

JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE – EC

PROGRESS REPORT¹

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (June 2013 / Budva till December 2013 / Zagreb)

1 Policy actions

(e.g. essential changes in the political authorities, administrative bodies, agencies, institutions, personnel, development/launch of new national funding programmes, etc.)

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

Enlargement Countries

22nd October 2013 – Petten (NL)

Study Visit of the Delegation from Enlargement and Integration Countries to the JRC Institute for Energy and Transport

On 22nd October 2013 a Study Visit of the Delegation from Enlargement and Integration Countries visited the JRC IET in Petten. There were 9 participants coming from WBC: ME, MK, BA, AL, TR, representing scientific organisation and/or national policy making bodies.

The objective of this visit was in the context of strengthening of cooperation between JRC and the Enlargement countries with regard to the preparation and implementation of the JRC Enlargement and Integration Action (E&IA). Energy was one of the priority areas for these countries as identified during the Third Meeting with the E&IA NCPs which took place in Brussels on 14th March 2013.

The programme included presentations on Energy and transport technology Assessment, Energy sources, infrastructures and security of supply, Nuclear Safety activities at the IET, Hydrogen – storage, use and safety, Renewable energies and Energy efficiencies.. Moreover, several IET facilities have been visited by participants in small groups (hydrogen storage & sensor testing, fuel cells testing, nuclear materials testing, energy security laboratory, interactive communication tools).

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.

13th -14th November 2013 – Ispra (IT)

Study Visit of the Delegation from Enlargement and Integration Countries to the JRC Ispra Site – Institute for Environment and Sustainability (IES) and Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen (IPSC)

On 13th and 14th November 2013 a Study Visit of the Delegation from Enlargement and Integration Countries visited the JRC Ispra Site in Italy. There were **9 participants** coming from WBC: ME, MK, BA, AL, TR, representing scientific organisation and/or national policy making bodies. The participants nominated by JRC NCPs have a background in Forestry, Civil Protection and Mechanical Engineering.

The general aim of E&IA study visits is always to strengthen cooperation between JRC and the Enlargement countries with regard to the preparation and implementation of the JRC Enlargement and Integration Action (E&IA).

As for the specific aim of this particular visit, it was to allow the participants to deepen their knowledge on research and projects carried out by JRC Ispra researchers and scientists in the field of crisis management and to raise the awareness and knowledge on how these activities, studies, scientific and technical methods and techniques underpin the EU policy implementation.

The programme of the two days of visit included presentations on General activities in the field of European Forestry, European Forest Fire Information, European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme, European Flood Awareness System, Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System.

During the two days of visit, participants have also visited several Ispra Site facilities such as: European Reference Laboratory for Air Pollution, European Laboratory for Structural Assessment, European Crisis Management Laboratory.

19th November 2013 – Braga (PT)

Joint workshop of the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL) and the JRC

On 19 November 2013, the JRC co-organized with the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL) a joint workshop on nanotechnology held at the INL's premises in Braga, Portugal. The INL was created following a joint decision of the Portuguese and Spanish governments in 2005 and is fully operational since 2011. It offers state of the art facilities for nanotechnology research and aims to attract world-leading scientists to work in its premises. At the moment, it only counts about 100 staff while the target is to eventually employ 400 persons.

The workshop gathered a total of 47 participants. In order to help INL increase its visibility and attract new staff, the **JRC invited 13 scientists for the EU enlargement countries to participate in the workshop** (financed in the frame its Enlargement and Integration Action), as well as 4 other scientists appointed by the JRC National Contact Points.

INL presented: Diagnostics/Analyte detection/Biosensor platforms, PCR methods for the detection of allergenic ingredients, Nanoparticles for food and biomedical applications, Design and characterization of Biointerfaces

JRC presented: General overview of food related activities at IRMM (Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements), Regulatory aspects of nanomaterials,

- Detection of nano silver in complex matrices
- Challenges in implementation of nanomaterials definition
- Challenges in nanomaterials in vitro testing
- "Omics" technologies and nanomaterials biological effects

Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy

On 28th October in Bucharest in the frame of the Annual Forum of the Danube Strategy, JRC has launched a new Project within the Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy Initiative. The Project "Danube Innovation Partnership" will address the issue of the innovation gap in the Danube Region of which was raised as a critical point at the high-level event in Bratislava.

As shown by the latest Innovation Union Scoreboard, the gap between the innovation leaders and the other countries of the Region is widening. Less advanced countries could clearly benefit from the experience and skills accumulated over the years in the most innovative ones. Therefore, JRC has created a new "Danube Innovation Partnership" (or "DIP") which will foster the cooperation and exchange of experience in the Danube Region and thereby help to improve the overall efficiency of the Research and Innovation ecosystems in the area. The DIP will gather all relevant innovation stakeholders to design and implement actions to accelerate innovation and technology transfer. JRC can bring in the useful expertise that has gained while running the "Technology Transfer Offices" Circle as well as the contacts with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the European Investment Fund (EIF).

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 4 months

(Optional personal opinion)

The following activities will be organized in the next six months:

E&I Action 2014

Within the E&I Initiative, workshops, training courses and studies are planned in specialized areas for Scientific & Technical support to EU policies, which correspond to well-established JRC core competencies and to the priorities identified together with the target countries

The workshops are set up to allow competent organisations in the new Member States, Candidate Countries, Potential Candidate Countries, FP7 Associated Countries, and on an ad-hoc basis European Neighbourhood Policy Countries and Russia to study the scientific and technical methods and techniques underpinning EU policy implementation

For 2014 more than 50 workshops and advanced trainings have been approved in the fields of Food security, Smart Grids, Eco-Innovation, Nuclear Safety and Security, Agriculture, Climate change, renewable energies and energy efficiency, and health. The workshops have been published on the JRC website.

Enlargement Countries

At the end of January a workshop on hydropower energy, organised together with TUBITAK and the support of the Norwegian SINTEF Energy SA. The objective of this workshop is to exchange experiences and ambitions on national and European level for the use of hydro power for balancing other renewables. Emphasis will be put on 1) New large-scale hydro projects, 2) Optimization of reservoir handling in high-RES systems, 3) Political, regulatory and environmental challenges for increased use of hydro as balancing source.

In March 2014 the Annual Meeting with Enlargement NCPs will take place in JRC Ispra Site in Italy.

TUBITAK MoU

In the frame of the implementation of the MoU signed by JRC with TUBITAK (TR) a **new call for hosting Turkish Ph.D. and post-docs students** at JRC Institutes will be launched in January 2014.

Scientific Support to the Danube Strategy

On **30 January 2014** JRC and DG REGIO organise the workshop "**Mobilising EU instruments for the financial design of transnational R&I projects in the Danube Region**" in Budapest.

The aim is to discuss which existing and new EU funded instruments could contribute to a more effective cross border and transnational cooperation and how this could be most efficiently done – also by reaching the best possible synergies between the existing sources - in the planning phase of EU funded regional development programmes for the period 2014-2020.

The event will gather around 50/60 high level policy makers from the national and regional ESIF Managing Authorities of the Danube area EU Member States and from the non-EU Danube countries (IPA and ENPI authorities).

As an outcome of the event, a JRC "S3 policy brief" will be published and made available for national and regional authorities and RIS3 stakeholders, highlighting the upcoming possibilities and practices offered by the new EU Cohesion Policy Regulations to enhance the implementation of concrete funding mechanisms supporting cross-border and trans-national cooperation, and the subsequent policy implications.