

FRANCE

PROGRESS REPORT¹

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (2st half 2012 or - June 2012 / Tirana till December 2012 / Belgrade)

1 Policy actions

A National Consultation on HE & R has been launched in July 2012, by the new Minister of Higher Education and Research, Mrs Geneviève FIORASO. This Consultation was aimed at allowing the dialogue between institutions, scientists, students and the public and at hearing innovative and effective proposals.

These proposals were focused on three main objectives : success for all students; a new ambition for research; the definition of the new landscape of higher education and research.

On July 11th 2012, the Minister appointed the members of the Steering Committee of the NCHER, chaired by the Nobel Prize, Françoise Barré-Sinoussi.

Schedule : a national consultation from July to September 2012 ; regional meetings by mid-October and a national conference on November 27th.

On Tuesday, November 27th, at the end of the National conference, Vincent Berger, General Rapporteur, drew up balance sheet works which will be used as basis for the future arbitrations and reforms to come. He identified two main ideas: the cooperation and the social responsibility of the higher education and research.

· On one hand, *cooperation* which integrates several aspects such as the simplification of the " institutional jackstraws ", budgetary sincerity, partnership with companies, participation of regions and communities, big universities, international partnerships, development of the digital technology or the link between high schools and universities. So many elements aiming at the same objective : strengthening the cooperation between the actors.

· On the other hand, the *social responsibility of higher education and research* concerning the working conditions of staff (including resorption of precarious employment), equality between women and men, living conditions and studies for students, disability or the sharing of scientific and technical culture.

Next steps : December 2012 : the Chair of the Steering Committee and the General Rapporteur shall submit a report summarizing the opinions and proposals of the contributors of the National Consultation to the French President.

In early 2013, following the proposals of the National Consultation, and after decision of the Minister, the necessary legislation will be presented to Parliament.

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 office@wbc-inco.net until December 1, 2012.

2 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

CROATIA:

1- The bilateral selection committee for the “Cogito” (Hubert Curien partnership) programme will meet, December 6th, in Paris, to select 15 new projects out of 37, in all scientific fields, to be financed during the period 2013-2014.

2- The Agreement between the Croatian Academy of science and arts and French Academy of science was signed on 19th April 2012 in Zagreb, by Mrs Catherine Brechignac, the perpetual secretary of the French Academy and Zvonko Kusic, president of the Croatian Academy. In the framework of this agreement, the two sides will agree upon the common projects in the future. The first one, the symposium about the Croatian science and culture, will take a place on December the 6th and 7th, 2012, in Paris, in the framework of the Cultural Croatian festival in France.

3- The French Embassy and the Institute “Rudjer Boskovic” have launched the call for the scholarships for the young scientists working in the fields of nanosciences, marine research and molecular biology. 8 students working on their PhD thesis have been selected for the scholarships of 1 month in France. The financing will be provided on the 50 – 50 % basis.

4- The French Embassy scholarships has been offered to 9 students (2 Master degree, 7 PhD) for studies and to 8 students for training (1 to 3 months).

5- Meeting between the CNRS and the Ministry (MSTD) on the December 5th to redefine and to highlight the scientific priorities of their agreement.

SERBIA

1) The new call for proposals cofinanced by CNRS and Serbian Ministry for education and science has been closed on September 2012. Evaluation is in progress. 19 proposals received. The selection committee will be held beginning of 2013. Currently, 7 high-level projects are financed by this program.

2) The Institut français de Serbie has confirmed this year the priority given to young scientists for the allocation of scholarships for masters and PhDs :

- for 2012-2013, 11 Serbian students will get a scholarship (from 10 to 12 months) to go to France for Master 2 programs (40 % of the total of scholarships)

- 8 scholarships will be allocated for PhDs in co-tutelle in the field of sciences out of them 5 new scholarships

- scholarships for shorter stays (1 or 2 months) are also allocated for young scientists (about 4 in 2012)

3) The Institut français de Serbie is providing support to international scientific seminars and summer schools taking place in Serbia

In 2012, at least 3 has seminars been supported (physics of particles, economic sciences and philosophy)

4) The Institut français de Serbie has developed new actions of cooperation for promotion of science

- The Institut français de Serbie provides support to the implementation in Serbia of the program “La Main à la pâte” (“Ruka u testu” in serbian). The program is promoting a new pedagogical approach of sciences for children, based on experimentation and learning by doing.

- The Institut français de Serbie is also a faithful partner of the Festival of science of Belgrade, which gathered at least 31 000 visitors recently.

- The Institut Français has a partnership with the Institute of Molecular Genetics and Genetic Engineering for two main events : the “DNA Day” (in June) and the “Night of researchers” (in September).

- The French Institute is presenting an exhibition on Marie Skłodowska Curie.