

Greece

PROGRESS REPORT¹

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (2st half 2011 or - May 2011 / Ohrid till December 2011 / Sarajevo)

1 Policy actions

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

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

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

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

¹ The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage (www.wbc-inco.net) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to heribert.buchbauer@bmwf.gv.at by November 22, 2011.

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

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

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

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

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

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

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

General investment plans shall be divided into 3 categories, one of which concerns investments in research and technological development. This category comprises investment plans intended for the technological modernisation of enterprises through the use of technological and operational innovations, such as quality assurance and control systems, certification, energy-saving technology, research and development projects and programmes and deployment of specialized scientific and research personnel. More specifically this category shall be granted aid in the form of grants and leasing subsidies. (80% of the amount shown in the table in Article 5(5) for existing enterprises and 90% for new enterprises). The remaining percentage up to the limit quoted in the table shall be made up by aid in the form of tax relief.

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

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

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

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

Within the framework of the WBC-INCO.NET project a training seminar and a brokerage event have been organised back-to-back in Thessaloniki (11-12 October 2011) by the co-partners in the project GSRT and SEERC. Both events were focused on the new FP7 Call on Transport providing the opportunity to the WBC and Greek participants coming from the public and private sector to gain knowledge on successful submission and participation in the current Call, whilst they exchanged information on project ideas and ways of cooperation in small group meetings and/or one-to-one meetings.

The events have been a success considering the high number of participants coming from all the WBC and the presentations made as well as the private meetings held in the course of the sessions. The positive outcome is depicted in the evaluation forms received in which the participants strongly emphasized the necessity for repetition of such actions.

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

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

FP7 projects

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

Coordinator GSRT, Greece

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

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

Two on-line questionnaires have been developed with a view to recording the industry and academia demands for researchers. In parallel a legislation gap analysis on inter-sectoral mobility has been drafted. At the moment, the results from both surveys are being elaborated with the aim to demonstrate the regional inter-sectoral mobility as it is. Meanwhile, National Analysis Reports as well as National Guidelines for the promotion of inter-sectoral mobility policy issues have been developed that will serve as background documents for the final comparative reports due at the end of this year.

SEERA-EI (South East European Research Area for eInfrastructures) - FP7-

INFRASTRUCTURES-2008-1

Coordinator GRNET, Greece

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

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

During the past five months a series of short-and long-term actions have been determined concerning the development of the eInfrastructures in the region. In this context GSRT and GRNET/ Greece are responsible for the following:

- identifying challenges encountered while implementing trans-national activities;
- drafting a template for regional pilot call;
- conducting a sustainability analysis in terms of exploration of funding models; and
- designing a White Paper for SEE eInfrastructures.

At the moment the partners are drafting the SEERA-EI Joint Call.

WBC-INCO.NET

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

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

- a) to support the bi-regional dialogue on S&T;
- b) to identify RTD priorities and potentials in a transparent and methodologically sound way; and

c) to enhance the participation of researchers from the WBC in European projects of mutual interest and benefit.

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

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

In this respect a mapping exercise for updating the NISs in the region as well as a survey on the future market and research needs in the WBC have been completed (T8.1), whereas a list of good practice examples from the EU MS and the WBC has been drafted. Moreover, synergies with the WB and OECD project "Regional Strategy on R&D for Innovation" have been explored. Last, but not least, in the framework of training activities for boosting innovation in the region a training seminar on Technology Transfer has been successfully organised on 23 September 2011, in MONTENEGRO.

The results of the activities for mapping the NISs will be also presented in a Steering Platform session on 1 December 2011.

SEE-ERA.NET PLUS

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

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

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

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

The EC has approved the implementation of 23 JERPS, among which 8 with Greek participation.

Nationally funded Projects

Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

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

Coordinator country: Greece (1.5.2010 – 31.4.2012)

In the BSEC framework Greece, Albania and Serbia are involved in collaborative S&T activities following the main purposes and axes of the "2nd BSEC Action Plan on cooperation in science and technology (2010-2014)". In this context Greece, acting as the present country coordinator

of the Working Group of cooperation in Science & Technology, is proposing specific initiatives/actions for the upcoming two-year period.

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

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

A Call for funding projects within SEERA-EI project is expected to be launched in 2012. To this end, bilateral meetings between delegations from Greece, Albania and FYROM have been organised resulting to a workshop to be held in Athens in January 2012 on the topic of Infrastructures. Soon afterwards the signing of the MoU for the SEERA-EI Call is anticipated.

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