

## BELGIUM (Country/EC)

### PROGRESS REPORT

#### on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (1<sup>st</sup> half 2012 or - December 2011 / Sarajevo till May 2012 / Tirana)

#### 1 Policy actions

- Political authorities
  - Federal government: Government in charge since 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011. See [http://www.belgium.be/en/about\\_belgium/government/federal\\_authorities/federal\\_government/](http://www.belgium.be/en/about_belgium/government/federal_authorities/federal_government/) but only in Dutch and French.
  - Minister in charge of Scientific Policy is Paul Magnette (Socialist Party) who is in charge of Public enterprises, Scientific Policy, Development Cooperation and the Great Cities, see [http://www.belgium.be/fr/la\\_belgique/pouvoirs\\_publics/autorites\\_federales/gouvernement\\_federal/composition\\_gouvernement/index\\_paul\\_magnette.jsp](http://www.belgium.be/fr/la_belgique/pouvoirs_publics/autorites_federales/gouvernement_federal/composition_gouvernement/index_paul_magnette.jsp) (not in English).
  - The combination Scientific Policy & Development Cooperation is unusual for the Federal Government. This leads to a focus on Africa where Belgium has a long tradition. Nevertheless, mobility of the researcher is still a priority. New initiatives and more stress on the entry conditions are scheduled. For the moment, still no note of policy orientation.
- New funding schemes
  - Flemish authority: Pegasus mobility scheme. New initiative under the COFUND (Marie Curie Actions) developed by the EC. Intended to bring excellent postdoc researchers to Flanders. <http://www.fwo.be/Pegasus-Marie-Curie-fellowships-postdoc.aspx> .
- Agencies and personnel
  - EUROFED, larger team (NCP) at federal level <http://eurofed.stis.fgov.be/> and new nominations for NCP (for Health, Bio, Legal and Financial issues, Energy, Transport, People, Ideas, Security)
  - At the federal level, new nomination for FP7 group (Security)
  - Brussels Region: still new nominations for NCP (for Bio, ICT, Security)
  - French-speaking Community: new nomination for NCP (for People)
  - Walloon Region: new nominations for FP7 groups (Health, Food-Agri-Bio)
  - Flemish authority: new nomination for FP7 group (SSH)
  - For a complete and up-to-date composition of the FP7 representatives for Belgium : [http://www.belspo.be/belspo/coordination/scienPol\\_FCC\\_en.stm](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/coordination/scienPol_FCC_en.stm) (federal level, Communities and Regions)
- Calls
  - At the federal level: PRODEX ([http://www.belspo.be/belspo/space/euPolicy\\_prodex\\_en.stm](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/space/euPolicy_prodex_en.stm) permanent funding scheme). (pro memori: ERA-NET SEAS-ERA, closed recently)
  - French-speaking community <http://www1.frs-fnrs.be/fr/financer-les-chercheurs/appels-a-propositions.html>, some calls for proposals, and calls for credits and project funding,

[http://www1.frs-fnrs.be/uploaddocs/docs/SOUTENIR/FRS-FNRS\\_MiniGuide2012\\_Credits\\_EN.pdf](http://www1.frs-fnrs.be/uploaddocs/docs/SOUTENIR/FRS-FNRS_MiniGuide2012_Credits_EN.pdf)

- Flemish authority: calls on <http://www.fwo.be/Nieuws-FWO-onderzoeksfinanciering.aspx>
- Walloon Region: no calls except the ERA-NET, <http://recherche-technologie.wallonie.be/fr/menu/ressources/programmes/index.html>
- Brussels Region: several projects going on, i.e. BRAINS back to Brussels, doctiris, and so on, [http://www.irsib.irisnet.be/site/index3829.html?page\\_id=400](http://www.irsib.irisnet.be/site/index3829.html?page_id=400)

It has to be recognised that few partnerships do exist between Belgian research institutions and research centres in WB Countries. NCP should be contacted more often to create synergies and bridges between teams.

## **2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework**

- Federal government: the application of the (restrictive) law on family reunification has been lightened through an internal communication sent to all Embassies and Consulates. Whereas normally the family should wait for 6 months abroad, the researcher is now authorized to enter the territory with his family. He must specify his financial resources and the characteristics of the house in Belgium (to see if the lodging is fit for the family). This has already benefited some WB researchers in several research institutions.
- Social Security: negotiations finalised for a bilateral convention with Albania in June 2011 and waiting for a signature, and bilateral conventions signed (2010) with Serbia and Montenegro, but still not ratified. Still no schedule to apply

## **3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.**

- Several seminars and trainings sessions on family reunification and scientific visa organised by the ADDE ([http://www.adde.be/J\\_15/](http://www.adde.be/J_15/) Association for the rights of the foreigners) and the Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie (<http://www.kruispuntmi.be/> Crosspoint Migration and Integration)
- Session on Marie Curie Actions by the FWO <http://www.fwo.be/CMSDownload.aspx?ID=ba536be1-3083-4937-a5bf-fdc657075aaf&L=nl>
- Session on Mobility and visas by the FRS-FNRS
- COST information day (organized by the federal level)
- Several Belgian research institutions in the third wave of the Human Resource Strategy for Researchers (follow-up of the Charter and Code)
- Euraxess Linked In network
- Publication of vacancies in Federal Scientific Institutions on Euraxess Jobs
- Development of a Joint SFIC-SGHRM workshop on improving the mobility of researchers between Europe and BRIC countries (12 June)

#### **4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA**

- Research programmes: three of the 6 pillars for the new federal framework research programme will be launched in late 2012:
  - Earth related research (geography, geology...)
  - Great Societal Challenges (humanities)
  - Heritage (digitalization, valorization of collections...)
- COST actions:
  - Project TU0801 (with Croatia - FYR Macedonia) - great team spirit and interaction, exchanges were fruitful and very dynamic, Croatian partner very active and present, Macedonian partner well integrated and active, their implication in the project is greatly acknowledged
  - Project MP0901 (with Croatia) - great work, team is among the best European experts in the field, great scientific partnership with a highly appreciated team, unique collaboration made possible by this project
  - Project ISCH0906 (with Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and FYR Macedonia) - great contacts and lots of energy coming from the Croatian and Serbian teams, deeply involved in the project since the beginning, organization of a conference, participation to summer doctoral school - great experience, though the research agendas (i.e. focus on different themes) are different for the WB countries and the Belgian coordinator - nevertheless, great dynamics and lots of synergies developed, good results

#### **5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data**

- The federal level cares for the publication of national figures on R&D and innovation, the last statistical compendium has been published in December 2011  
[http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/Publ/pub\\_ostc/ind/BOOKLET\\_BES\\_99-09\\_2.pdf](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/Publ/pub_ostc/ind/BOOKLET_BES_99-09_2.pdf)
- Online statistics are regularly updated
- *Guide on financial incentives to perform R&D in Belgium*  
<http://www.euraxess.be/docs/incentives.pdf>

#### **6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months**

- Training sessions on social security for mobile researchers
- Guide on the fiscal treatment of the researcher (grant, stipend, wage, royalties...)
- Large framework programme coming at the federal level (as outlined supra)
- Greater margin of maneuver for Federal Scientific institutions (according to their own roadmap) to get involved in bilateral/multilateral projects (bottom-up spirit)