

Recent R&I cooperation developments in/with the Western Balkans

Western Balkans Steering Platform on Research and Innovation

27 September 2017
Belgrade, Serbia

WESTERN BALKANS

Albania

- National Economic Reform Program - NERP
- Law Nr 80-2015 on Higher Education and Research on Higher Education Institutions
 - 3 Working groups established (Law on Science & Technological Development, National Strategy for Research, Technology and Innovation 2017-2022, Policy Paper on Reform of Institutional Framework of National Research System)
- National Census on Research Capacities –NCRC in close collaboration with Albanian Academic Network (RASH); process as solid basis to establish software and on-line platform ACRIS
- Workshop on RIS3 (R&I in Smart Specialization Strategy), Tirana 6-7 Dec. 2016 (MES, NASRI, JRC)
- In 2016 , Albanian government launched the First Call for Proposal, grant “Digital Albania”
- Action plan 2017-2021 “Support the development of innovative policies based on Triple Helix approach”; Programme for Economy Support; Investment Policy Guideline of Albanian government
- Ratification of agreement on establishment of Western Balkan Center for Scientific Research and Innovation – WISE
- Albania participate actively at JSC-Joint Science Conference of Berlin Process and Open Science Working Group established by RCC

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Draft of the Revised BiH Research and Innovation Strategy 2017-2022 prepared but not yet adopted; Council for Science and Conference of Ministers responsible for Science established, Award for Science introduced;
- 23 H2020 projects with 38 participants from BiH – total amount 2,9 mio EUR;
- BiH participates in ERAC, ESFRI, SFIC, JRC, SGHRM, as well as in all Programme Committee configurations and NCP Network;
- Participation in COST and EUREKA activities;
- In 2018 bilateral cooperation with Slovenia, Montenegro, Austria, Croatia, Turkey and Russia

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- New Government and a new Minister for Education and Science as of June 2017 – Mrs. Renata Deskoska
- The Strategy for innovation, 2012-2020, New Action Plan 2016-2018 adopted by the Government, implemented and monitored by an Advisory Group
- Business – Academia cooperation:
 - A Transfer Technology Office to be established
 - Supporting funding mechanisms of the Fund for innovation
 - commercialization of innovation and
 - technology extension
 - Launching the new instrument for business-technology accelerators
- Projects and grants for strengthening R&I capacities:
 - publishing in international journals,
 - postgraduate studies at the top 100 ranked universities - Shanghai list,
 - participation at Scientific Conferences etc.

Kosovo*

(*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.)

- During 2017 5 PhD programmes have been accredited (Law, general medicine and dentistry). Three of them new study programmes.
- Through partnership agreements during 2017 15 scholarships for PhD studies abroad have been awarded (HERAS) .
- During 3 MONTH PERIOD so far are granted 5 research projects (MEST).
- Through HERAS (project funded by Austrian Development Cooperation and MEST) 5 RESEARCH PROJECTS have been awarded in the first call (up to 15.000 € each);
- 50 short term mobility grants were granted for participating in international conferences, 6 of them for scientific work/up to 3 month support for research activities).
- Law on Innovation, Knowledge and Technology Transfer - FINALIZED!
- 3 administrative instructions.
- Transformational Leadership Programme – Scholarships and Partnerships (funded by USAID and MEST) initiated 13 joint research projects between University of Prishtina staff and university partners in the United States; topics: using ICT in education, early childhood education, air pollution, water pollution, agriculture etc.

Montenegro

- Initiative for establishment of the South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies with the spirit 'Science for Peace'
- Promotion and strengthening of national participation in the Horizon 2020 - H2020 National Office
- New programme of internationalization – team up with large infrastructures (CERN, EMBL, EMBO, ESA, GSI-FAIR) started -Montenegro since July 2017 full member of the CMS experiment at the CERN-LHC (MoU for MO signed between the Government of Montenegro and CERN); by the end of 2017, Montenegro is expected to be a full member of EMBL and EMBO (application already sent)
- Establishment of the Central Unit of the Science Technology Park – location already defined – Conceptual Design under preparation
- Adoption of the Strategy of Innovation Activity (2016-2020), preparation of the Strategy of Scientific Research Activities (2018-2021) and of the Smart Specialization Strategy – S3 (2018 - 2022)

Serbia

- Action plan for the implementation of the National strategy is in the last stage of the finalization.
- Inter-ministerial working group (WG) for the development of the Serbian Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization
- MESTD initiated the work on Research Infrastructure Roadmap in the Republic of Serbia and create the Working group for this activity.
- Innovation Entrepreneurship and Information Technology Council established in September 2016.
- Chapter 25 – Science and Research, opened and temporarily closed, on December 13, 2016.
- World Bank Competiveness and Jobs Project - public call June 1 - September 1, 2017. Total funds of 2,7 million euros for implementation of the Mini and Matching Grants are secured from the budget of the MESTD
- Danube-INCO.NET project - research and innovation (R&I) policy mix peer review
- Mr Robert-Jan Smits, Director-General of DG Research and Innovation at European Commission, visited Serbia in March 2017

EU MEMBER STATES

Austria

- Bilateral Agreement on scientific and technological cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina formally adopted June 2017, first Call expected in 2018
- Bilateral Call with Serbia currently open and expected with Albania and Macedonia still in 2017 and with Montenegro in 2018
- Western Balkan RTI Info Platform running and funded until 2019 <https://wbc-rti.info/>
- 1st Multilateral Danube Call has financed 19 projects, 2nd Call will be prepared for 2018; invitation to all interested countries
- HERAS – Higher Education, Research and Applied Science – Kosovo* project, financed by the Austrian Development Agency; support by the BMWFW with expertise

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Croatia

- on-line exchange of expert in the research area between Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia
- Support to Montenegros initiative for establishing International science institute
- Providing further and advise on implementation of MSCA-COFUND programmes

Germany

- In spring and summer 2017 German experts conducted - on behalf of BMBF - six Travelling Workshops on knowledge transfer and capacity building in Albania, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo*
- The results of two studies targeting the research and innovation system of the WBC – a bibliometric study and a fact finding mission - were presented and discussed at an expert's meeting at the BMBF in Bonn in July 2016
- A delegation of the BMBF visited Belgrade, Serbia on January 31 – February 3, 2017 in order to prepare the ground for a first German-Serbian cluster initiative
- Within the 2nd BMBF "Danube call" all 16 projects started in spring 2017; ministries and funding agencies from Hungary, Moldova and Serbia co-fund network projects; the aim of the call is the development and establishment of innovative research networks

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Greece

- Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)
 - We are participating in the Working Group on Cooperation in S&T, following the ongoing discussions on the framework of the BSEC.
- Agreements on Science & Technology cooperation (currently inactive)
 - Albania
 - Serbia
 - The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
 - Montenegro

SLOVENIA

Bosnia And Herzegovina

- 36 ongoing bilateral research projects adopted for the period 2016-2017;
- launch of the new joint call for research projects is in the process of negotiation;

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

- 15 bilateral research projects adopted for the period 2017-2018 are in the process of realization;

Montenegro

- 26 bilateral research projects adopted for the period 2016-2017 are in the process of realization;
- launch of the new call for research projects for 2018-2020 is planned; the Joint Board meeting is planned to be held in the first half of 2018.

Serbia

- 53 bilateral research projects adopted for the period 2016-2017 are in the process of realization,
- the joint call for research projects for 2018-2019 was launched 21. 4.2017; the Joint Board meeting is planned to be held at the end of 2017.

- Cooperation in the HORIZON 2020;
- MIZŠ participated in DANUBE-INCO.NET;
- Participation of WBC at 2nd World Congress on Open Educational Resources (OER), 18 – 20 September 2017, Ljubljana.

REGIONAL / INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Central European Initiative

Priority 1: Bridging between ERA and non-ERA countries

CEI-funded Cooperation Activities in the WB:

- *XVII International Symposium Feed to Food Tech* (Novi Sad, October 2016)
- *Fifth International Conference on Radiation and Applications in Various Fields of Research* (Budva, June 2017)
- *7th Central European Symposium on Plasma Chemistry* (Sveti Martin na Muri, September 2017)
- *Reversing the brain drain through the Scientific Diaspora* (Planned Tirana, October 2017)

Priority 2: Facilitating access of WB scientists and researchers to the institutions of the “Trieste Science System”

- CEI co-funded Workshop “Training in advanced material characterization in Large Scale Research Infrastructures” (CERIC, Trieste, June 2017)
- CEI co-funded International Advanced Summer School on Sustainable Blue Growth (OGS, Trieste, July 2017)
- Master in Sustainable Blue Growth (OGS, UNITS, deadline 5/10)
- CERIC-ERIC Call for proposals (Deadline 2/10)
- Workshop “Research meets business to foster collaboration between CERIC and the industry” (CERIC, Trieste, October 2017)
- **Euro Science Open Forum (ESOF) to be held in Trieste in 2020**

EC Joint Research Centre (JRC)

Scientific support activities in the Western Balkans

Enlargement and Integration Action

- ✓ *Smart Specialisation*
- ✓ *Training and workshops*
- ✓ *Innovation Camps*

Open access to JRC Infrastructures

JRC Scientific Support to the Danube Region

- ✓ *Capacity building through thematic clusters*
- ✓ *Danube Inco.Net Project*

Capacity building in Innovation, Technology Transfer and IPR EU4Tech Project:

- ✓ *unlocking **economic benefits**, job creation and increase of **economic growth***
- ✓ *Possible **Proof of Concept** supporting very **early stage investments** and bridging the gap between WB research and industry*
- ✓ ***Action Plan** to boost technology transfer in WB*

Community of innovator practitioners – vast network of stakeholders in the WB

- ✓ *database of ~1200 persons from governments, universities, academia, industry, science parks...*
- ✓ *young professionals which we train, network and coach with specific seminar and visits*

Thematic workshops

- ✓ *Macro-Regional Innovation Week, Financial Instruments for Innovation, Science Parks and Incubator Management, Proof of Concept (PoC), Investment Readiness*

Regional Innovation Center – WISE

- During 2015 and 2016 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro ratified Split Agreement
- Serbia, Kosovo* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: ratification pending
- From Nov. 2015 until today Croatia has changed two Governments and 3 different Ministers of science and education
- In 2016 Macedonia sent diplomatic letter to Croatia regarding WISE
- Croatian high government officials promoted WISE during Croatia's Presidency of SEECEP (June 2016- June 2017)
- City of Split was without Mayor for more than 7 months. In July 2017 a new Mayor was elected.
- The Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs – registration of WISE
- Slovenia, Norway and Austria expressed interest in participating
- Croatia will notify Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro on details regarding establishment of WISE during October 2017.

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WBC-RTI.info

Information Platform on RTI
in/with/for WB

- <https://wbc-rti.info/>
- Funded until 2019 (BMWFW)

Support for the Steering Platform on
R&I:

- Information Office to disseminate achievements
- Dedicated SP member Area → find here all materials from the SP meetings
- Newsletter dedicated to SP meetings

Newsletter subscribers: ~11.000

Registered website user: ~4000

Registered SP members: ~300

The screenshot displays the WBC-RTI.info website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'About', 'Glossary', 'Users Guide', and social media icons (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, RSS, YouTube), along with 'Submit' and 'Login' buttons. A search bar is located on the right side. Below the navigation bar, a horizontal menu lists various categories: 'Themes', 'News', 'Events', 'Calls', 'Documents', 'Links', 'Organisations', 'Projects', 'Research Infrastructures', 'Steering Platform', 'Information Office', and 'Steering Platform Member Area'. The main content area features a map of Western Balkan Countries with links to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo*. A red circle highlights a 'Subscribe to our newsletter' form with an 'E-mail' input field and a 'SUBSCRIBE' button. To the right, a large blue banner for the 'Steering Platform on Research and Innovation for Western Balkans' is visible, with a red arrow pointing to the 'Steering Platform Member Area' link in the navigation menu. Below the banner, there is a 'Related articles' section listing several news items and documents.