

WBC-RTI.info Newsletter



MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE
WESTERN BALKANS STEERING PLATFORMS
ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING & RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
02 DECEMBER 2020



The Western Balkan Six pledged to increase their support for research, innovation, education, training and culture at the *Ministerial Meeting of the Western Balkans Platforms on Education and Training & Research and Innovation* with Commissioner Mariya Gabriel and top European Commission officials on Wednesday 2 December.

During the meeting, Commissioner Gabriel presented her vision and new narrative for the Western Balkans: the 'Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport', a comprehensive, long-term cooperation strategy of the European Union and the Western Balkans. Ministers of research, innovation, education and culture from the Western Balkans took part in the meeting and exchanged views and experiences. All of them committed to increasing their support for these sectors, and backed the various EU programmes aimed at improving cross-border cooperation in these fields. The Ministers expressed their firm backing for the proposed 'Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport', a positive and forward-looking vision for all.

Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, said the "Western Balkans Agenda on Innovation, Research, Education, Culture, Youth and Sport" should provide opportunities to students, researchers, innovators and cultural operators so that they access new markets, become more competitive and build sustainable prosperity." "A deep innovation agenda will be essential for enhancing human capital development as well as the development of a sustainable innovation ecosystem," she said. "Our ambition is to promote inclusive and high-quality education and training systems, with a view to offering new opportunities for young people in the regions."

Commissioner Gabriel further emphasized that investments in education, innovation and research would unlock talents in the region, which would be invaluable for the green and digital transitions across the whole of Europe. "This innovation agenda aims to bring the Western Balkans closer to the European Union, and the young generation will be the focus of our work. We really need to provide them support and tell them we can work together to realize their

ideas, their projects and their potential,” she further added. “All the tools are at our disposal to make our common innovation a success story. Let’s join forces and work on it.”

Thomas Rachel, Germany’s Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Education and Research - representing the EU Council Presidency - said the coronavirus crisis had shown how important investments in research, innovation and technology are. “No economy can solve the major challenges of our time on its own. We need European and international cooperation on science and research in order to combat the coronavirus pandemic and man-made climate change,” he said. He stressed that researchers from the Western Balkans are already well integrated into the European research community, and he said that next year the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research will provide funding for 14 projects with all six Western Balkans partners.

The annual Ministerial meeting is a forum of exchange between Western Balkans ministers, the European Commission and EU Member States. It gathers ministers responsible for Innovation, Research, Education and Culture from the Western Balkans. The Western Balkan partners have increased their participation in Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ in recent years, and are currently aiming at associating with Horizon Europe. They also all have strong cooperation potential in research and innovation systems. This is crucial, as the integration of the Western Balkans research and innovation frameworks into the European Research Area is important step forward on their European path.

• NEWS & DOCUMENTS

- **[\[EVENT REVIEW\] - MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN BALKANS PLATFORMS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING & RESEARCH AND INNOVATION](#)**
The Ministerial Meeting of the Western Balkans Platforms on Education and Training & Research and Innovation took place on 2 December 2020 from 9:00 to 16:30 and was hosted by the European Commission...
- **[\[BACKGROUND INFORMATION\] - MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN BALKANS PLATFORMS ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING & RESEARCH AND INNOVATION](#)**
In 2020 we commemorate the 17th anniversary of the foundations for the ongoing relations between the European Union and the economies of the Western Balkans laid...
- **[COST PARTICIPATION LEVELS FROM WB RESEARCHERS IN THE PERIOD 2014 - 2019](#)**
The Western Balkans are all part of the COST community. This short presentation provides figures and trends related to the number of individual researchers active in the COST initiatives. ...
- **[A STRATEGIC FORESIGHT INITIATIVE FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS](#)**
COVID-19 has caused major disruptions to the Western Balkan economies and the consequences are evident in all parts of society. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are struggling hard and looking...
- **[INFOGRAPHIC - THE WESTERN BALKANS IN HORIZON 2020 \(NOVEMBER 2020, WITH TRANSLATIONS\)](#)**
This infographic was recently released to inform on developments related to the funding of Western Balkan research projects within Horizon 2020. Funding of Western Balkan research projects...
- **[INTERVIEW WITH MS SIGNE RATSO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: OPEN INNOVATION & CHIEF NEGOTIATOR FOR THE ASSOCIATION DG RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, EUROPEAN COMMISSION](#)**

The Western Balkans Agenda is expected to set out a new narrative for the region and to provide a forward-looking vision for all citizens, particularly for the youth. Can you tell us more about this? ...

- **POST EVENT VIDEO - HIGHLIGHTS**



WB Success Stories

- **CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**
Agriculture is facing enormous challenges today. Not only does it have to provide enough safe and healthy food for the ever-increasing Earth's population, it is also expected to offer alternatives to ...
- **CRAFTING EUROPE IN THE BRONZE AGE AND TODAY (CRAFTER)**
CRAFTER aimed at reviving modern-day artisanship by drawing inspiration from pottery traditions of four of the most remarkable Bronze Age societies of Europe: El Argar (south-eastern Spain), Únětice (...)
- **EIT RAW MATERIALS - WB RELATED ACTIVITIES**
The EIT Raw Materials aims at turning the EU raw material sector into major strength focusing on the metallic and mineral raw materials along the entire value chain. EIT Raw Materials is well established...
- **HERITAGE HUBS**
Heritage Hubs was a two-year project related to the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. Heritage Hubs brought together 10-16-year...
- **HUB FOR EXCHANGE OF MUSIC INNOVATION IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE**
HEMI aims to provide expertise, consultancy and offer training modules to music professionals in each country of CSEE region, answering to the current and future needs of the sector in the region but ...
- **IMARECULTURE - ADVANCED VR, IMMERSIVE SERIOUS GAMES AND AUGMENTED REALITY AS TOOLS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND ACCESS TO EUROPEAN UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE**
The project's i-MareCulture scope is to raise public awareness of European identity by focusing in maritime cultural heritage, which by default bridges different civilizations. In particular, i-MareCulture...
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF COST-OPTIMIZED CHILDHOOD VISION AND HEARING SCREENING PROGRAMMES IN MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES IN EUROPE**

Screening for vision and hearing disorders in children has shown to be highly effective. EU-directive 16620/11 invites EU-member states to give priority to such screening programmes. Early detection and...

- **[INNOFEIT - CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND INNOVATIONS](#)**
Having recognized the need for more tight cooperation between the academia and the industry, the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEEIT), as a part of the Ss. Cyril and ...
- **[I-PORTUNUS TRIAL A MOBILITY SCHEME FOR ARTISTS AND CULTURE PROFESSIONALS](#)**
i-Portunus is a short-term pilot project, selected and funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, to trial a mobility scheme for artists and culture professionals.
- **[MOST - THE COMPLEX STRATEGY TO DEVELOP THE BALKAN WORLD MUSIC SCENE](#)**
Project 'MOST' aims to improve the world music market of the Balkans by a complex strategy including audience development, professional training, export support, mobility of artists and professionals, ...
- **[READING BALKANS: BORDERS VS. FRONTIERS](#)**
Reading Balkans: Borders vs. Frontiers is a continuation of the project Reading Balkans that was supported by Creative Europe in 2017.
- **[STORIES BEHIND CITIES \(NOVI SAD, RIJEKA AND TIMISOARA\)](#)**
Stories, narratives, and storytelling are central aspects of all cultures. Stories provide people with a sense of history, a sense of community, a sense of generations, a sensitivity to oral language ...
- **[TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE WESTERN BALKANS \(EU4TECH\)](#)**
This initiative supports and strengthens the technology transfer and innovation ecosystem in the countries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the Former Yugoslav Republic...
- **[THE SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES](#)**
The South East European International Institute for Sustainable Technologies (SEEIIST) proposed in late 2016 by Prof. Herwig Schopper, a former Director General of CERN and initiator of the international...
- **[YOUNG EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS \(YEAS\)](#)**
Five Ambassadors and five Attachés from across the Western Balkans coming from different backgrounds, but all are interested in learning about the European Union's values, connecting and engaging with...

[FIND MORE RELATED ARTICLES](#)

WESTERN BALKANS AGENDA

ON INNOVATION, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT

Fostering the stability and prosperity of the Western Balkan region remains a key priority for the EU, taking into account the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic which is hitting hard the Western Balkan societies and economies. As outlined in the European Commission priorities, green transition, digital transformation and an economy that works for people are crucial for relaunching and modernising the economies of the Western Balkans, helping to create jobs and growth, addressing the long-standing challenges faced by young people

in the region such as limited job prospects, and inequality. Research, innovation, education and culture are essential drivers in this process...

[READ MORE](#)

FURTHER SELECTED ARTICLES

NEWS

- Posted on December 14, 2020
[COMMISSION WELCOMES POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME](#)
The Commission has welcomed the political agreement reached between the European Parliament and EU Member States on the new Erasmus+ Programme (2021-2027). Trilogue negotiations have now concluded, pending...
- Posted on December 14, 2020
[COMMISSION WELCOMES POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON HORIZON EUROPE, THE NEXT EU RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME](#)
The Commission welcomes the political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on Horizon Europe, the largest transnational programme ever supporting research and innovation. The new ...
- Posted on December 8, 2020
[EU R&D EXPENDITURE AT 2.19% OF GDP IN 2019](#)
On 27 November 2020, EUROSTAT published the latest figures on Research & Development expenditure in 2019. R&D expenditure and intensity are two of the key indicators used to monitor resources ...
- Posted on December 8, 2020
[NETWORK OF YOUNG EUROPEAN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES REACTS TO ERA COMMUNICATION](#)
The Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN) published its reaction to the Commission's Communication "A New ERA for Research and Innovation".
- Posted on December 8, 2020
[NEW EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA: COUNCIL ADOPTS CONCLUSIONS](#)
The Council has adopted a set of conclusions on a major overhaul of the European Research Area (ERA) in the years to come. These conclusions, together with the Commission communication entitled "A new...
- Posted on December 2, 2020
[\[EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT\] THIRD EUROPEAN EDUCATION SUMMIT: DIGITAL EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION](#)
Building Resilience in the European Education Area The coronavirus pandemic has caused widespread disruption to education and training provision by schools, higher education institutions...
- Posted on December 2, 2020
[EU BUDGET: EUROPEAN COMMISSION WELCOMES AGREEMENT ON €1.8 TRILLION PACKAGE TO HELP BUILD GREENER, MORE DIGITAL AND MORE RESILIENT EUROPE](#)
The European Commission has today welcomed the agreement between the European Parliament and EU Member States in the Council on Europe's next long-term budget and NextGenerationEU, the temporary recovery...
- Posted on November 29, 2020
[COMMISSION STARTS OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING PLATFORM](#)

On 26 November 2020, the European Commission announced that its Open Access publishing platform 'Open Research Europe' would be ready to accept submissions.

- Posted on November 26, 2020
EUROPEAN UNION TO PROVIDE UP TO €40 MILLION IN BUDGET SUPPORT TO MONTENEGRO WITH A FIRST PAYMENT OF €28 MILLION
The European Commission has paid a first instalment of €28 million in non-repayable financial aid to Montenegro. This important budget support assistance is intended for mitigating the economic fallout...
- Posted on November 26, 2020
COVID-19. HOW EU DELEGATIONS ARE RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC: THE CASE OF ALBANIA
The COVID-19 crisis has hit the Albanian economy severely, with a sharp decrease in tax revenue, an upsurge in debt, and loss of jobs. While still supporting the country's recovery from the 2019 earthquake...
- Posted on November 17, 2020
SFIC CALLS FOR A STRONG INTEGRATION OF INTERNATIONAL STI COOPERATION IN THE NEW EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA
On 9 November 2020, SFIC launched its recent opinion on a "New European Research Area". Recalling the activities of the last decade and referring to the Commission Communication of 30 September 2020, ...
- Posted on November 12, 2020
EUROPEAN UNION : EIB PRESIDENT WERNER HOYER WELCOMES WESTERN BALKANS' COMMITMENTS TO THE GREEN AGENDA AT THE BERLIN PROCESS SUMMIT AND EXPRESSES EIB'S SUPPORT
The EU bank welcomes commitments made by the Western Balkans countries to roll out the Green Agenda and develop a common regional market. The EIB expressed support for the Economic and Investment...
- Posted on November 12, 2020
HEAL URGES REGIONAL LEADERS TO IMPLEMENT GREEN AGENDA FOR WESTERN BALKANS
Non-profit organization Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) has urged heads of states of the Western Balkans to adopt and implement the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans in order to prevent ill ...
- Posted on November 12, 2020
STATE LEADERS ENDORSE GREEN AGENDA FOR WESTERN BALKANS AT SOFIA SUMMIT
Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov said countries in Southeastern Europe that intend to join the European Union agreed with its Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. The summit was organized in Sofia...
- Posted on November 9, 2020
COMMISSIONERS VÁRHELYI AND GABRIEL AT THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTERS MEETING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE BERLIN PROCESS AHEAD OF THE SOFIA SUMMIT
Today, Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Olivér Várhelyi, and Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Mariya Gabriel, are participating by videoconference in...

EVENTS

- January 23-24, 2021, Republic of North Macedonia
2020 AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR IN PANDEMIC TIMES: ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES AND RESEARCH PRACTICES FROM THE BALKANS
Department for Balkan, Slavic and oriental studies, University of ...
- January 28, 2021 | virtual, OTHER
DANUBE GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE: "TOWARDS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION WITH THE SDGS"
The Danube Governance Conference is all about European integration with the SDGs and how the local level finds responses to global challenges.
- February 22-25, 2021 | virtual, OTHER
EU INDUSTRY WEEK 2021

Over the past years, the European Commission has organised EU Industry Days as an opportunity for stakeholders and citizens from all over Europe to establish a strong dialogue on the future of European...

- March 22, 2021 | Vienna, Austria
EUREKA 35 YEARS CELEBRATION
This Austrian Chair event will take place on 22 March 2021 at the Hofburg in Vienna.
- April 26-29, 2021 | Marseille, France
EUBCE 2021 - 29TH BIOMASS CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
EUBCE is the largest biomass conference and exhibition in the world. Each year, EUBCE brings together the greatest minds and latest advancements in biomass, with the aim of accelerating research and...
- May 18-20, 2021 | Graz, Austria
GLOBAL INNOVATION SUMMIT 2021
The Innovation Summit will take place on 18-20 May 2021 in Graz, Styria.
- June 9-11, 2021 | Munich, Germany
THE SMARTER E EUROPE
Renewable energy is more than just an alternative to conventional energy sources. This is where The smarter E Europe comes in, as the most important innovation hub for new energy solutions, dedicating...
- September 8-9, 2021 | Roma Eventi, Pontifical Gregorian University, Italy
ICSD 2021 : 9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 8 - 9 SEPTEMBER ROME, ITALY
European Center of Sustainable Development in collaboration with Canadian Institute of Technology will organize the 9th ICSD 2021 International Conference on Sustainable Development...

CALLS

- Deadline: December 20, 2020
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:THE GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR EAST AND SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN STUDIES AT UNIVERSITÄT REGENSBURG
The Graduate School for East and Southeast European Studies will admit its doctoral candidates to its program beginning April 1st, 2021.
- Deadline: December 31, 2020
APPLY NOW FOR COVID-19 FAST TRACK ACCESS
In order to facilitate the research on the COVID-19, CERIC has set up a dedicated Fast Track Access to a selected number of instruments.
- Deadline: December 31, 2020
CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - PILOT LIVING LABS AT THE JRC
Living labs are a modern way of creating user-centred environments that enable innovation, co-creation and start-up development. Living labs integrate research and innovation processes in real life communities...
- Deadline: December 31, 2020
JOIN THE S3 PLATFORM - HOW CAN REGIONS AND COUNTRIES DO IT?
Established in 2011 following the Communication 'Regional Policy contributing to smart growth in Europe 2020', the role of the S3 Platform is to provide information, methodologies, expertise...
- Deadline: January 8, 2021
CALL FOR PROPOSAL: NANOBIO TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY
The Nanobiotechnology Laboratory features state-of-the-art equipped facilities designed to foster interdisciplinary studies. A special emphasis lies on characterisation of nanomaterials, micro-nanoplastics...
- Deadline: January 26, 2021
THE GREEN DEAL CALL

The Green Deal call will mobilise research and innovation to foster a just and sustainable societal transition aiming at 'leaving nobody behind'. Projects are expected to deliver tangible and visible ...

- Deadline: February 1, 2021
ERNST MACH GRANT - WORLDWIDE
The Ernst Mach Grant worldwide is targeted at young researchers from all disciplines and countries (except Austria) who wish to pursue a research project in Austria. Target group: young researchers...
- Deadline: June 1, 2021
CALL FOR PROJECT PEER REVIEWERS - SCIENCE FUND OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
The Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia (SFRS), a state institution providing grants to researchers in Serbia, is looking for international experts in order to ensure an objective, high-quality two...
- Deadline: September 30, 2023
EASI GUARANTEE INSTRUMENT
The EIF's response measures to the COVID-19 pandemic (as at 24 July 2020).

[FIND MORE ARTICLES](#)



We are coming to the close of such a tumultuous year and this holiday season is unlike any other. Never before the hopes towards the role of science in and for the society and the need for coordinated joint actions in tackling the common challenges have

been so high. We at WBC.RTI.info would like to thank you for your support throughout this period and wish you endurance, strength, health, and as much happiness as these times can allow!

The WBC-RTI.info platform acts as a source of high quality targeted information on research, technology and innovation in/with/for the Western Balkan countries (WBCs). The Platform supports the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and is funded by the European Commission (contract №30-CE-0838742/00-87). Access to the WBC-RTI.info platform is free of charge. The Platform will be regularly updated in the upcoming year, with particular focus on one selected theme per month. If you would like to suggest a research topic or promote your R&I project or your research results to over 11,000 interested researchers and policy makers in the Western Balkans and Europe-wide, or if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at office@wbc-rti.info.

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