



Editorial

Dear readers,

after about one and a half years of its implementation, WBC-INCO.NET has been involved in a number of different activities and reached several positive results. Thus, in this issue we inform you about the current plans to enhance the project's work towards the field of innovation (see pages 2 and 3). RTD cooperation between all stakeholders in the region is growing continuously, as acknowledged by the Steering Platform on Research during its last meeting in Liblice, Czech Republic (the conclusions of the meeting are published on pages 1 and 2). Commissioner Janez Potočnik recently appraised the work of the Steering Platform itself at a research information event in Serbia (see pages 4 and 12).

One of this issue's highlights is the article on effective brain circulation by Sohail Luka of the European Commission, which is part of this issue's main topic, EURAXESS and mobility (pages 6 and 7). A second focus deals with the current activities of the Regional Cooperation Council (see page 18). As usual, we are also presenting you news from the region (pages 8 ff) and different initiatives in and for South East Europe (pages 14 ff). We hope you will enjoy reading. To receive information updates more often, please register for our bi-weekly email newsletter on <http://www.wbc-inco.net>.

For any comments, or suggestions, and to inform us about your news and event announcements, feel free to e-mail us at office@wbc-inco.net

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Imprint

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6th Steering Platform Meeting: Conclusions

The Steering Platform for Research for the Western Balkan countries (WBCs) met in Liblice on May 28, 2009. The Platform was co-chaired by the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which hosted it, the Republic of Albania on behalf of the WBCs, and the European Commission (EC). The conclusions of the Platform meeting are published in the following article. The chairs and participants are dedicated to follow-up on the conclusions and invite all readers to contribute with their activities.

The next Steering Platform meeting will take place in Zagreb on October 29, 2009 allowing stock-taking and reporting of further progress in the integration process into the European Research Area.

The presentations of the recent developments regarding cooperation on research and technological development in and with the Western Balkan countries acknowledged the trend of growing cooperation with the European Commission, the European Union Member States, the FP7 Associated States, as well as with other stakeholders, and in particular with COST, EUREKA, the Regional Cooperation Council and UNESCO. Actions have been taken in the last six months on two levels: encouraging and increasing common research cooperation as well as support and effort to strengthen the research capacity in the region. As we are now facing the impacts of an economic crisis, the risk of decreasing investments in research and development and innovation should be avoided, also because these investments are largely aimed at overcoming the present economic crisis and steering stabilization process and growth.

The Platform welcomed, in particular, the willingness to strengthen the cooperation at regional level under the auspices of the Regional Cooperation Council. The Platform is very supportive of the newly established Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) and encourages the Western Balkan countries to nominate their delegates and participate actively in the work of the Forum.



6th Meeting of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries, Liblice, Czech Republic

The Commission presented the statistics on participation of Western Balkan countries in the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities (FP7) followed by a presentation of the study on barriers to research cooperation by the WBC-INCO.NET project. The presentations and discussion demonstrated a number of important aspects of research cooperation with and in the Balkan region. The results of the WBCs participation are mixed: strong participation in Cooperation – in particular in ICT, Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology (FAB) and Transport themes, but generally very weak in the SP People. With respect to the SP Ideas, it was acknowledged that the participation in the latter needs to be considered separately and on its own merits. The share of SMEs' participation is also too low. The data also demonstrated the preference of WBCs for coordination and support actions over collaborative research projects. The findings of the study on barriers in WBCs and Turkey disclosed that the major barrier to cooperation and the EC Framework Programmes is related to the management and administrative conditions and hence the importance of further simplification. The lack of critical mass and infrastructures, including research equipment, is also seen as a barrier to compete on the basis of scientific excellence. In this context, the WBCs reiterated the importance of progressive research potential building and repeated the request to include special calls for WBCs into the Capacities – Specific Research Potential Programme. The Platform discussed the study and the statistics and acknowledged that the results should be carefully considered and could certainly contribute to improving the research capacity in the Balkan region. The Platform also takes note of the conclusions of the EUFORIA Conference aiming at making research cooperation under the Framework Programme more effective.

Following the discussion on mobility of researchers, the Platform asked to actively consider how to improve the participation of WBCs in the FP7 Specific Programme on People. Visa and stay permits are still important obstacles to the mobility of researchers. The need to build further upon human capital and balanced “brain circulation” was also emphasised. The Platform welcomed

the recent work of the Task Force on Fostering and Building Human Capital under the Regional Cooperation Council and will follow up the improvement on interface between research and building human capital. The programme presented by Albania on brain gain was seen as a good practice of how to reintegrate the scientists into their countries. With respect to research infrastructure the Platform expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the conference on “Research infrastructures and the Regional dimension of ERA” (March 24-25, 2009) held in Prague under the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union which, amongst others, highlighted the regional aspects of the development of large EU infrastructures in new, small and Associated Countries. The Platform is looking forward to the work to be undertaken in the 2008 Regional Issues Working Group. The Platform is committed to cooperate wherever it can, to ensure that regional partner facilities, distributed infrastructures and e-infrastructures will be duly considered in addition to large pan-European research infrastructures, in order to reduce the imbalanced distribution in Europe and increase the possibility of brain circulation leading to a reduction of unemployment.

The Platform takes due note of the Joint Statement on Developing a Regional Strategy on Research and Development for the Western Balkans adopted at the ministerial meeting held in Sarajevo on April 24, 2009. Considering the identification of regional research priorities, through a high standard methodology, in the frame of the WBC-INCO.NET project, the Platform supports the idea that emphasis should be given to the ICT, Agro-food, Health, Transport and Environment themes when setting priorities in the FP7 Management Committees and their future work programmes. The Platform confirmed its willingness to contribute to the elaboration of the regional dimension of the research policy with the Regional Cooperation Council and encouraged the idea that this initiative would also be supported by an IPA project. In general, the Platform encourages the Western Balkan countries to use IPA in synergy with FP7.

LINK *Steering Platform Meeting in Liblice* ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/53631.html>

WBC-INCO.NET – Update on the Project Activities

After one and a half years of its implementation, WBC-INCO.NET has been engaging in many activities and reached several results. The following article shall inform the interested reader about our work done so far and planned in the near future.

As you know, WBC-INCO.NET is supporting the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan countries and follows up its conclusions (the latest ones are provided on page 1 and 2 of this journal). Thus, we are currently busy preparing a series of events in Zagreb, which culminate in the Platform meeting on October 29, 2009. Furthermore, we are already thinking about the next one: co-chaired by the EC, Spain, which will hold the EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2010 and Serbia for the WBCs.

At these meetings, we will present the results of our consultation processes for research priorities: the identified results on ICT and AgroFood well fed to the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS call (see page 19). Further results are available for Environment, Health and Transport research. Currently, we are also working on including the perspectives of civil society and the public on research priorities with a survey to open soon. In another task we focused on existing research funding programmes and strategies tackling the topic of climate change as a major global challenge.

We already presented a study on barriers to cooperation and are now preparing one on cooperation patterns in FP6 and FP7. Furthermore, we will present a report, which describes major research infrastructures in the region and discusses the possibilities for WBC researchers to access research infrastructures in the EU Member States.

Other workshops and reports were targeting the National Contact Point system (which was e.g. evaluated and benchmarked) and statistical offices as well as research information systems. Furthermore, several training workshops were organised within the framework of the project. In 2010 and 2011, we will continue to announce trainings for research managers and also brokerage events.

Furthermore, we prepare ourselves to participate in some major EU conferences to showcase excellence in the region and to promote research cooperation with the region to potential project partners and coordinators from the established Member States.

Moreover, WBC-INCO.NET continues its efforts in the dissemination of information. Here we aim to provide information to the research community in the region, but also to policy makers in the field of RTDI (research, technological development and innovation). Our communication efforts also include informing you about interesting events and calls for proposals. If you have any suggestions for our dissemination efforts or for any of the above mentioned issues, please feel invited to get in touch with WBC-INCO.NET at office@wbc-inco.net.

LINK *Western Balkan Countries INCO.NET* ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/2789.html>

Ideas to Expand WBC-INCO.NET

WBC-INCO.NET's current focus is to support cooperation in research, but it is obvious that liaising with the fields of higher education and innovation is very important to achieve the project's objectives. Answering to a new call in the Framework Programme (Capacities – International Cooperation) the WBC-INCO.NET consortium will propose to enhance its activities towards innovation.

According to EU policy and the Lisbon Agenda, boosting innovation is the key determinant of the ability of an enterprise, sector, region or country to remain competitive. Improving the education of human resources, their skills, and the capacity to innovate as well as increasing business expenditure in RTD and early stage venture capital for innovative SMEs are the main challenges of European policy for innovation.

WBC-INCO.NET's core objectives are to support the bi-regional dialogue between the EU, Associated FP7 Countries and the Western Balkan countries (WBCs) and to enhance the participation of WBC researchers in European RTD projects by structural measures. It is aimed, e.g., to identify research areas of mutual benefit in an inclusive and comprehensive manner.

Moreover, WBC-INCO.NET monitors the take-up of identified research areas into forthcoming RTD programmes and the participation of WBC researchers in collaborative FP7 projects. As described in the previous article (page 2), existing cooperation patterns are being analysed by social network methodologies, while barriers to cooperation are being explored by empirical investigations. WBC-INCO.NET also emphasises the building of capacities and the facilitation of networking opportunities for researchers in order to improve absorption quantities and qualities and to enhance a better international recognition of existing WBC potentials. Several renowned European NCP-organisations and research agencies have committed their capacities to join WBC-INCO.NET and to support the integration of the WBCs into the ERA.

In this framework, actions taken so far prove that in the WBCs, SMEs strongly contribute to job creation and economic development. They are fostering the expansion of all services that are driving the economic growth in those regions. Emerging SME clusters operating in high-value added operations are spreading innovation throughout many parts of the WBCs.

Thus, the expansion of the WBC-INCO.NET towards the field of innovation currently seems very necessary. Therefore, a new workpackage (WP) is being proposed for funding to the EC, aiming at

- Dialogue on Regional Research and Innovation Area
- Definition of Future Innovation Activities

The WP and task leadership will be appointed to partners of the WBC-INCO.NET with strong activity in the region.

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Regional Research Priorities Identified

With three Priority Setting Workshops held in May and June 2009, the series of five consultation sessions was concluded bringing together relevant stakeholders from the WBCs and EU Member States from the science sector, the European Commission, ministries and the business sector. As a result, commonly agreed-on research topics and country reports on the S&T systems of the WBCs are now available in the fields of ICT, AgroFood, Health, Transport and Environment.

Having accomplished the priority setting process in the fields of ICT and AgroFood in the beginning of 2009 (the WBC-INCO.NET journal reported in its Spring 2009 issue), three more consultation sessions were organised on the themes of Health (May 12 – 13, 2009 in Tirana/Albania), Transport (May 19 – 20, 2009 in Sarajevo/Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Environment (June 16 – 17, 2009 in Skopje/FYR of Macedonia).

Through a sound preparatory work, comprehensive national background reports on the S&T systems and the priority setting in the WBCs could be generated. The sessions were attended by stakeholder delegations from the Western Balkans, representatives from the European Commission and experts from other countries.

The aim was to define the most important research topics for the region that would serve as input to the Work Programmes of FP7 and the further development of national and regional programmes in the WBC.

The following priorities were decided upon:

- Health: Oncology, Cardiovascular Diseases, Public Health, Mental Health, Infectious Diseases;
- Transport: Impact of Surface Transport on Environment and Safety (Coastal Seas, Inland Waterways, Railways and Roads), Advanced Materials and Structures – Engineering for Safer and Greener Means of Transport, Passenger and Freight Intermodal Transport and Optimal Use of Various Transport Modes, Application of Advanced Simulations in Transport Systems, Application of ICT in Intelligent Transport Systems;
- Environment: Ecosystem-Based Approach to Management of Renewable Resources, Environmental Hazards in Cultural Heritage – Development of Knowledge Base for Effective Western Balkan Protection Strategy, Biodiversity, Cleaner Production / Environmental Technologies, Sustainable Management of Terrestrial Natural Resources, Climate Change.

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Commissioner Potočnik Visits Serbia

On June 29, 2009, European Commissioner for Research Janez Potočnik attended the EU Research Information Event "Towards integration into the European Research Area" in Belgrade, Serbia (see related news on page 12).

Potočnik praised Serbia for its active participation in FP7: in less than three years the Serbian scientific community seems well embedded in the European research community. "We encourage you to continue in this path as we believe that it will help for Serbia's future that lies in the European Union. We hope that the Serbian people share this objective," the Commissioner pointed out.

Serbia has successfully participated in several FP7 projects, especially in such areas as AgroFood, ICT and energy. However, "there is room for improvement and I believe that this can only be achieved if Serbia commits more fully to the objectives of the ERA," Potočnik added.

Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries Does Excellent Work

Commissioner Potočnik also pointed out the importance of the Steering Platform for Research Co-operation, launched by himself in June 2006, and supported by the WBC-INCO.NET project. "The Steering Platform is doing excellent work, if only because it is the only forum in which representatives from the ministries of science from every WBC sit together."

However, as the ERA is work in progress, further challenges would need to be met. The proposed National Strategy for Research Cooperation was a step into the right direction. Involvement of the private sector in research still needed to be enhanced and more attractive and competitive working conditions for scientists to be created.

As an Associated Country to FP7, the EU expects Serbia to fully contribute to the realisation of the five core objectives of the ERA as part of ERA Vision 2020 and the Ljubljana process: a single labour market for researchers; world-class research infrastructures; well coordinated research programmes and priorities or joint programming; effective knowledge sharing and opening of the ERA to the world. Potočnik expressed his hope that "Serbia will contribute, through the Strategic Forum on International Cooperation to an open ERA by streamlining its bilateral programmes with those of the EU on thematic and geographic targets to be determined together".

Although some aspects of the European Research Strategy might sound futuristic in a country like Serbia that has an economy in mid-transition, and even more in times of a global financial crisis, it was his "firm conviction that the need for scientific investment remains a priority, even an opportunity in times of crisis. Money is scarce, but the right investments in research and technological development are smart investments," said Potočnik.

"Finally, increasing regional competitiveness is part of your partnership with Europe. Doing research together will allow you to share knowledge and ideas, develop better and more innovative products, create new opportunities for accessing markets and, above all, help to improve the quality of life of your citizens. In doing research together, Serbia and its neighbours will become more competitive and build sustainable prosperity. Sustainable economic development will help you on the road to EU membership. I know that you still have a lot of work to do to build up your research capacity, build or rebuild infrastructures and grow useful networks of co-operation. Therefore, I am very pleased to announce that under the recent FP7 Work Programme on Research Potential, another call specifically for the Western Balkan countries aiming at strengthening your research capacity will be launched this summer."

Moreover, "cooperation and support for research does not and should not only come from the 7th Framework Programme. The Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) also has an important role to play. We can use it in synergy with other instruments and stakeholders, who are committed to the same objective – to strengthen the capacity of the region by paying the right attention to and investing in the knowledge triangle," Research Commissioner Potočnik concluded.

LINKS *European Commission - DG Research* ■
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/99.html>
Read the full version of the speech at ■
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/63844.html>

New National CORDIS Services for the WBCs

CORDIS, the Community Research and Development Information Service, has launched ten new national services on its web portal. All Western Balkan countries are now represented with their own site.

The national services provide information on the national RTD policies, research-related news, a project search, addresses of NCPs and partner search requests.

To spread your RTD news across the European research communities, feel free to send any important information about your R&D projects, results and events to CORDIS at opoce-cordis-marketing@publications.europa.eu as currently the information level is still poor.

Other ways to interact with CORDIS include the possibility to send your press releases, to register as an expert (to be selected for future proposal evaluation), partner search or to publish research results.

LINKS *For further information, please visit the following websites*
 CORDIS ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/508.html>
 CORDIS National Service ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/63766.html>

Selected Open Calls

Second Call of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme

The second call of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme will be launched on October 26, 2009. The programme area includes eight EU Member States, the accession candidates and potential candidates as well as Moldova and the Western part of the Ukraine.

In the area of innovation, the call is focused on line 1.3 of the programme: "Enhance the framework conditions and pave the way for innovation", dedicated to setting up exchange and coordination mechanisms for research, technology and innovation approaches and policies (governance aspect) and to increase public awareness on the importance of technological progress and innovation developed through transnational actions in the area (awareness aspect).

Projects could include activities such as networking and exchange of information activities (stand-alone networking activities will not be supported), studies and operational plans, capacity building activities, promotional actions, the set-up of services, preparation and conduction of investments etc. in the form of an adequate activity mix, which will produce visible outputs, assure the fulfilment of the proposed project objectives and contribute to the programme objectives.

The maximum contribution from the programme is 85%, the rest needs to be nationally co-financed.

The deadline for expressions of interest is already in November. In a second stage scheduled for spring 2010, selected applicants will be invited to submit their full proposals.

Further information: <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/65609.html>

Unlocking and Developing the Research Potential of Research Entities Established in the EU's Convergence Regions and Outermost Regions

FP7-REGPOT-2010-1 (Deadline: 17/12/2009, 17:00 CET)
Call budget: € 31,000,000.00

Similar to the REGPOT call specifically for Western Balkan countries (deadline was on October 15, 2009), this call focuses on stimulating the realisation of the full research potential of the enlarged European Union, especially in the EU's convergence regions and outermost regions, and on helping to strengthen the capacities of their researchers to successfully participate in research activities at the EU level. All WBCs are eligible along with a number of other regions. Highest quality or most promising research entities of significant size qualified in any S&T field within the scope of FP7 may apply (minimum participation: three organisations in three different states).

Further information on this call at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/call/59731.html>

FP7 Capacities/Research Infrastructures

FP7-INFRASTRUCTURES-2010-1 (Deadline: 3/12/2009, 17:00 CET)
FP7-INFRASTRUCTURES-2010-2 (Deadline: 24/11/2009, 17:00 CET)

The overall objective of these calls is to optimise the use and development of the best research infrastructures. Furthermore, it aims at helping to create new research infrastructures of pan-European interest in all fields of S&T.

FP7 Capacities/Research for the Benefit of SMEs (all research fields)

FP7-SME-2010-1 (Deadline: 3/12/2009, 17:00 CET)

This programme aims at enhancing the research and innovation capacities of European SMEs, which have little or no research capacities themselves and have to outsource research to specialised RTD-performers.

FP7 People/Marie Curie

FP7-PEOPLE-2009-RG (Deadline: 31/12/2009, 17:00 CET)

Researchers, who have been active in research in a third non-associated country for at least three years, may apply for a reintegration grant in liaison with a(n) (re)integration host organisation located in an EU Member State or Associated Country.

FP7-PEOPLE-2009-ITN (Deadline: 31/12/2009, 17:00 CET)

Initial Training Networks, built on a joint research training programme in defined scientific areas, aim at improving early-stage researchers' career prospects in both the public and private sectors through a transnational networking mechanism.

FP7 Cooperation/Transport

FP7-SST-2010-RTD-1 (Deadline: 14/01/2010, 17:00 CET)

FP7-TRANSPORT-2010-TREN-1 (Deadline: 14/01/2010, 17:00 CET)

These calls aim at developing integrated, safer, "greener" and "smarter" pan-European transport systems for the benefit of all citizens, society and climate policy as well as at developing the competitiveness attained by the European industries in the global market.

IPA Adriatic Crossborder Cooperation Programme

First call for ordinary project proposals (Deadline: 29/10/2009)

The objective of this programme, involving regions on both shores of the Adriatic Sea, is to provide funding and support for economic, social and institutional cooperation, natural and cultural resources and risk prevention, and accessibility and networks.

Further information: <http://www.adriaticpacbc.org>

LINKS Find more FP7 calls via CORDIS ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/713.html>

Visit our Call Section at WBC-INCO.NET Call Page ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/call/list>

Spotlights

On our website <http://www.wbc-inco.net>, you may find regularly updated news articles on S&T in the WBCs, event announcements, an organisation database and a document library as well as a section on currently open calls.

Feel free to sign up for an account to be able to access even more information at no charge and subscribe to our bi-weekly email newsletter informing you of all recent updates. You may also enter your organisation in our directory and update us about your own initiatives and events – we will be glad to present them for you (WBC/S&T reference required).

Call for Young Researchers. Graduate students from WBCs are most welcome. Find out more about the programme at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/59276.html>.

Some Upcoming Events from Our Calendar

Spotlights from WBC-INCO.NET

- A **Dialogue Forum on ICT Research for the Western Balkan Countries** for the discussion on regional ICT research related policy issues was officially launched in Belgrade on May 21, 2009 within the FP7 funded project WINS-ICT: <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/51696.html>.
- The European Commission has launched a public **consultation** on the learning **mobility of young people**, which will be open until December 15, 2009. Find out how to comment on the debate at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/59236.html>.
- Interested scientists from the fields of AgroFood and ICT may apply as **evaluators** the **SEE-ERA.NET PLUS** Call. Find out how at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/62863.html>.
- Information on a number of **FP7 Work Programmes**, containing background infos on the current calls referred to in this journal, are available for download in our document section. Make your selection at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/list>.
- The Slovenian Jožef Stefan Institute has announced a public

- 13th semi-annual meeting of the Central and Eastern European Network (CEEN), Podgorica, Montenegro, November 19-20, 2009 <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/51514.html>
- International Conference “Values and 21st Century”: Podgorica, Montenegro, November 19-20, 2009 <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/51512.html>
- Rethinking Interethnic Reconciliation in the Western Balkans: Minorities, Borders, Governance: Florence and Montecatini Terme, Italy, March 24, 2010 <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/44288.html>
- 6th International Congress on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources for SEE: Sofia, Bulgaria, April 14-16, 2010 <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/59153.html>
- Fourth International Scientific Conference on Water Observation and Information System for Decision Support: Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia, May 25-29, 2010 <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/44809.html>

LINKS Read our most recent news at ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/list>
See our full event calendar at ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/list>

EURAXESS: How to Achieve Effective Brain Circulation

The competition for talents is fierce in the research world. There is an issue of an ageing researchers' population with fewer young people being attracted to the research profession. With this increasing global competition for researchers, the shortage of qualified human resources is a concern for Europe. Therefore, it is essential that the mobility of European researchers is promoted and encouraged in a balanced way to reach true and effective brain circulation.

The EU and the Member States (MS) have called for the removal of barriers to the free movement of knowledge noting the need for action in several specific areas such as researcher mobility and an open researchers' labour market, further higher education reforms, fostering scientific excellence, the optimal use of intellectual property arising from public research, and building up a new generation of world-class research facilities. It is therefore essential to achieve an effective circulation of knowledge in order to render the European Research Area (ERA) a true open market for innovation and in order for Europe to become and remain a world-class location for R&D in the long term. “Brainpower circulation” is therefore at the heart of the EC's policy on human resources in R&D.

The communication “Better Careers and More Mobility: A European Partnership for Researchers” adopted by the EC in May 2008 aims to address this issue. It is a partnership with and among Member States entailing a focussed framework to make rapid progress across Europe in key areas determining better careers and more mobility of researchers. The implementation of this partnership is followed by the ERA Steering Group for Human Resources and Mobility (SGHRM), which in addition to the 27 MS, include the twelve countries associated to the Framework Programme; thus, making it most relevant to the WBCs involved. Within the framework of this partnership, the MS and the EC are committed to make more rapid, measurable progress to:

- systematically open recruitment;
 - meet the social security and supplementary pensions needs of mobile researchers;
 - provide attractive employment and working conditions; and
 - enhance the training, skills and experience of researchers.
- Several of the EC's initiatives for the mobility and career of researchers were consolidated as of June 2008 under the overall brand name of “EURAXESS-Researchers in Motion”.
- This covers the following four initiatives:
- EURAXESS-Jobs: Helping researchers' mobility being a one-stop-shop for finding fellowships and research jobs
 - EURAXESS-Services: Helping mobile researchers with practical issues like social security, residence, family, schools, etc.
 - EURAXESS-Rights: Providing information on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment
 - EURAXESS-Links: A specific initiative for the scientific diaspora maintaining the link with European researchers abroad

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Brno: Regional Efforts to Enhance Academic Exchange

A regional agency helps to enhance the academic cooperation with the Western Balkan countries by granting scholarships and supporting foreign students and researchers. This special service is needed in order to overcome obstacles caused by the administrative system.

Around 70% of the clients of the South Moravian Centre for International Mobility (Brno, Czech Republic) come from countries of the former Yugoslavia. The biggest part of them originates from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Their educational background varies between the wide range of technical science, medicine, design, engineering and natural science.

Our services include advisory related to entry conditions, assistance in the application to the University of Brno and the provision with an individualised scholarship scheme. Clients are mainly Master students, PhD applicants and researchers in the early stage of their career. Their stay in the Czech Republic is often complicated by the formal requirements of the Czech law and in particular by the agenda of the local "aliens' police". The South Moravian Centre for International Mobility has been gathering experience in this field since 2005. Despite the assistance provided, this agenda remains the main obstacle to the future career of international scholars in the country.

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EURAXESS in Serbia Goes Live

The implementation of the FP7 project 'SER-MORE: Development of Serbian Network of Mobility Centres' began in September 2008. The coordinator of the project is the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Niš.

Up to now, 25 organisations (seventeen faculties, eight institutes) have joined the EURAXESS network in Serbia, signed a declaration of commitment and nominated Local Contact Points to provide mobile researchers and support the network operations. The first national EURAXESS seminar for coordinators of service centres is planned for October 2009 in Niš and is expected to enhance the operational capacity of the network.



The Serbian EURAXESS portal (www.euraxess.rs), which was developed by the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Niš and launched on January 1, 2009 became a useful and powerful tool, which offers a wide range of information and online services to mobile researchers. To date, already more than 7,000 people from all over the world have visited the portal. Moreover, as a part of the promotional activities around the project, a Facebook page called "EURAXESS 2 Research in Serbia" has been created.

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Study on the Mobility of WBC Researchers

The study "Barriers in research cooperation of Western Balkan countries", carried out within the WBC-INCO.NET project by the Ivo Pilar Institute from Zagreb, was part of the first presentation of the EURAXESS programme in Croatia. It was a special occasion for the promotion of the project, since this event, held on June 29, 2009, marked Croatia's entry into the European researchers' network.

It was emphasised that the overall process of integration of WBCs into the European Research Area was laid down in the framework of the Zagreb Summit in 2000, when the status of "potential candidate" was offered to all WBCs on the basis of the Copenhagen criteria and the progress achieved in implementing the Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA). The process has culminated in the adoption of the "EU – Balkan Countries Action Plan in Science and Technology" at the ministerial conference in Thessaloniki in 2003, which resulted in a full membership of all WBCs, except of Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), in the Framework Programmes.

The dominant group of international projects of WBCs is funded by the EU Framework Programmes (64%), while inter-regional cooperation (bilateral projects with MS) count for 27% and intra-regional (bilateral projects with WBCs and Turkey) make up 9% of all projects. Croatia, Serbia and Turkey are the most successful partners in bilateral projects within the region, while Slovenia significantly predominates bilateral projects with the WBCs and Turkey among the Member States.

However, researchers from the WBCs and Turkey significantly lag behind researchers from EU Member States in the intensity of research cooperation

and in research mobility. The mobility of WBC researchers is rather low, since almost half of the respondents (43%) declared no visit abroad within the last ten years. This calls for concerned actions of policy makers at the national and EU level. The dominant obstacles to mobility are visas followed by residence permits and health care insurances, while the least important obstacle is related to intellectual property rights. Researchers from Bosnia and Herzegovina experience the biggest obstacles to mobility. Research visits are mainly short-term (70% of all visits) and dominated by conferences and fellowships. The most frequently visited countries (Germany, Italy and UK) are among the most developed EU countries, while the leading destination country in the WBCs is Croatia.

It was concluded that the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes has an important role in assisting the mobility of researchers, but support and coordinated action of all stakeholders (ministries, agencies, universities) are necessary to encourage inward and outward mobility of researchers in Croatia.

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News from Albania

Conference on Albania's STI Strategy

On June 17, 2009 in Tirana, Albania, the Department of Strategy, together with the Prime Minister of Albania, organised a conference on the "Strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in Albania" for the years 2009 to 2015.

Albania's Vice Prime Minister, Genc Pollo, opened the conference by saying in his speech that the strategy should determine a very clear vision and important objectives related with research capacities and financial sources. Furthermore, he mentioned the close relationship between this strategy and the National Strategy of Development and Integration as well as the Strategy of Higher Education.

Following the speech, Mr. Raid, the Director of the Technopolis group and a consultant to UNESCO, presented the STI strategy. The STI strategy of Albania is based on a vision for a shift to a knowledge society. Thus, it is an objective to achieve "excellence in a small number of priority areas by 2015, through the concentration of national and international resources, as well as through the provision of systematic support for innovation and technology transfer to cater for the needs of the productive sector."

The targets set are to increase public spending on research to 0.6% of the GDP by 2015, to increase the share of gross expenditure on R&D from foreign sources (EU programmes, e.g. FP7, and international donors) to cover 40% of all research spending in the years 2010 to 2015, to create four to five Albanian Centres of Excellence in Science (ACES), to double the number of researchers through "Brain Gain" incentives and training of new researchers, and to increase the innovation activities of companies.

Albania's STI strategy also contains five main funding programmes for a long-term improvement. However, it is clear that money will not solve everything; moreover, the strategy requires stronger policy management capabilities and strong accountability through evaluation and monitoring.

In this respect, the strategy foresees the reorganisation and reinforcement of Albania's governance system. In order to strengthen the policy management of Albania, the strategy specifies that scientific advice to ministers should be improved. Furthermore, future economic and social needs and trends need to be reflected in the priority setting processes for research. The strategy also foresees the need to strengthen the ministerial capacities of policy design as well as their evaluation mandate. In addition, the plan comprises the establishment of an Albanian Research Funding Agency. Secondary, the research capacity of organisations, which intend to receive funding, shall be increased.

The mission of the Albanian Research Funding Agency is to increase the level and rate of growth of investment (compared to 2009 as a baseline year) in scientific and applied research and innovation by Albanian research performing organisations (public, higher education non-profit and private sectors). The Agency's tasks comprise:

1. Management of programmes supporting scientific and applied research in higher education and non-profit research-performing organisations and the technological and non-technological innovation sector.
2. Acting as a National Contact Point for all bilateral, European and international cooperation programmes concerning scientific and applied research and innovation.
3. Promoting a public understanding of science, technology and innovation in Albania across all relevant sectors of the economy and groups in society.

During the last months the strategy has been discussed within the Albanian scientific community. In the end it was approved by the government, which is when the government also took its decision on the creation of the Albanian Research Funding Agency (see next article).

Albanian Research Funding Agency Established

The Albanian government took the decision to establish an Agency for Research, Technology and Innovation. Albanian Prime Minister Berisha said that the establishment of the Agency was aiming at promoting scientific research not only in public universities, but also in the private sector.

"The newness of this Agency is its innovation. We have to finance not only our universities, but also the private sector. We have to finance innovation in all fields, prioritising hi-tech, soft- and hardware-programming. It is one of the Agency's important objectives to encourage and motivate scientists and scientific researchers to participate in the digital era and foster innovation in this sector." During the forthcoming four years, the Albanian government has parallel objectives of improving infrastructure, roads, water supply and irrigation systems as well as schools in order to enable Albania to take part in the digital era.

The decision for the establishment of the Agency for Research, Technology and Innovation is based on the National Strategy for Scientific Research, approved by the Albanian government (see previous article).

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News from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina Joined EUREKA



On June 19, 2009 in Lisbon, the Bosnian Deputy Minister of Civil Affairs Mr. Senad Šepić on behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Portuguese Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education Mr. José Mariano Gago signed a statement according to which Bosnia and Herzegovina joined EUREKA as a National Information Point – a transitional status

that should lead to full membership in a few years. After the EUREKA XXIV ministerial conference, Mr. Šepić said: “The statement, which has just been signed, is important for Bosnia and Herzegovina for many reasons. EUREKA is a pan-European network, which supports market-oriented, industrial <research and development. It helps to build a partnership through various multilateral projects aimed to strengthen the European competitiveness”.

FP7 Info Day

On April 23, 2009 a first FP7 Info Day was organised by the Ministry of Civil Affairs in Sarajevo in cooperation with DG Research and the JRC. The key note speakers were EU RTD Commissioner Dr. Janez Potočnik and Mr. Sredoje Nović, Minister of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Framework Law on Science and the Draft Strategy

A public debate on the Draft Strategy on Science Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Action plan has been opened by July 6, 2009. The Draft Strategy was developed by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, representatives of the entity ministries and the research community. Once adopted, it will be the first document of this kind at the state level. Furthermore, the Framework Law on Scientific and Research Operations was passed on May 20, 2009.

BiH Joins the COST Family

Bosnia and Herzegovina became the 35th member country of COST at the 174th meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials of COST, held in Brussels on May 26 to 27, 2009.

Researchers from Bosnian institutions have already played an active role in COST actions as near-neighbouring country participants. So far, they have contributed to actions in the Individuals, Societies and Cultures and Health (ISCH) and Forestry, Products and their Services (FPS) domains.

Further Project Activities

The Bosnian Ministry of Civil Affairs applied for the establishment of the EURAXESS Mobility Centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is currently negotiating the grant agreement. The EC-funded project “**Capacity building and institutional strengthening of Science and Research in Bosnia and Herzegovina**” officially started on September 1, 2009.

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News from Croatia

Radovan Fuchs Appointed Minister for Science, Education and Sports

Radovan Fuchs was appointed Minister for Education, Science and Sports in July 2009. After working as a scientist for many years, Mr. Fuchs has followed a long career at the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, serving as a Deputy Minister for International Cooperation from 1993 to 2000 and again from 2004 to 2008 and later as a State Secretary from 2008 to 2009.

Furthermore, Fuchs is a member of the Steering Platform on Research for the WBCs.



Radovan Fuchs was appointed Minister for Science, Education and Sport

Science and Innovation Investment Fund Grant Scheme

The Croatian Central Finance and Contracting Agency is seeking proposals for projects contributing to sustainable regional development and industry competitiveness of high value-added sectors of the economy and knowledge-based SMEs by supporting the commercialisation of innovation in the public R&D sector in Croatia.

Financial assistance is provided by the Regional Competitiveness Operational programme 2007–2009 for Community Assistance under the IPA Regional Development Component in Croatia.

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is € 5 million, with individual grants ranging from € 50,000 to € 750,000. Two deadlines for proposals are still coming up: March 5 and July 2, 2010. Comprehensive background information is available on our website.

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/51483.html>

Hosting Foreign Researchers in Croatia

A Mobility Centre (EURAXESS) was recently founded in Croatia, serving as a contact-point assisting foreign researchers participating in projects in Croatia and aiming to increase the number of researchers in Croatia, particularly in the private sector.

The increased incoming mobility of scientists is expected to contribute considerably to competitiveness and economic growth, as well as to encourage further international cooperation of Croatian researchers.



News from the FYR of Macedonia

Nikola Todorov Appointed New Minister for Education and Science



Nikola Todorov

As of July 10, 2009, Nikola Todorov has been appointed Minister of Education and Science of the FYR of Macedonia. Todorov had graduated from the Faculty of Law at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and worked in different management positions in the public and private field.

Furthermore, the ministry organised an information day for researchers and stakeholders from the FYR of Macedonia for the promotion of open calls within FP7 (e.g. REGPOT, Regions of Knowledge, Health, Energy and Bio). Researchers attended the event with great interest.

FYR of Macedonia participates in "Researchers Night"

The FYR of Macedonia also took part in the Europe-wide initiative "Researchers' Night", aiming at bringing science closer to the public at large. The Agency for Electronic Communication organised an event in Bitola headed by ICT NCP Vladimir Ristevski.

A round table was organised with representatives of the Academy of Science and the business sector, discussing "How to Enhance Macedonian Participation in FP7".

FP7 Information Days in Skopje

On September 3, 2009 the Ministry of Education and Science held an Institutional Info Day on health at the Institute for Public Health in Skopje.

Representatives of all Institutes for Public Health in the FYR of Macedonia attended the event. Presentations mainly dealt with the possibilities of FP7 cooperation in the field of health and the topics of the newly opened FP7 HEALTH-2010 call.

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IZIIS – A Seismological Research Institute

The Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology (IZIIS) of the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" was established more than 40 years ago. It works on a large number of applied and development research projects, and provides consulting services in the design and analysis of sophisticated civil engineering structures. It is a public institution, which is funded by the government and the service provided to numerous clients.

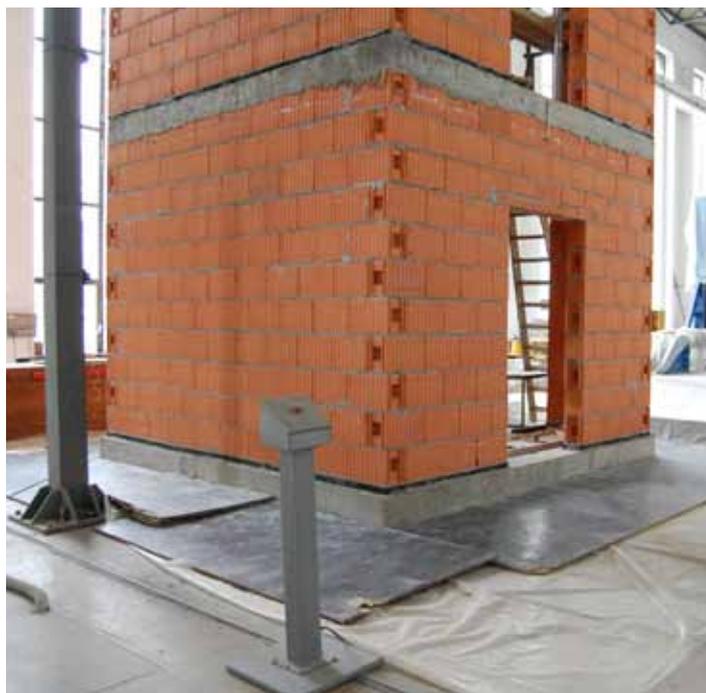
IZIIS has four laboratories, namely, a dynamic testing laboratory, a geophysical laboratory, a soil dynamics laboratory, and a strong motion laboratory.

The work of IZIIS is divided into five departments: Natural and Technological Hazards and Ecology, Building Structures and Material: Design, Analysis and Testing, Engineering Structures, the Department on Risk, Disaster Management and Strategic Planning (RDM/IZIIS), the Department for Geotechnics and Special Structures, and the Dynamic Testing Laboratory and Informatics (Dynlab&Info).

Some of the equipment that can be found in the Institute are shaking tables, material testing frames, quasi-static equipment, equipment for specialised field measurements in engineering seismology, a dynamic simple shear apparatus, a cyclic triaxial system and ambient and force vibrations.

The Institute has participated in many important projects, which have been already concluded or are still ongoing, such as e.g. in proof tests on a shaking table of a new brick laying system, in shaking table testing of Wienerberger unreinforced masonry models, or in the determination of the seismic potential of a site.

In addition to direct cooperation of the Institute with universities, institutions and the economic sector of the country, within the framework of the above mentioned activities a permanent and intensive international cooperation has been developed and maintained. Such international cooperation with universities, scientific institutions and centres worldwide is a prerequisite for more efficient and more complex scientific research within the Institute.



Shaking Table at IZIIS

LINK University Ss. Cyril and Methodius – Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology ■
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News from Montenegro

Workshop on Evaluation of Research and Universities

A regional workshop on evaluation the evaluation of research and universities took place from July 6 to 8, 2009 in Kotor, Montenegro. It was one of the knowledge gaining activities within the project Evolunimont (Evaluation and strategic planning of research at the University of Montenegro), financed through the FP7 call REGPOT-2008-2.

The organiser and project coordinator, the University of Montenegro (UoM), intended to take advantage of this opportunity to disseminate the project activity among the university community in the Western Balkans, raise the awareness of the necessity to establish research evaluation practices and raise the visibility of the project, the EC activity under the FP7 – REGPOT call and the UoM itself.

The workshop was held by the Institute for Innovation Research of the University of Manchester, at the premises of the Faculty for Tourism and Hotel Management in Kotor. The lecturers were Prof. Katherine Barker, also a project's Advisory Board member, and Prof. Maria Nedeva.

There were 35 participants, among whom there were four staff members, 15 participants from the UoM, two from other institutions in Montenegro, two trainers from the UK, while the remaining 16 participants were from higher education and research institutions in the region (WBC - SEE): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the FYR of Macedonia, Romania and Serbia.

The workshop provided a good knowledge base about the state-of-the-art in the field of evaluation of research, measuring scientific output and impact, the present historical moment in the development of European universities and in the region and its relation to the research function and the third mission of the universities. Lastly, the workshop provided a framework for considering different methodologies in strategic planning of university processes. During the interactive sessions, mainly those related to topics of universities, the participants exchanged views about what universities are today, how the universities in the region relate with regard to the 'third mission', what the implications of current changes are for research etc.

One issue should be particularly pointed out for the readers of WBC-INCO.NET journal – the WBC-INCO.NET mailing list was the main tool for inviting participants to the workshop. The project team received more than 200 applications in a few days, which created a great pool to select the most appropriate participants.



Participants of the Regional Workshop on the Evaluation of Research and Universities in Kotor

The Magic of Doing Science



Miha Kos during his presentation at the "Researchers' Night" in Montenegro

Hiša Eksperimentov is the first Slovene "hands on experiments" center. Experimenting happened in Ivanova Korita, Montenegro, during a summer school for physics talents on August 25 to 26, 2009.

Miha Kos, director of Hiša, a scientist passionate about science communication and a man of knowledge and creativity was a guest of the Ministry of Education and Science and Montenegrin Science Promotion Foundation in the preparatory phase of the project "Researchers' Night in Montenegro".

He gave a two-day workshop on how to communicate science to the wider public, with lots of experiments, do-it-yourself demonstrations, examples of how they work in Hiša Eksperimentov and Sciencetival in Slovenia. His shows with gasses, pressure, sound and focus were accompanied with plenty of laughter, joy and applauding of the impressed public.

The young were intrigued by questions left unanswered, undemonstrated and were approaching Miha Kos, asking for more knowledge and offering answers to brain-twisters. Two days to learn, have fun, but also recognise that it is a virtue to admit not to know something as a push to start investigating and learning. Researchers, who took part as well, could gather many ideas about how to present their field of science and their job at the upcoming festival.

Flash News Montenegro

The Ministry of Education and Science and MONSTAT arranged a TAIEX expert mission from May 11 to 15, 2009 on the reform of science statistics. An action plan was developed, with preparatory activities and the goal of conducting a new statistical survey in 2011.

In April 2009, the government of Montenegro commissioned the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts with the preparation of a development document "Montenegro in the 21st Century". The document should define the road of Montenegro towards a knowledge-based society.

The Montenegrin public administration received the questionnaire on the fulfillment of candidate status conditions from the European Commission, in July 2009. The team of the Ministry of Education and Science was engaged in the preparation of answers to 33 questions from the chapter on science and research during August and September 2009.

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News from Serbia

FP7 Research Event in Serbia



Audience at the FP7 Research Conference in Belgrade

On June 29, 2009 the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the Commission's Research Directorate General and the Serbian Ministry of Science and Technological Development jointly organised a high-level conference in Belgrade entitled "Towards Serbia's Integration into the European Research Area".

The main purpose of the event was to present and discuss a wide spectrum of research cooperation opportunities in FP7, with a view to identifying specific areas and topics that would need special attention for support.

More than 400 experts attended the conference, which featured 36 speakers from both the EU and the Serbian side, including ministers, secretaries of state, deans of universities, directors of institutes as well as major media outlets.

Božidar Đelić, Deputy Prime Minister for EU Integration and Minister of Science and Technological Development, announced that Serbia plans to boost its research spending from the present level of 0.3% of GDP to 1.0% by 2014 and, moreover, that negotiations are underway with the European Investment Bank for an additional € 150 million investment in research infrastructure. Commissioner Janez Potočnik commended Serbia's good results in its first two years of association to FP7 and praised the assistance that the JRC is providing to the potential candidate countries (see article on page 4).

Francesco Fedi, President of COST, confirmed the excellent performance of the Serbian scientific community that in a short period of time joined over 60 pan-European research networks. Viktor Nedović, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation and Serbia's representative in the JRC's Board of Governors, underlined the important role of the JRC in support to Serbia's approximation to the EU body of law. In order to improve future collaboration, Nedović proposed signing a Memorandum of Understanding (JRC – Ministry of Science and Technological Development) specifying priority areas and available instruments, including new positions for Serbian grant-holders at JRC Institutes.

Đelić recognised the conference as the most important event that took place in Serbia in the field of research since its association to FP7. The topics and themes of the conference had been chosen based on specific interest expressed by Serbia (ICT, Energy, Food and Health), areas in which Serbia should pay more attention given its integration process into the EU, or topics which are new or in which Serbia is underrepresented (FP7 "People" programme).

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Draft of S&T Development Strategy Published

The draft, prepared for a public debate, has been published at the end of June 2009 by the Serbian Ministry of Science and Technological Development. Mobilnost.rs has compiled an extract of this draft version. The strategy addresses current key challenges of the local R&D community and proposes measures to resolve the issues, which were identified. The strategy is expected to be adopted in the first quarter of 2010.

Although public R&D expenditures have been rising since 2001, to reach € 100 million in 2008, its percentage of GDP stagnated (0.35% in 2003, 0.28% in 2008), to one of the lowest in the developed world, according to the OECD Science Scoreboard for 2007. Besides funding, two of the most threatening issues of the Serbian R&D landscape are ageing and the unawareness of the importance of intellectual property issues.

The ultimate goal is to create an effective and efficient national innovation system, implementing a synergy between knowledge users and knowledge creators, at the national, regional and international level. An innovation system will be implemented through a partnership between institutes and universities, the Ministry of Education and other Ministries, industry, the scientific diaspora, international R&D institutions and society, in general.

A new system on intellectual property, which will include R&D based intellectual property, is expected to motivate both researchers and industry to apply for patents and share both risk and royalties of joint research outcomes. By a new law on intellectual property, innovation will belong to the institution, where royalty revenues will be regulated by contract.

While it is proposed to maintain the existing level of basic research in all disciplines, it is strategically decided that the investment in applied and development research should be increased, with a clear and measurable goal.

Priorities are selected on the basis of different criteria, such as being in line with other national strategies, improved chances on successful participation in the ERA, number and quality of current human resources (including scientific diaspora), required level of future investments needed to reach relevant success, applicability in industry (in Serbia and abroad), international cooperation potential, importance for policy making capacity and affirmation of national identity.

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LINKS Serbian Ministry of Science and Technological Development ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/55692.html>
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/63822.html>

Benchmarking of Research Organisations

The benchmarking of research activities within corporate and public research organisations is one of their main challenges, but also one of the key success factors for the success of corporate and public research efforts. One of the critical tools in this process is a comprehensive SWOT analysis.

The recent FP7-REGPOT call for proposals targeting the Western Balkan countries aimed to support the strategic development of a couple of outstanding research organisations in South East Europe. A mandatory requirement for the application is the inclusion of a completed SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) in the proposal. SWOT is a tool, which is regularly used in business, but has since long diffused to many other socio-cultural spheres for strategy-making. One of them is the field of science and technology. However, the quality of SWOT analyses differs considerably. A well-designed SWOT approach is doubtlessly more than brainstorming. A critical factor for a successful SWOT analysis is the definition of categories relevant for strategy development and the formulation of the right questions. This calls for a comprehensive insight into the topic and needs a coherent research design. Moreover, data requirements can be extensive. A committed management to support the SWOT and to initiate necessary change processes (e.g. in format of an action plan) based on the results of the SWOT-based evaluation is another must.

Klaus Schuch from the Centre for Social Innovation and Stane Pejovnik from the University of Ljubljana have prepared a SWOT-based design for benchmarking research organisations under the previously funded REGPOT project *“SWOT-Chemistry-Food: Evaluation of the research capacity and development of a strategy for further growth in chemistry in general and in food science in particular”*, coordinated by the Institute of Chemistry of the UKIM in Skopje. In the research design the following three dimensions of comprehensive research processes, which characterise a modern research organisation, have been assessed:

1. Knowledge generation
2. Knowledge utilisation
3. Knowledge diffusion

The research design was deducted from the RECORD benchmarking manual developed under FP5, which became a standard for the benchmarking of innovative research organisations in European Accession Countries.

Data requirements centred on

- Input data (human resources and material and non-material investments; intellectual, social and relational capital)
- Through- and output data (publications, patents, projects, innovations etc.)
- Information about organisational framework conditions and systemic RTDI conditions.

In a next step data have been assigned to certain key factors:

- Internal factors, which are under direct control of the organisation under scrutiny
 - e.g. mission and value system
 - critical mass (differentiated by scientific specialisations)
 - progressive management
 - human resource management
 - creativity and innovation (“outputs”)
- External factors, which are outside the control of the organisation
 - e.g. mobility and international networking
 - user involvement
 - public relations
 - financial position

- Negotiated factors, over which the organisation has just limited “control”; these factors have to be negotiated with at least one external party to become effective,
 - e.g. RTDI policy of the country/region under scrutiny (as framework condition)
 - the “capital market” for financing RTDI
 - (in)dependency of political parties
 - relevant industrial sectors in transition

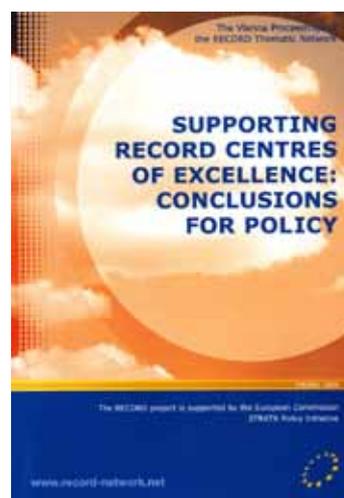
In order to assess the performance of a research organisation, three potential benchmarks for comparison are distinguished:

1. Internal benchmarking across time
2. External benchmarking with comparable organisations
3. Functional benchmarking (analysis of functions and practices vis-a-vis some accepted standards).

Although the emphasis of this SWOT-based benchmarking was mostly on the learning dimension (*“why and how to improve”*), the methodology can be used for accountability purposes, too (*“have the goals been achieved or not”*). It provides, for instance, a decision making basis for whether or not an institute qualifies as national, regional or even international Centre of Excellence. Another possibility is to use the methodology for institutional evaluation under existing performance contracting schemes. Even the adequacy of the allocation of institutional funding (*“block or basic funding”*) can be assessed with such an approach. There are of course limitations and too mechanistic benchmarking approaches should be avoided. For more reading on this I recommend the contributions of Attila Havas, Balázs Borsi and Gábor Papanek, Klaus Schuch and Peter Stanovnik and others in the book *“Supporting Record Centres of Excellence: Conclusions for Policy”*, edited by Balázs Borsi and Gábor Papanek.

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For deeper insights, Klaus Schuch recommends reading the book *“Supporting Record Centres of Excellence: Conclusions for Policy”*

COIN – Cooperation & Innovation

COIN is a joint initiative launched by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (BMWFJ) and the Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology (bmvit). There is a special focus on the cooperation with South East Europe (SEE).

COIN contributes to the advancement of Austria's innovation performance by the better and broader transposition of knowledge into innovation within two programme lines.

The "Structure" line focused on application-oriented research and technology organisations should lead to an increase in the overall number of qualified R&D partners, particularly competent for the requirements of SMEs. The "Cooperation and Network" line (COIN-Net) encourages technology transfer within entrepreneurial cooperation schemes, thus, raising the level of innovation within businesses and strengthening their cooperation capacities. It focuses on output-oriented cooperation projects to develop and improve innovative products, processes and services. COIN is not restricted to any research area or technological field; projects are funded by grants of up to 70% of the total eligible costs. The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) launches two or three COIN calls per year with an annual funding budget of approximately € 20 million. COIN also contains transnational cooperation opportunities; strategic co-operation projects between Austria and South East/Eastern Europe are particularly addressed. This regional cooperation focus lies with the responsibility of the BMWFJ.

The COIN-Net call in 2009 included this specific regional co-operation focus. All WBCs, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey, and all European and Caucasian CIS states including Russia were addressed as partner countries. Every project has to be coordinated from Austria, but at the same time between 15 and 50% of the project funds mandatorily have to be foreseen for the partner countries.

In fact, the special focus is a continuation of a previously independent programme known as CIR-CE (Cooperation in Innovation and Research with Central and Eastern Europe). The countries of South East and Eastern Europe are very important for the Austrian economy and vice versa. For SEE, Austria acts as a beacon economy.

Medium and long-term sustainable solutions cannot be sought in low-wage/low-tech production in Europe. This also holds true for the WBC region. This is why the situation offers a clear win-win potential. A strategically planned joint axis between players in Austria and in the South East and Eastern European states can be the basis for competitive advantages in a global context, from which all parties involved will benefit. Austrian enterprises can offer, on the one hand, an impetus, and, on the other hand, participate in the accelerated growth thus induced. Due to geographic proximity, these win-win effects can particularly be exploited by technology-oriented SMEs from both, Austria and the partner countries. To obtain state aid, the main beneficiaries of a given project must be SMEs.

The results of the COIN-Net call 2009 meanwhile available, it is very interesting to notice the clear predominance of cooperation with SEE; collaboration with Eastern Europe, in contrast, seems to be quite underdeveloped. In total, 17 cooperation projects with South East/Eastern Europe have been filed, and more than 90% of the foreign projects partners involved stemmed from SEE.

Only the very best five projects have been selected for funding, and these projects receive grants of around € 1.9 million in total (average grant per project close to € 400,000; in total, more than € 500,000 is foreseen for the partner countries). All selected projects deal either with energy-related issues or with information technologies – or both.

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ResearchGATE Launches Open-Access Repository

After less than one and a half years after its creation, ResearchGATE has become the world's largest scientific online platform with more than 140,000 members. Combining features of social networks with others serving the particular needs of scientists, it contains, among others:

- Personal pages
- A search tool to find fellow researchers
- Online groups to facilitate worldwide cooperation
- Scientific job listings

Its most recent tool is a SelfArchiving Repository - an online library enabling free access to full-text scientific articles from all fields. Infringement of copyrights is not an issue, because each profile page within ResearchGATE is legally considered the personal website of the user, and the majority of journal publishers allow articles to be openly accessible on personal homepages.

Since each individual profile is networked to the larger platform, the uploaded resources will form an enormous pool of research. A publication index makes every publication identifiable and searchable.

All services of ResearchGATE are free of charge. To learn more about the portal and its many features, visit www.researchgate.net and sign up for a free profile.

LINK Open the ResearchGATE ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/65218.html>



Self-Archiving Repository at ResearchGATE

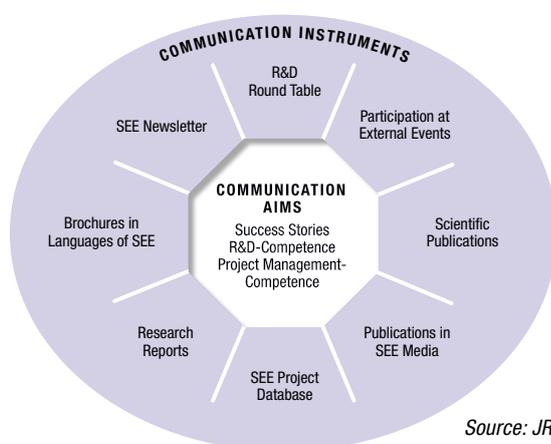
Joanneum Research: SEE Cooperation Strategies

JOANNEUM RESEARCH (JR), one of Austria's largest research organisations with its headquarters in Graz/Styria, can look back on a longstanding and successful cooperation tradition with SEE countries.

The intensification of R&D - relationships with SEE partners has been identified as an important success factor regarding applied R&D in the company mission of JR itself. To place emphasis on the necessity of cooperation and the achievement of common R&D objectives, formal cooperation agreements with the Jožef Stefan Institute in Ljubljana and the Ruđer Bošković Institute in Zagreb have been established recently.

All of JR's strategies are embedded in an overall communication concept, where different aims and instruments serve as a general guideline regarding cooperation efforts.

The SEE Communication Mix of JOANNEUM RESEARCH



Source: JR - InTeReg

To achieve its communication aims, such as presenting success stories and signalling R&D and project management competence, various important instruments have been launched and used effectively.

The **JOANNEUM RESEARCH "Round Table on Internationalisation of R&D"** was initiated in 2006 as a sort of exchange platform for R&D topics in South East and Eastern Europe. The Round Table events are organised twice a year and can be considered as a qualified discussion among experts (representatives of research organisations, universities, firms, policy makers, etc.). Usually four to five short presentations about different experiences with international R&D are held and talked about in a casual atmosphere. The number of participants is kept rather small (20–30 persons) to ensure good discussions. The timeline of a Round Table Event is usually up to three hours with the possibility of networking in the end.

The **SEE Project Database** gives an overview about all JR activities in SEE countries or with SEE cooperation partners since 2002 and is updated once a year. Analysing the database can be done according to the R&D focus and the running period of each activity, the funding, the responsible institute of JR and the participating countries. Additional information is given about the project manager, the customer and the contents. The valuable data is used in internal meetings, in presentations at the Round Table and other conferences as well as in reports, brochures and newsletters.

The **SEE Newsletter** is published three times a year and sent to more than 400 recipients in Austria and the SEE countries. It is an excellent means for making the activities of JR in South East and Eastern Europe visible to partners, customers and other R&D target groups and gives information about current and future events, successful common R&D projects and the efforts for obtaining more mobility of researchers.

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International Workshop on Using ICT to Link Up With the Scientific Diaspora

The Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office in Ljubljana in cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), the UNESCO Venice Office and the Center for eGovernance Development for SEE (CeGD) in Ljubljana organised a workshop on ICT and the scientific diaspora in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina on June 10, 2009.

The objectives of the workshop were to get some scientific background information about the diaspora knowledge networks approach and good practice cases worldwide, to get an overview of the status quo with regard to networking of the scientific diaspora from SEE countries as well as regarding their use of ICTs (with a special focus on Web 2.0 applications) for cooperation with their countries of origin, to facilitate mutual learning of programme owners/stakeholders in the SEE region, to raise the awareness of stakeholders (RTD policy makers, development experts, official development assistance providers, ...) feeding into SEE regional RTD policy dialogue processes and to initiate (new) projects on a national and the regional (SEE) level.

The workshop has been very successful with about 25 highly motivated and very knowledgeable participants. Presentations can be found online at <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/44522.html>.

A follow-up workshop is planned for early November 2009 to develop concrete regional SEE project initiatives in this field.



Participants at the ICT Workshop in Sarajevo

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ICT Training and Networking Events

Between September and November 2009, the two FP7 support actions ICT-WEB-PROMS and WINS-ICT are organising a series of ICT training workshops and joint networking events.

The training workshops are free of charge and are conceived to foster an increased successful participation of the local ICT researchers in EU ICT FP7 initiatives. Thus, the training workshops both offer an insight into FP7 and its ICT Work Program, and additionally focus on the necessary information for the successful development and management of EU projects.

On a demand base, a one-to-one coaching is also offered to the participants by the EU WINS-ICT project partners. Themes such as the optimisation of project profiles and project proposal in view of specific calls are just an example of topics that can be discussed.

A total of seven training workshops are foreseen between September and November, one in each of the Western Balkan countries covered by the projects. The first event was scheduled for Skopje on September 11, 2009. More information on the workshops is available at each project's website.

Furthermore, two networking events were also scheduled this autumn aside of well-known international conferences: a "Training and networking for WB-EU research cooperation in ICT for Learning and eLearning" workshop was held in the framework of the 4th BCI 2009 on September 18, 2009 in Thessaloniki (info: <http://www.wins-ict.eu/workshop.html>), and an "EU – Western Balkan countries Brokerage & Networking Session" took place in Istanbul in the frame of eChallenges 2009, on October 22.

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LINKS WINS-ICT ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/43674.html>
ICT-WEB-PROMS ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/43677.html>

eGovernment Development in the WBCs

Electronic Government (eGov) can increase efficiency, enhance transparency, collect more revenue and facilitate a reform of the public sector that aims at improved services for the citizen, reinforced democratic procedures and effective support of governmental policies. This is also true for the WBCs.

The WBCs, in view of their European prospect, owe not only to advance in the adoption of the European acquis, but also to converge with the levels of growth of EU Member States. Thus, the incorporation of ICTs in their governance is an integral part of the process to unleash their potential and mitigate chronic problems. Increasingly, the WBCs emphasise the development of eGov tools and therefore, investments in the sector are rising.

The INA Academy – Hellenic Aid 'Center for eGovernance Program @ SEE' was launched in May 2008 to underpin this development and support WBC governments in the process of human capacity building and eGov project design. The competent ministries or authorities for ICT from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the FYR of Macedonia and Serbia participated as primary partner institutions from each country. The program was placed under the operational framework of the regional Center for eGovernance Development - CeGD.

The "Center" delivered a set of executive eGov training seminars and an electronic learning platform that enabled more than 250 public administration staff members in the WBCs to increase their understanding of eGov processes and project building methodologies. The programme also delivered research studies that investigated the current level of eReadiness and eGov development in the WBCs and provided useful insights on the factors that inhibit faster growth. Five factors were found to be critical for the successful implementation of eGov services in the WBCs, including political commitment to the reform process, the availability of ICT infrastructure, institutional capacity, the underlying legal framework related to electronic administration and eGov strategic planning.

Despite the adoption of a strategy that includes eGov development and the available relevant legislative framework, eGov services are still in the early stage of development. A comparative analysis was implemented assessing the level of sophistication in the development of 23 basic public services. In most cases, the sophistication level reached in the provided services is still rather low, even in those marked as complete. This status quo is expected to cut-off significant foreseen benefits that eGov services have to offer. National eGov strategies have not yet tapped issues related to interoperability between existing and planned eGov systems and the necessary organisational and institutional arrangements. In this context, WBCs still need to ensure strong political commitment and active involvement of the entire society in eGov and IS development.

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WBC-INCO.NET Facebook Group Created

WBC-INCO.NET has opened a facebook group and invites our readers and partners to join us by creating an additional "social network". If you are a member of the social networking platform Facebook, you are invited to join us as a fan, interact with us or to recommend the project to your friends.

LINK WBC-INCO.NET Facebook Group ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/63148.html>



TransBonus Encourages Closer Cooperation in Surface Transport

TransBonus (Transport EU-Western Balkan Network for Training, Support and Promotion of Cooperation in FP7 Research Activities) is an initiative put in motion by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7). The project started on January 1, 2009 and will run for two years, ending in December 2010.

The project aims at encouraging closer scientific and technological (S&T) cooperation between Europe and the Western Balkan countries (WBCs: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia and Serbia) in the area of surface transport. It further seeks to establish an EU-Balkan transport network of researchers, universities, industry and experts among these countries in order to improve and enlarge the research capacity of Western Balkan centres of competence in terms of research programmes and human resources through transnational placements of research staff and knowledge.

TransBonus provides the following opportunities to the target groups:

- Participation in the currently open call for pre-proposals – proposals for research ideas. The main objective is to urge the active participation of research organisations, NGOs, universities, public organisations, and SMEs coming from **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the FYR of Macedonia, Serbia and Bulgaria** in future EU projects in the field of surface transport under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7).
- Becoming a partner of a European R&D project for the surface transport sector.
- Participation in the “Idea Generation Events” – the aim of these events is to establish partnering schemes among WBCs and EU

members and simultaneously to facilitate knowledge transfer through generating proposal ideas in the field of surface transport.

- “Expert study visits” – authors of the best two to three project ideas per country, in the particular sector of interest, will have the opportunity to take part in study visits to meet experienced partners for setting up research project consortia for the calls for proposals described above.
- Support in the development of the full project proposal for the relevant FP7 call.

Major outputs of the TransBonus project include a mapping report, analysing the current status of the research potential in the field of surface transport in the WBCs and a brief FP7 handbook describing to partners from the transport academia how to participate in FP7 initiatives and offering them full information on financial and legal aspects of the programme. Furthermore, the project website, <http://www.transbonus.net>, makes finding information about specific topics in surface transport research much easier for the transport research community from the WBCs. It also contains a systemised database of the surface transport centre and individual researchers.

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Transbonus ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/65525.html>

Bulgaria’s ARC Fund Supports STI Activity in the WBCs

The Applied Research and Communications Fund (ARC Fund) is a leading Bulgarian think-tank in the field of innovation policy and technology transfer. During the last few years the ARC Fund expanded its activity into new areas – entrepreneurship, business incubation and IT-based good governance, and started collaboration with new partners from the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The first prominent project in these new areas – E-Municipalities in South East Europe – was implemented during 2006 and 2007. The purpose was to facilitate ICT policy making and the implementation of local government initiatives in the SEE region through the development of a set of decision-support and benchmarking tools.

The project reviewed the implementation of case studies of ICT policy-planning and implementation cycles by SEE countries. Based on the findings from these comparative case studies, the ARC Fund developed pilot benchmarking tools for ICT policy-making and their implementation in SEE.

Another initiative to support science, technology and innovation in SEE was the Fourth International Conference Advancing Innovation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (AIECA) 2009: Bridging Education, Research and Business Incubation for Fostering Academic Entrepreneurship and Innovation organised by the ARC Fund on September 23 to 27, 2009 in Gabrovo, Bulgaria.

Representatives of the Bulgarian government, the municipality of Gabrovo, the World Bank InfoDev Programme, the ECABit Network and the Bulgarian Academy of Science took part in the conference round tables, parallel sessions, networking and brokerage meetings.

Researchers, business managers and policy makers from Romania, Russia, Turkey, Belarus, Ukraine, Denmark, the FYR of Macedonia, etc. have participated in the conference sessions. During the conference various events took place, devoted to the Creativity and Innovation Days in Gabrovo and the 45th anniversary of the Technical University of Gabrovo, such as a presentation of Bulgaria’s services to the Enterprise Europe Network and visits to Bulgarian innovative companies situated in the region and exo-tourism business sites.

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Applied Research and Communications Fund ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/2007.html>

Follow-Up: The Regional Strategy for R&D for the WBCs

An expert meeting on developing the Regional Strategy for R&D for the WBCs was held on September 7, 2009 at the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) Secretariat in Sarajevo.

The event gathered experts from ministries of science and research of the RCC members from South East Europe (SEE), including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), members of scientific institutions from the region, and representatives of relevant international organisations and stakeholders. The WBC-INCO.NET project was represented by its coordinator Elke Dall.

The Regional Strategy for Research and Development for the Western Balkans aims at increasing knowledge transfer through boosting networks and capacities of researchers and scientists from the Western Balkans, and within the entire SEE, at enhancing cooperation between the science, research and education communities and the business sector and at creating cross-border regional clusters in competitive sectors to pave the way for the establishment of competitive regional centres of excellence.

The meeting participants urged the European Commission, the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, OECD, the RCC Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital, the Steering Platform on Research for Western Balkans and all other interested international donors and appropriate networks, to work together in the establishing of a multi-donor approach for the implementation of the said Regional Strategy.

The approach to involve the national administrations, working groups, networks and regional stakeholders as much as possible in the forthcoming World Bank study, ensuring that the results are fully owned by the countries concerned, was highly appreciated by the participants.

The participants also welcomed the European Commission's support for the Regional Strategy for Research and Development for the Western Balkans. Moreover, they invited the Commission to investigate, whether the project fiche – to be presented in the Regional Programme – can cater for a multi donor approach, which was based upon the Joint Statement of the ministerial conference of April 24, 2009, building further on the work already carried out by SEE-ERA.NET, WBC-INCO.NET and the Steering Platform, while taking into account the results of the World Bank study.

The meeting participants also agreed that a coordination body for the continuation of all activities related to Regional Research Strategy needs to be established, involving representatives of the science ministries of all countries concerned, coordinated by the RCC.

LINK *Regional Cooperation Council* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/16063.html>

RCC Approves Zagreb Plan of Action 2009-2010

On the occasion of the meeting of the RCC's Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital on June 24, 2009 in Zagreb, a Plan of Action for the current and upcoming year was adopted.

Task Force Representative Ivana Puljiz from the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports pointed out the importance of human capital as a key factor for sustainable economic development, social cohesion and innovation. Therefore, political lobbying and networking in the field of education, training, science and research was a major focus of the RCC. Among others, the RCC envisaged a regional workshop on evidence-based policy making and considered the possibility of organising clusters of knowledge to foster the creation of mechanisms for sustainable cooperation and dialogue.

The Task Force agreed to engage in cooperative action to enable an effective and sustained implementation of its mandate now and up to 2011, focusing on three major action lines:

Action line 1: Human capital as a key factor for sustainable economic development, social cohesion and innovation, containing such areas of activities as political lobbying within the framework of the RCC; the creation of a new policy culture shifting from a fragmented to a holistic approach for human capital development and continued cooperation and promotion of synergies with other initiatives, events and actions.

Action line 2: Partnerships for innovation – innovative partnerships, aiming at the provision of a platform for debate and discussion for the promotion of new strategic partnerships with key stakeholders, at enhanced lobbying and cooperation with European and international institutions, at the implementation of a Capacity Building Programme for Regional Cooperation and at facilitating mobility schemes in the field of education.

Action line 3: Regional cooperation and common areas of interest, including, among others, close cooperation and exchange with relevant regional networks and projects such as ERI SEE, the Steering Platform on Research and WBC-INCO.NET.

Furthermore, partner ministries and institutions were invited to provide "hosting weeks" or grants for sustaining and further developing the Task Force Capacity Building Programme into a regional exchange and mobility programme for public administrators in education, science and research.

LINK *Download the full document at* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/63154.html>



SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Joint Call for European Research Proposals

As a continuation of the successful cooperation within the SEE-ERA.NET project, a Joint Call for European Research Projects has been published on September 1, 2009 within the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS project. Eligible countries are WBCs (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), EU MS (Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Romania and Slovenia), and Turkey as an FP7 Associated Country.

The following thematic areas will be supported through the call:

ICT: I) Software systems for learning process management and support
II) ICT for energy efficiency

AgroFood: III) Preservation of indigenous species and traditional food products (in SEE/WBC)
IV) Interdisciplinary field: Land use impact in agriculture on biodiversity

This call is aimed at projects with duration of one to two years. The total budget for the call is € 3.5 million. The participating countries and the EC will provide the funds. Each approved project will receive up to € 150,000.

Minimum conditions for participation: the consortium has to consist of at least two partners from the WBCs and one from another participating country (2+1 principle).

A two-stage online application procedure will be used. In stage one, the applicants will be asked to submit an Expression of Interest (EoI), not a full project proposal. After the evaluation procedure, the research teams with an EoI ranked highly will be asked to submit full project proposals.

Deadline for submission of Expression of Interest (EoI): November 3, 2009, 16:00 CET

End of SEE-ERA.NET

The project SEE-ERA.NET, which had started in September 2004, was successfully finished in August 2009. The last months of the project were especially dedicated to the production of the booklet on the scientific results of the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call as well as to an update of the Joint Action Plan.

SEE-ERA.NET succeeded in reaching its goals of enhancing research co-operation between EU MS and SEE countries and fostering the integration of this area into the ERA. This was achieved by a systematic exchange and dissemination of information and best practice models on bilateral RTD activities.

The project contributed to a sound understanding of research systems and policy approaches in the SEE-ERA.NET partner countries. It conducted needs



analyses from the viewpoint of researchers, RTD organisations as well as policy makers in the target countries. Furthermore, it supported the policy dialogue on ERA integration of the WBCs and related awareness raising activities in the EU. Apart from this, the identification of complementary approaches was followed by the implementation of joint instruments and initiatives, including a joint "evaluators' database" and the Pilot Joint Call for research proposals in 2007.

The final closing ceremony will take place in Zagreb in October 2009 within the frame of the meeting held by the Steering Platform on Research for the WBCs. The coordination institution, the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI), will invite to an official dinner in order to honour the achievements of the project and to thank the project members and others for their commitment.

Update of Joint Action Plan

In August 2007 the "White Paper on overlaps, gaps and opportunities in view of the extension of bilateral RTD programmes and initiatives towards multilateral approaches" and its accompanying Joint Action Plan were finalised as a deliverable of SEE-ERA.NET. It has recently been updated.

Since its finalisation, the White Paper has been widely distributed. Some of the proposed actions of the Joint Action Plan already have been implemented (e.g. in the framework of the WBC-INCO.NET project), some just started, and some remain outstanding. Feedback and many recommendations have been collected and now, after two years and close to the end of the SEE-ERA.NET project, it seemed to be a good time to revise the Joint Action Plan once more.

While the White Paper is designed as a policy paper, the Joint Action Plan has to be understood as a working paper reflecting the current situation and proposing respective actual measures, gaining momentum through the combination, coordination and adaptation of the individual measures.

This makes the Joint Action Plan the ideal document to be updated from time to time summarising and outlining all combined measures targeting at the strengthening of strategic reform processes with regard to S&T in the WBCs, the assuring of a high level of participation of the WBCs in FP7 and the promotion of an intensive use of existing cooperation instruments, or, where necessary, introducing new, coherent and complementary or joint cooperation instruments.

The update is available on the websites of SEE-ERA.NET (PLUS) and WBC-INCO.NET.

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Centre for Social Innovation ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/29.html>

LINK SEE-ERA.NET PLUS: Further Integrating Key Research Institutions From Southeast Europe Into The European Research Area ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/44489.html>
SEE-ERA.NET White Paper ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/61788.html>

Booklet on Scientific Results of Pilot Joint Call Published



The booklet "Scientific results of the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call", edited by Jana Macháčová and Katarina Rohsmann, has been printed and is also available online.

It consists of 27 individual scientific reports on the research and networking projects as well as on summer schools funded by the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call along with a general overview on the project and a foreword by the European Commissioner for Science and Research, Janez Potočnik, as well as Philippos G. Tsalidis, Secretary General for Research and Technology in the Greek Ministry of Development. An overview of the project's main objectives and achievements is provided as well as a chapter on the implementation of the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call (PJC). The huge oversubscription to the PJC shows the enormous interest in such multinational funding instruments, which target the WBCs.

The booklet serves as a good documentation of the project SEE-ERA.NET (2004 to 2009). With the publication of the booklet as the final activity, the project SEE-ERA.NET has been finished in August 2009 (see articles on page 19). However, its successor project SEE-ERA.NET PLUS already had a successful kick-off in April 2009 and will last until January 2013.

Jana Macháčová and Katarina Rohsmann, ed. (2009): Scientific results of the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call. Vienna: Centre for Social Innovation (256 p.), ISBN 978-3-200-01567-8

LINK Download the book at ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/56743.html>

Cooperation/Opportunities Matrix for the WBCs

WINS-ICT has recently released a new deliverable, namely the Cooperation – Opportunities Matrix.

The report publishes the main ICT-related funding opportunities that are currently accessible for the Western Balkan region. More specifically, it documents the relations between the critical existing needs of the ICT RTD system in the WBCs and the currently available funding programs by focusing on the correspondence between these two components: the needs and the offer.

LINK Download the document ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/65629.html>
 WINS-ICT ▪<http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/43674.html>

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The European Union's Framework Programme 7

(with an emphasis on ICT) - Version 2.3
 by Myer W. Morron (EFPCConsulting Ltd)

Version 2.3 of Myer W. Morron's FP7 Book is now available for download. The book is 247 pages long and covers subjects such as: FP7 funding schemes, proposal preparation and submittal, project management and financial aspects.

You may download the constantly updated book at
<http://www.efpconsulting.com/downloads/Bookfp7.pdf>
 (free user registration necessary; registered users receive regular email updates).

FP7 Work Programmes

A number of FP7 Work Programmes is available in the document section of <http://www.wbc-inco.net> (select "programme descriptions"). For further information on current calls, please see the call section in this journal.

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