

## Germany

### PROGRESS REPORT<sup>1</sup>

#### on recent developments regarding research and innovation cooperation in/with Western Balkans (Period: June 2016 – June 2017)<sup>2</sup>

#### 1 Policy actions and legislative initiatives (legal and strategic framework)

- In February 2017 a comprehensive update of the Initiative “Strengthening Germany’s role in the global knowledge society – Strategy of the Federal Government for the Internationalization of Science and Research” (originally launched in 2008) was launched. Implementation is continuously ongoing. The text (in German and English) can be found under: <https://www.bmbf.de/en/internationalization-strategy-2209.html>.
- The New High-Tech Strategy 2020 for Germany was initially presented in 2015. It introduced the goals and priorities for the fields of innovation in Germany. As an advisory group on innovation policy, the High-Tech Forum gives guidance on the development of the Federal Government’s current High-Tech Strategy and more broadly on Germany’s research and innovation policy. In May 2017 the High-Tech Forum published their recommendations for the further development of the High-Tech Strategy on key innovation policy which can be found under <http://www.hightech-forum.de/en/>

#### 2 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

##### 2.1 BMBF call on cooperation with CESEER (Central European and South East European Region)

The call entitled “International Cooperation in Education and Research - Central, Eastern and South Eastern European Region” initially launched by November 3, 2014 BMBF is still open until December 29, 2017. It addresses – among others – all Western Balkan countries with funds for preparatory projects in the field of applied research, development and education in order to support project applications under Horizon 2020 and other research related EU

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<sup>1</sup> **Important Note:** The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meeting of the Steering Platform on Research and Innovation for the Western Balkans and will be made available for the participants. Based on this report, please prepare one PowerPoint slide, which will be used during the meeting to present the main topics of the progress report to all SP members. Please send the report and the PowerPoint slide by September 1, 2017 to Ms. Ines Marinkovic at [marinkovic@zsi.at](mailto:marinkovic@zsi.at).

<sup>2</sup> The last Steering Platform was held in Sarajevo on June 7, 2016. All related information is also available online here: <https://wbc-rti.info/object/news/15251>



programmes as well as Eurostars Programme and IPA. A follow-up programme is under preparation to be launched in January 2018.

The electronic version of the call can be found in German under <http://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/25110.php> and in English under <http://www.internationales-buero.de/en/7101.php>.

## 2.2 2<sup>nd</sup> German Call for innovative R&D networks with partners in the Danube States:

16 projects of the 2<sup>nd</sup> German Danube call for proposals of the BMBF (launched in 2015) took up their work in spring 2017. The call addresses the Danube region countries including also some Western Balkan countries (Serbia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Montenegro). Funding phase 1 serves to establish a new R&D network or to develop an existing R&D network to include partners from the Danube States. In phase 2, funding is provided to launch specific joint research projects. Ministries and funding agencies from Hungary, Moldova and Serbia are co-financing partners. BMBF carried out the formal and thematic assessment of proposals as the lead agency. The previous call (1<sup>st</sup> German Danube call) is currently being evaluated.

## 2.3 Participation in Danube-INCO.NET and activities under the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

One of the main achievements of the Inco project was the establishment of the Danube Funding Coordination Network (DFCN) in cooperation with stakeholders from the EUSDR. The aim is to better align funding mechanisms in the Danube Region. Since its launch in 2016, the DFCN met several times, recently in June 2017. As partners in the FP7 funded project Danube-INCO.NET, BMBF and the Project Management Agency of the German Aerospace Center supported several coordination activities with regard to research policies of the countries from the Danube Region (including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia). Germany is also actively participating in the Steering Group of the Priority Area "Knowledge Society" of the EUSDR.

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

## 3.1 Travelling Workshops on knowledge transfer and capacity building in Western Balkan

In spring and summer 2017, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) contracted German experts to conduct six so-called Travelling Workshops in Albania, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo<sup>3</sup> on knowledge transfer and capacity building in the WBC. The unique workshop concept aimed to broaden the knowledge about technology transfer possibilities in the WBC and addressed stakeholders from all spheres of the innovation cycle, representing politics, academia and industry from the WBC as well as from Germany. The workshops produced a number of proposals for concrete follow-up measures and recommendations for further joint action in each country. The

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<sup>3</sup> 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.



interests of young scientists were explicitly taken into account. Currently the findings and the conclusions of these events are being discussed.

### 3.2. BMBF delegation visit to Belgrade, Serbia on January 31 – February 3, 2017

As a fact-finding mission, this visit dealt with preparing the ground for the first German-Serbian cluster initiative. The German delegation met with representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and with the Ministry of Economy. During intense discussions with further innovation and cluster stakeholder in Serbia (i.e. the Serbian Chamber of Commerce, the Science Technology Park Belgrade etc.), the current situation as well as the potential and the specific need for joint cluster projects was analysed. Next steps were agreed on, and a first draft of a joint call text was prepared and circulated.

### 3.3 Studies: Bibliometric Study by Fraunhofer institute ISI, and Fact -Finding mission to the WBC by TU Hamburg-Harburg

The BMBF has launched two studies to analyse the research and innovation systems in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia to receive input for potential future activities. The results of the two studies were presented and discussed at an expert's meeting at the BMBF in Bonn in July 2016. The results constituted the basis for the Travelling Workshops on knowledge transfer and capacity building in the WBC outlined under 3.1.

## 4 Outlook and perspectives

A follow-up programme to the BMBF call on cooperation with CESEER is currently under preparation. The launch is foreseen for January 2018.

As outlined at 3.2 Germany and Serbia are in the process of developing a first German-Serbian cluster initiative.

## 5 Other relevant information related to Research and Innovation cooperation in/with Western Balkan economies)

Internet Platform for information on the German research system and landscape: "Research in Germany" (<http://www.research-in-germany.de/52/home.html>). The portal provides an overview of the research and funding opportunities (also for foreigners) in Germany. It also delivers the latest science and research news from Germany and upcoming events.