prelević, Secretary General of the Ministry of Science and prof. dr Luigi Nicolais, President of the National Council for Research of the Republic of Italy signed the Agreement on scientific cooperation between two institutions. According to the Agreement and Cooperative Programme every two years up to ten joint research projects in specific research areas will be supported.

The Call on Scientific and Technological cooperation with Slovenia and the Call on Scientific and Technological cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina financing joint scientific-technological projects have been closed and project applications are in the process of evaluation.

The Call between Montenegro and PR China for financing joint scientific-technological projects is opened until 07 March 2014.

Montenegrin research teams actively participate in the COST programme – joining of three research teams in the COST Actions is approved in June 2013, which makes in total 13 research teams which joined running COST Actions from April 2011.

As of 01 June, there were nine Montenegrin scientists and researchers who attended workshops and study visits organized by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) (Conference on Research Cooperation between the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and Croatia – 05 June 2013; Study visit of JRC Institute for Energy and Transport – 22 October 2013; Study visit to JRC Ispra site on crisis monitoring, climate risk and forest modeling” – 13-14 November 2013; Workshop at the Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory in Braga – 19 November 2013; and Workshop on Accident Analysis and Risk Assessment – 20-22 November 2013). Also, the Ministry of Science promoted on its website two Notices of vacancy for Seconded National Experts to the JRC Institute for Health and Consumer Protection (IHCP) - Unit I.4.

Montenegro also had one application within the FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IAPP call (project GENOME), but the proposal was defined as the “proposal of good quality” (which funding is not available due to the budgetary constraints).

The Ministry of Science/MSCA NCP actively promoted MSCA calls - CIG, IEF, IIF and IOF (information days, websites of the Ministry of Science and of the Montenegrin NCP Network, one-to-one communication). As far as the MSCA NCP is informed (due to the consultations and advisory activities given directly to the interested researcher), there is one application within FP7-PEOPLE-2013-CIG (project “Identification of economical optimization paths for future racetrack memory and logic devices via state-of-art micromagnetic simulations” - “SpinME”) which was evaluated as 'above threshold' according to the Flash Information published on CORDIS. Montenegro also had one application within the FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IAPP call (project GENOME), but the proposal was defined as the “proposal of good quality” (which funding is not available due to the budgetary constraints).

The kick-off meeting of the EU FP7 project: Fore-Mont (Fostering Innovation Based Research for E-Montenegro) took place in Podgorica, from 26 until 28 August 2013. Funded through REGPOT scheme, the project is worth a total of 1.4 million €, and it is the largest project budget granted to one of the research institutions in Montenegro from FP programmes up to now. Fore-Mont aims at strengthening the University of Montenegro – Faculty of Electrical Engineering's (UoM-FEE) excellence by improving its research infrastructure, human resources fostering and long-term partnerships. This project will support UoM (FEE) to integrate into ERA, becoming the major actor in ICT innovative research at national/regional level and a competent partner for Horizon2020 projects. (<http://www.foremont.ac.me>)

Also, University of Montenegro - Faculty of Electrical Engineering is partner in EU FP7 project E-WALL and its representatives participated at the project kick-off meeting on 4 and 5 November 2013 in Aalborg, Denmark. An EU research project with 13 international partners and a budget of over 8.8 million € will over the next three years develop an electronic wall that can help those weakened by age enjoy greater independence and increased quality of life at home. (<http://www.ewallproject.eu>)

The project „Voucher schemes for innovative SMEs“ realized through regional project „Initiative for competitiveness“ supported by OECD, on the ceremony held in European Parliament on 07 October 2013 gained first award as the best finished project in 2013. Moreover, DDSME with the OECD and CEI realized project „Appraisal of conducting specific incentive support measures for SMEs“. One of the activity was performing research on how

incentive measures were effective, ie. how much the implementation of the measures contributed to the development of the companies. The companies which were granted within Voucher schemes for innovative SMEs were questioned. Results show that 66% of companies introduced certain innovation and increased sales and income. All companies which introduced innovation changed their manners in business, techniques and strategies.

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

Intersectoral working group (representatives of the Ministry of Science, Statistical Office of Montenegro - MONSTAT, Tax Administration, State Audit institution, Institute of Certified Accountants of Montenegro) submitted the Report to the Science Council of the Ministry of Science on the review of the methodology of R&D statistics, in December 2013. The report takes account of the two relevant international reports on the quality of national and regional science statistics produced during 2013 (by IPA-GOPA project and by UNESCO - World Bank project, respectively) and includes recommendations on how to improve the R&D&I statistical processes in the country.