

EU4TECH:

Capacity Building for Technology Transfer in the Western Balkans



EU4TECH was a **three year (2017-2020)** action from the European Commission, designed to build capacity for Technology Transfer from Public Research Organisations (PROs) and help to develop the wider innovation ecosystem in the six economies of the Western Balkans (WB).

The project was implemented under contract with DG NEAR and the guidance of the JRC, allowing it to exploit synergies with wider **Technology Transfer actions**, ensure alignment with overall EC strategy for R&D&I and to channel best practice from some of the top research organisations in Europe.

The project focused on **five main** activity streams:

The project was delivered by a team of experts from **EY, Inno Group, MITO** and **T3i**.

Among others, here are the major results and outcomes of the project that have sustainable impact in the region. Some of the outcomes will find its realisation in follow up EU projects, supported by **JRC** and **DG NEAR**.

1

Technology Transfer Training and Exchange of Best Practices: Improving the level of efficiency and sophistication of technology transfer offices (TTOs) and technology transfer professionals.

2

Contract research: Fostering and supporting the development of a collaborative relationship between research centres, universities and local industry.

3

Science Parks and Incubators: Understanding the role that can be played by Science Parks and Incubators in accelerating innovation in the Western Balkans and delivering a roadmap for the growth of this sector.

4

Technology Transfer Financial Instruments policy platform: Understanding what concrete measures could be put in place to facilitate the growth of technology transfer focused financial instruments.

5

Investor readiness training and matchmaking: Facilitating the growth and expansion of start-up companies through the provision of investor readiness support and matchmaking services between companies and early stage investors.

1

Training activities and exchanges of best practices

- ▶ Mobilised a network of emerging technology transfer units and professionals.
- ▶ Organised two summer schools (Podgorica, Montenegro and Skopje, North Macedonia) as well as several small focused workshops in Tirana, Albania and Pristina, Kosovo.*
- ▶ Capacity building delivered to over **120 TTO** employees/ researchers from over **15 PROs**.
- ▶ Mentored six technology transfer centres/units towards defined organisational strategic goals.

Outcome:

- ▶ A regional technology transfer network has been established for the Western Balkans that will be supported by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and will continue to deliver training and support to PROs in the region and to engage in wider policy initiatives.

2

Contract research

- ▶ Completed **15 'technology audits'** for PROs identifying particular expertise, competency and equipment.
- ▶ Delivered **15 Workshops** at each PRO, presenting and discussing the results.
- ▶ Collaboratively produced Strategic Roadmaps for each of the **15 universities** to help them strengthen contract research with local, national and regional economic impact, particularly for SMEs.
- ▶ Organised a roundtable meeting on Open Access to research infrastructure in collaboration with **RCC, JRC, DG NEAR and DG RTD**, attended by over **40 people** from the Tech Transfer and Innovation ecosystem including senior policy makers from all six

economies and invited speakers from the WB region as well as Croatia, Poland and Lithuania.

- ▶ Proposed policy recommendations for improving the environment for contract research in the region.

Outcome:

- ▶ A set of Principals for Open Access to research infrastructure for PROs in the region were developed.

3

Science Parks and Incubators

- ▶ Supporting the JRC workshops on Science & Technology Parks and Incubators in Thessaloniki, Greece, (**23-24 May 2017; 180+ participants**), Trieste, Italy (**21-22 September 2017; 120+ participants**), and Belgrade, Serbia (**16th-17th October 2019; 180+ participants**)
- ▶ Regional level survey of technology incubator and Science & Technology Park activity.

Outcome:

- ▶ Twinning and Soft-landing roadmaps for future development of Science Parks and Incubators.

4

Financial instruments

- ▶ Assessment of activities in the region and meeting with regional national stakeholders:
 - ▶ Regional workshop (**Belgrade, April 2017**)
 - ▶ Consultation workshop (**Trieste, September 2017**)
- ▶ Concept Paper "Development of an instrument with a focus on early stage (Proof of Concept)".

Outcome:

- ▶ Launch of a follow up project on Proof of Concept by **DG NEAR and JRC (January 2020)**.

5

Investment Readiness

- ▶ Investment Readiness support delivered to more than **70** enterprises from the region at start-up, established and scale up stage, selected from an applicant pool of more than **300** teams.
- ▶ Development and delivery of a tailored Investment Readiness programme including:
 - ▶ Two Investor memorandum workshops in Serbia;
 - ▶ IP strategy workshops in Serbia and Montenegro;
 - ▶ Crowdfunding events in Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina;
 - ▶ Two Pitch training events in Serbia with five International Experts;
 - ▶ Two Investor Fora in Belgrade with **35** companies pitching in front of more than **20** investors at both events.
- ▶ Development of Position paper: Investor Readiness in the Western Balkans: challenges, opportunities and practical experiences.

Outcome:

- ▶ Several companies successfully raised finance including **Publit.io, Perun Technologies, Solar Collector, Zumoko, Selfikom and Car.go**. In addition, **Happy Honey and Stanisic Bio** were presented as success stories at the 86th International Agricultural Fair in Novi Sad, Serbia within the EU Agriculture Negotiation project.

**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence*