



Editorial

Dear readers,

the WBC-INCO.NET journal autumn 2008 reports on major issues such as

- **Framework Programme 7**, which is becoming more and more popular in the region. Currently several networking and training activities are taking place (also with the support of WBC-INCO.NET), several calls are open and researchers from the region are hopefully continuing to work for their successful integration to the European Research Area.
- The creation of **networks** is an important activity in order to reach this integration. The Steering Platform on Research met in Ljubljana in June and will meet in December in Paris, SEE-ERA.NET is consolidating with the aim to launch a new call early 2009, the Task Force Building and Fostering Human Capital is building up a network of networks linking research to education and higher education policy. Reports on the development of these networks are included.
- The Western Balkan countries are taking concrete actions to integrate in the European Research Area. This is confirmed and summarised in the 2008 Progress Reports issued by DG Enlargement as well as in the presented "news from the region". New initiatives are also expected from the newly appointed ministers in the region.
- **Events** are announced, **reports** are presented, and **funding programmes** are introduced. The journal covers a wide range activity reports and announcements, based on the daily announcements at our website www.wbc-inco.net. It invites also all the readers to provide information on their activities in science and research with and for the Western Balkan countries.

Register for our e-mail-updates on <http://www.wbc-inco.net>.

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Imprint

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Co-Chairing the Steering Platform: a Resume from Montenegro

The Steering Platform meeting held in Ljubljana on June 13, 2008 has introduced the good practice of WBC co-chairing. Mira Vukcevic describes the experiences of the Montenegrin Co-Chair on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro.

With Slovenian presidency, Montenegro was the first WBC co-chairing partner. In Montenegrin delegation we deeply hope that the co-chairing in WBCs to the Platform meeting reinforces our readiness to contribute to the maximum possible extent to ERA and proves the commitment of the European Commission (EC) to help the region along their road of progress. Five years ago cooperation within this region and between this region and the rest of Europe hardly existed. Now, the Steering Platform is just one of the joint initiatives that emerged from that time on. During the four month process, the Montenegrin representative from the Ministry of Education and Science was actively involved in the development of the agenda together with the EC representatives and the Slovenian Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. The common effort was to highlight the most actual issues concerning WBCs and the cooperation with WBCs, like the SEE-ERA.NET White Paper and the Joint Action Plan presentation, the possibilities under IPA and the ESFRI-state of play, as well as cooperation opportunities for WBCs under EUREKA. The aspects of the partnership were evident in the frame of the achievements of WBCs during the last five years. The successful beginning of the ERA integration of WBCs by the rapid process of FP7 association was the base for very clear suggestions of further integration possibilities. The possibilities of using the Multi-Beneficiary IPA funds that were discussed at the Steering Platform meeting were strongly supported even in the Science, Higher Education and Policy Forum held in Montenegro in July 2008 organised by UNESCO and the Montenegrin Ministry of Education and Science. The respective visit of Mr. Potocnik to Montenegro and his participation in the forum was the opportunity to elaborate further possibilities of WBCs in FP7 and all the novelties that WBCs might face after the process of association.

What we have learned from our experience is that we all have to plan Steering Platform meetings with much more space for assessment, inputs and conclusions. Additionally, we have learned that the WBCs should neglect their almost passive role and take the initiative with clear demands towards the Member States concerning their programmes for the cooperation with the WBCs. The needs of the WBCs, even in the participants' list creation, new ideas like regional centers of excellence or large equipment access should be stated in a precise way, but with an active role of the WBCs themselves.

Anyway, regional dialogue meetings within WBC-INCO.NET are our excellent future opportunity for dialogue between ourselves with the scope to define the common goals.

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Cooperation with the Western Balkan Countries from Latvian Perspective

The family of European countries is becoming richer in terms of the number of its members, but most importantly in terms of experience, knowledge, diversity and ideas.

Research and education programmes offered by the European Union to the post-communist countries in the beginning of 1990 were targeted at countries, which had to transform the entire education and science system. Today, EU members and their partners are facing a new turn – it is a creation of networks of partnerships that should enrich all involved parties.

Latvia's involvement in the Communities' programmes is linked to the country's foreign policy priorities. For Latvia, for obvious reasons, the most important partners are post-soviet countries, namely, Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia. But it does not mean that other regions are neglected. The WBC area becomes more and more important for Latvia what can be exemplified by some cases.

In education Latvia has several priorities, but among the most important areas are life-long learning programmes. For small countries with limited human resources and rapid economic growth the ability to establish an educational system, which is flexible, inclusive, open and creative, is a matter of the survival of the nation. The experience, which Latvia has accumulated over the past decade in life-long learning, has become attractive to the FYR of Macedonia and Croatia. These countries expressed their willingness to participate in collaborative projects. Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro are involved in TEMPUS projects. In the area of research relations between the WBCs and Latvia started under the EC's 6th Framework Programme. The leading country was Croatia (participating in 53 projects with Latvia), followed by Bosnia Herzegovina (5), Serbia (5), and Albania (3). There are more joint projects on the way under the 7th Framework Programme.

How can Latvia contribute to the WBCs' research policies? First of all, it is the knowledge about regional co-operations in the research area. It is almost an axiomatic statement that regional co-operation has only positive outcomes. Unfortunately, there are some problems and possible contradictions that should be considered. Secondly, it is the specifics of co-operation among different regions. Inter-regional co-operation quickens its pace and in the future it will have more potential than narrow regional interaction. It means that co-operation and competition will go hand in hand. Thirdly, the expansion of the European Research Area will need participation and contribution from the EU member states and from partner countries as well. Collaboration

between the WBCs and Latvia regarding the ERA will increase the possibility of the representation of regional interests in the project. Fourthly, the experience of EU integration and its impact on the research policy that Latvia gained over almost 20 years. Latvia has gone through this complicated process of learning what kind of opportunities and shortcomings there are. Latvia is ready to share its knowledge with the region of the WBCs.

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Further project examples of cooperation between Western Balkan and Baltic States

Besides Latvia, also Estonia has recognized the advantages of joint research projects with the WBCs.

Joint projects with Estonia are limited but existing, an example is illustrated at the website of the project "Strategies for Public Participation in Management of Transboundary Waters in Countries in Transition: Lake Ohrid and Lake Peipsi Case Studies" (See: http://www.ctc.ee/index.php?menu_id=227&lang_id=2). Projects like this can create long-lasting, sustainable contacts. This year experts from the Estonian partner visited Montenegro and the FYR of Macedonia (in connection with the Global Water Partnership Network activities). Collaboration in research with the University of Tartu as another example includes the area of human genetics and heredity.

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Upcoming Steering Platform Meeting in Paris

The next Steering Platform meeting will be held in Paris, France on December 19, 2008 co-chaired by the French Presidency (Ministry of Education and Research as well as Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the Serbian Ministry of Science and Technological Development and the European Commission.

Participants in the Steering Platform meetings are expected from respective Science Ministries of the EU27, countries associated with the Framework Programme (such as Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, etc.) and the Western Balkan countries. Invitations will be sent to the Steering Platform members and through the Council. After an analysis by all parties of what has been done since the last meeting in June 2008 (in Ljubljana), discussion will centre around the following topics:

- Mobility including discussions on a Young Scientist Programme
- Statistics and S&T indicators: state of play
- IPA and Research

The WBC-INCO.NET project will also present its preliminary results at this event, which will take place at the OECD premises. On December 18, 2008 a "Regional Dialogue Meeting" supported by the WBC-INCO.NET project will take place. The topic of this meeting will mainly be "IPA and research".

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Serbia is Strengthening its Cooperation Links

Serbia is developing its bilateral and multilateral cooperation in S&T

Croatia: The Second Session Joint Commission of Croatia and Serbia has established on October 27-28, 2008 in Zagreb that there have been 45 applications from Serbia and 46 from Croatia respectively, among which 21 projects were accepted for co-financing by both countries. The Joint Commission agreed that the next tender for the submission of projects would be announced by April 1, 2009.

Portugal: Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Science and Technological Development Božidar Djelic met with a delegation of Portugal headed by João Sentieiro, President of the Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Portugal on September 11, 2008. Three key domains of the cooperation between the two countries have been identified at this meeting: energy efficiency, nanotechnology and the food industry. Serbia and Portugal will sign a Cooperation Agreement on Science and Technology by the end of this year.

Spain: Furthermore, Serbia is opening bilateral cooperation with Spain.

China: Minister Djelic and Chinese Ambassador to Serbia Li Guobang agreed that a science and technological agreement between Serbia and China shall be signed in December in Beijing in the course of a visit of a Serbian delegation to China. The priorities in the economic cooperation of the two countries lie in the drawing of Chinese investments, especially in the sector of telecommunications, IT and the car industry.

Japan: State Secretary Mrs. Snezana Pajovic took a part to the Forum Science and Technology in Society in Kyoto, Japan, in October 2008.

Furthermore, Serbia is strengthening its cooperation with international research programmes: it officially requested to join EURATOM, strengthened cooperation with CERN and joins the Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe (PRACE).

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Call for Bilateral Projects Between Italy and Croatia

A new call is launched that shall encourage Italo-Croatian projects in a few specific areas.

Projects had to be submitted in the following priority research areas: Basic Sciences, Life Sciences, Health, ICT, Energy and Environment. Within the framework of the 3rd Executive Programme of Scientific and Technological Co-operation for the years 2009-2010, 14 joint research projects will be admitted for funding. Deadline for submission was October 31, 2008.

LINK *Applicable rules and procedures* ■
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/news/15625.html>

New Ministers in the Region

In the recent months several new ministers have been appointed in the region, they are briefly introduced in the section (in alphabetical order).

Albania

The new Albanian minister Fatos Beja is an experienced politician and at the same time a personality of university background.

He holds a Doctorate in Philology Sciences. From 1971 to 1982, he worked as translator and editor at the Albanian Telegraphic Agency, from 1982 to 1985 he was editor of Archaeology Magazine "Iliria"; between 1985 to 1992 he was employed as scientific collaborator in the Institute of Albanian language and Literature, Academy of Science, the whole time from 1978 till 1991 he was also a lecturer in the University of Tirana. Furthermore, he is an author of university text books, scientific articles and monographs. Before his nomination for Minister of Education and Science he was a vice-president and spokesman of the Albanian parliament and chairman of the Laws' Commission.



Fatos Beja

Serbia

Božidar Đelić, vice-president of the government of Republic of Serbia and minister for Science and Technological Development, was born in 1965 in Belgrade (Serbia). He graduated at leading French business school "Hautes Etudes Commerciales" at the Institute of Political Sciences and obtained his masters degree in financial management in 1991 from Harvard Business School in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

From 1991 till 1992, he was working as consultant of the government of Russia, Romania and Poland for the private and the banking sector. From 1993 till 2000 he was a partner of McKinsey&Company, working as a consultant in the department of strategic management in Paris and in California. As minister of finance and economy in the government of Serbia, in the period of 2001 till 2004 he established strong and competent administration in one of the fastest and the most successful reforms of public finances in countries in transition. From 2005 till 2007 he was a director for Central Europe at Credit Agricole Group. In the period from May till July 2008 he was vice-president of the government of the Republic of Serbia. In the name of Serbia he signed Stabilisation and Association Agreement in Luxemburg on April 29, 2008. The World Economic Forum (DAVOS) recognized his achievements in business and politics by nominating him for the title of "Young World Leader" for the period from 2005 till 2010.



Božidar Đelić

FYR of Macedonia

Pero Stanojanovski, new minister of Education and Science of the FYR of Macedonia holds a degree in electrical engineering from the SS. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.

Through his career he held various positions in the educational as well as the private sector.

He started his career as a member of the professional team, as a mentor-teacher in natural sciences and as the administrator at the experimental teaching project PEKSNAS and later worked as a teacher in information science, mathematics and the study of algorithms. He was also employed in various positions in the private sector.



Pero Stanojanovski

National S&T priority setting

The national priorities of the Western Balkan countries were analysed by the Greek General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT) in the framework of the WBC-INCO.NET project.

The results were presented to the project partners in a workshop and a report, which is available upon request from the project coordinator. The information obtained through questionnaires is briefly summarized in the following article.

The survey concluded that the definition of the national S&T priorities is the outcome of national initiatives involving mainly policy makers and scientific councils, which are involved in this process. Asked about key issues that influenced national S&T priority setting, some common issues such as economic importance, research & technological opportunities and application capacity were stated – with some additional influence of the priorities of the Framework Programmes and in some cases of bilateral cooperation.

The official documents, which describe the national S&T priorities, are:

Albania: For each priority a national document is prepared by experts.

Croatia: Science and technology policy 2006-2010

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: National Programme for S&T Development, 2006-2010; National Strategy for ICT Development 2007-2010; Strategic Plan for 2008-2010 of the Ministry of Education and Science; Laws of Science and Technological Development and Innovation

Montenegro: National Strategy of Scientific Research Activities

Serbia: The Law of the Ministry (through activities of the Ministry of Science), Law of the Ministry of S&R activities and the Strategy of S&T priorities, which is a part of the Law.

National Priorities

The national priorities are shown in the following table:

<p>Albania</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human Science and Albanology ▪ ICT ▪ Environment and Diversity ▪ Agriculture and Food ▪ Health ▪ Materials ▪ Water and Energy 	<p>Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable Growth and EU Integration ▪ Biotechnology ▪ High-Quality Food Production ▪ Water Resources management ▪ Energy Sector ▪ New Materials ▪ Environmental Protection ▪ ICT ▪ Health ▪ Earth Science and Engineering 	<p>Serbia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physics (22 thematic fields) ▪ Chemistry (six thematic fields) ▪ Mathematics and mechanics (21 thematic fields) ▪ Medicine (six thematic fields) ▪ Biology (six thematic fields) ▪ Earth Sciences: Astronomy (seven thematic fields); Geology (six thematic fields); Meteorology (three thematic fields); Geography (seven thematic fields), ▪ Social Sciences (ten thematic fields) ▪ Literature and Language (15 thematic fields) ▪ History (five thematic fields): Archaeology (four thematic fields), Ethnology and Anthropology (three thematic fields), Art History (five thematic fields) and Musicology (two thematic fields) <p>Technological Development, Transfer of Technologies and Innovation System Programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Technological Development:</i> Information technology, Technology materials and chemical technology, Mechanical engineering and software industry, Traffic and Civil Engineering, Biotechnology and Energy Technology Efficiency of Energy, Biotechnology in the agronomic industry, protection and use of waters in Serbia. 2. <i>Transfer of Technologies & Innovation System:</i> establishment of a sustainable bridge between research organizations and industry, based on knowledge, for a more important application of scientific results and the development of research in the economy and to assure methods for a direct transfer of knowledge and technologies into the enterprises. 3. <i>International Science & Technological Cooperation Programme:</i> priorities focused on the integration into the European research area and regional and bilateral cooperation development. 4. <i>Human Resources Development in Science Programme:</i> priorities focused on improving human capacity building and international mobility.
<p>Croatia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fundamental knowledge about mankind and society, necessary for Croatia's national development ▪ development of understanding of humanity, national identity and distinction ▪ preservation of natural wealth and cultural heritage, including research on linguistics ▪ research with the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of the state apparatus and of developing a modern democratic society ▪ understanding and grasping social processes and risks that the new technologies bring, global economic growth, changes in the demographic structure and increased complexity of governing modern societies ▪ research with the purpose of developing national security and positioning Croatia in the international arena ▪ knowledge-driven fundamental research 	<p>Montenegro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ICT ▪ Biotechnology ▪ Renewable Energy Sources ▪ Materials ▪ Tourism ▪ National History ▪ Cultural Heritage ▪ Environment ▪ Infrastructure and Transport 	

Research Priority Setting supported by WBC-INCO.NET

Finding research topics of common interest in ICT and Food/Agriculture

The aim of Work package 2 of the WBC-INCO.NET is to define S&T priorities of mutual interest between EU Member States, EU Accession Countries and the WBCs in a consultation process following a defined methodology. To this end, results from other priority setting activities are being examined and eventually included, as well as the opinion from civil society and industry.

The priority setting is adjusted to the needs and interests of the European Commission Directorates dealing with the FP7 Themes. In parallel, targeted input is provided for the relevant initiatives and programmes run in these directorates as well as for national coordinators of the Framework Programme and Programme committee members from the participating countries.

The first step of Work package 2 is the Development of Methodologies and Guidelines for S&T Priority Setting (Task 2.1). It provides the conceptual basis for the methodology and a practical road map with concrete guidelines for the priority setting implementation in the WBCs. The results compiled have been discussed during a workshop in Bonn on April 10 and 11, 2008 and a final report has been compiled recently. Additionally, during this workshop, the methodology of priority setting used by other relevant initiatives has been presented (Task 2.2): Screening and monitoring of ongoing CSAs (Coordination and Support Actions) and national initiatives. Two projects in the fields

of ICT and Agriculture/Food and their results were presented, including the selected S&T priorities. Furthermore, details on priority setting at national level in each of the WBCs were analysed and presented.

According to Task 2.2 (Dialogue with EC Cooperation Directorates), several interviews with representatives of the European Commission Cooperation directorates have taken place in the timeframe of April until August 2008 (Transport, Health, Security, Energy, Environment, Biotechnology/Agriculture/Food, and ICT).

In WBC-INCO.NET, the themes ICT and Agro Food were chosen for the next steps leading to a further implementation of priority setting (Task 2.4: Organisation of consultation process). Stakeholder seminars are planned for each of the themes, the first ones to be held in autumn/winter 2008 (ICT in Belgrade, and Agriculture/Food in Montenegro). The second phase of stakeholder seminars (in the themes Transport, Health and Environment) is supposed to take place in spring 2009.

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WBC-INCO.NET Training Workshops

Review on the Training Seminars for Research Managers in Belgrade and Sarajevo

In the framework of the WBC-INCO.NET project, the Slovenian Business and Research Association (SBRA) with the help of project partners from Serbia and from Bosnia and Herzegovina organised two training workshops for FP7 Research Managers in Belgrade and Sarajevo on May 8 and 9, 2008.

The training workshops explained benefits and pitfalls of the participation in FP7 and gave hints on project preparation, building of consortia, budgeting, reporting etc, together with funding possibilities and the commercialisation of the project results. The key lecturer in both seminars was Sean McCarthy, Hyperion, leading European expert on RTD Framework Programmes, together with senior representatives of project partners in Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina, who presented their experiences with the EU research programmes. During the two days in Belgrade and Sarajevo, a total of more than 200 representatives from RTD community, business, NGOs, universities and research establishments participated in the lectures.

Upcoming Training Seminar for Research Managers

The next seminar will be organised by SBRA in cooperation with the WBC-INCO.NET partner TUBITAK in Ankara. It will take place in February, more details will be announced soon on the website of the WBC-INCO.NET project. Travel grants for participants from the Western Balkan countries are available to use the opportunity for training and networking. It is envisaged to invite particularly researchers in the sector of "energy research" in order to allow targeted information exchange and networking.

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Training for Financial Managers in all Western Balkan countries

WBC-INCO.NET partners from Bulgaria (Ministry of Education and Science) currently organise one-day training events in all countries of the region to be carried out in the months of September, October and November 2008.

The target groups for the training are:

1. Financial managers from the research organizations; universities and private research organisations; companies, incl. SME's; chambers of commerce; innovative structures; municipalities; NGO's and other relevant structures that have been involved in FP6 and/or FP7 projects as partners and coordinators;
2. NCPs on legal and financial issues
3. Representatives from the Ministries, including financial officers, responsible for research and innovation and involved in the coordination of the EU programmes. The focus of the training is on the calculation of costs, accounting principles, cost statement, audits and other relevant issues.

Topics that will be addressed include:

- a. Preparing the budget when submitting the project proposal
- b. Signing the contract and relevant financial operations including bank transfers and charges
- c. Financial management of the contract
 - Personal costs and time sheets;
 - Financial planning, bookkeeping, cost recording; accounting records
 - Financial reporting
 - Financial certificates
 - Audit

Dates:

Serbia: *September 22, 2008*

Montenegro: *September 26, 2008*

BiH: *October 27, 2008*

Albania: *October 28, 2008*

FYR of Macedonia: *Nov. 17, 2008*

Trainings in Croatia and Kosovo/
UNMIK will be scheduled in *Jan. 2009*

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Results from Different FP7 Calls

Project proposals from the REGPOT-call are currently in negotiation. Proposals received from the third ICT call have already been evaluated.

REGPOT-Call: Projects currently in negotiation

The projects submitted in the REGPOT-2008-1 call earlier this year are currently in negotiation. The news for the Western Balkan countries is quite good with respect to this research activity. Several partnering research organisations from other countries of the region (including Slovenia and Greece) are actively participating in all selected proposals from the Grant Agreement negotiation.

In more detail, the WBCs' participation is as follows:

- Croatia, the FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia submitted 76 eligible proposals in the call, which represent 16.85 %;
- The most important participation by the number of eligible proposals came from Serbia, followed by Croatia;
- In the main list, 7 out of the 32 proposals are coming from above mentioned 4 countries.

The EC's financial contribution to the call is 29 M€.

SOURCE Marita Kayamanidou ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/16110.html>
European Commission, DG Research ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/org/99.html>

- 2.2 Cognitive systems, interaction, robotics (IP, STREP, NoE, CA)
- 4.3 Digital libraries and technology-enhanced learning (IP, STREP, NoE, CA, SA)
- 4.4 Intelligent content and semantics (IP, STREP, NoE, CA, SA)
- 8.4 (FET Proactive) Science of complex systems for socially intelligent ICT (IP, CA)
- 8.5 (FET Proactive) Embodied intelligence (IP, STREP, CA)
- 8.6 (FET Proactive) ICT forever yours (IP, CA)
- 9.2 International cooperation (CA, SA)
- 9.3 Trans-national cooperation between NCPs (CA)

Submission of proposals happened in a single step, i.e. only complete proposals could be submitted. The evaluation of the proposals was also carried out in a single step, with a single group of evaluators being responsible for the complete evaluation of each proposal.

A total of 829 proposals were received directly in response to the call. No proposals were transferred to or from other calls. There were no duplicates or test submissions, thus all 829 received proposals went forward for eligibility checking. Five of the received proposals (1%) were excluded from evaluation for various reasons (ineligible consortium, incomplete proposals or being out of the scope of the call), thus 824 proposals were subject to an evaluation.

Proposals were evaluated between May and June in 2008. The total grant requested by the ICT Call 3 proposals is €2,683m. Following the evaluation by external experts, 307 proposals (37%) were eligible and achieved scores on all criteria above thresholds. These proposals were listed in priority order by each panel. The total grant requested by all the prioritised proposals is €985m. The total indicative budget for the call is €265m.

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3rd Call for Information and Communication Technologies

The third ICT Call, published on December 4, 2007 invited proposals for integrated projects (IP), small and medium scale focused research projects (STREPs), networks of excellence (NoE), coordination actions (CA) and support actions (SA) in eight different areas, as follows (compare workprogramme ICT):

Updated Statistics on WBC participation

		CAPACITIES						COOPERATION												
		Activities of International Cooperation	Regions of Knowledge	Research for the benefit of SMEs	Research Infrastructures	Research Potential	Science in Society	Sum	Energy	Environment (incl. Climate Change)	Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology	General Activities – Annex IV	Health	Information and Communication Technologies	Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials & new Production Techn.	Security	Socio-economic sciences and Humanities	Space	Transport (including Aeronautics)	Total
Albania	# Proposals	12	0	1	1	19	2	35	5	9	5	0	8	0	0	2	18	0	3	50
	Success Rate	20%	–	0%	100%	0%	0%	1.05%	0%	0%	0%	–	50%	–	–	0%	5.56%	–	33.33%	8%
BiH	# Proposals	11	2	2	1	23	1	40	6	6	11	0	7	4	0	2	13	0	4	53
	Success Rate	11.11%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	7.50%	28.57%	0%	16.67%	–	0%	0%	–	0%	0%	–	20%	9.43%
Croatia	# Proposals	11	7	48	10	55	9	140	25	33	48	2	42	35	17	10	46	3	24	285
	Success Rate	21.43%	35.29%	22.22%	60%	12.90%	16.67%	19.29%	20%	15.79%	12.07%	0%	6.67%	13.16%	16.67%	26.67%	4%	66.67%	26.47%	12.98%
FYR of Macedonia	# Proposals	10	0	7	3	46	2	68	10	8	12	1	10	9	5	4	21	1	3	84
	Success Rate	16.67%	–	0%	75%	10.20%	0%	13.24%	50%	0%	7.14%	0%	18.18%	9.09%	14.29%	0%	4.35%	100%	33.33%	14.29%
Montenegro	# Proposals	8	0	2	2	22	1	35	0	5	7	0	5	1	0	2	7	0	2	29
	Success Rate	30%	–	0%	100%	4.55%	100%	20%	–	20%	14.29%	–	0%	0%	–	50%	14.29%	–	0%	13.79%
Serbia	# Proposals	14	3	23	8	132	7	187	17	24	35	0	44	43	6	9	31	1	16	226
	Success Rate	17.39%	0%	5.13%	44.44%	11.69%	25%	11.76%	13.64%	3.23%	18.18%	–	3.92%	14.29%	50%	0%	2.50%	0%	12.50%	10.18%

The table published in the fall/winter 2007 journal (see <http://www.wbc-inco.net/news/2644.html>) was updated in August 2008.

New open calls in 7th Framework Programme

On September 3, 2008 new calls were published in the seventh Framework Programme ("Cooperation" and "Capacities"): Further Information on the Call for Proposals regarding call fiche, work programme and FP7 factsheets can be found on CORDIS. Current deadlines are shown in the table on the right.

SOURCE CORDIS Find A Call ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/link/713.html>

WBC Opportunity: Launch of the FP7 PEOPLE-Call for Re-integration Grants

The Call for the Re-integration Grants (RG) has been launched on October 9, 2008.

In the PEOPLE Work Programme 2009, the European Re-integration Grant (ERG) and the International Re-integration Grant (IRG) have been regrouped under the appellation "Re-integration Grants". Applications can be submitted continuously and will be evaluated and selected at regular intervals (cut-off dates: April 2, 2009, October 8, 2009).

International Reintegration Grants are a possibility for WBCs to receive funding for returning diaspora – experienced researchers who at the time of application must be nationals of an Associated country and who have been active in research in a third country for at least 3 years.

Objectives of the Re-integration Grants

- The ERG, European Re-integration Grant, aims at assisting experienced researchers in the (re)integration into a research career after a trans-national mobility experience within the frame of the Marie Curie Actions (FP7 or previous FPs). The ERG offers the opportunity for experienced researchers, who to capitalize on their experience gained abroad.
- The IRG, International Re-integration Grant, aims to reinforce the attractiveness of Europe by encouraging European researchers, who have carried out research outside Europe for at least three years, to reintegrate in a Member State or an Associated Country.

For more information about the Call, please read in the Call Fiche. You can find more information about the Marie Curie Actions in general in the "Marie Curie R&D Guide" and the "People Work Programme 2009".

LINK People Workprogramme ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/doc/15452.html>
CORDIS Find a Call ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/link/713.html>

COOPERATION	DEADLINES
Health	December 3, 2008
Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology	December 2, 2008 (for biorefinery joint call) and January 15, 2009
Information and Communication Technologies	January 20, 2009
Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and new Production Technologies (biorefinery joint call)	December 2, 2008
Energy	November 25, 2008 and January 29, 2009 (check call documents) and December 2, 2008 (biorefinery joint call)
Environment (including Climate Change)	January 8, 2009 and December 2, 2008 (biorefinery joint call)
Socio-economic sciences and Humanities	January 13, 2009
Space	December 4, 2008
Security	December 4, 2008

IDEAS	DEADLINES
ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grant	November 19, 2008 and December 10, 2008
IDEAS Coordination and Support Action (CSA)	November 12, 2008

PEOPLE	DEADLINES
Marie Curie Reintegration Grants (RG)	Cut off date April 2, 2009, deadline December 31, 2009
Researchers' Night	January 14, 2009

CAPACITIES	DEADLINES
Research for the benefit of SMEs	December 18, 2008 and January 27, 2009 (check call documents)
Regions of Knowledge	January 27, 2009
Research Potential	February 13, 2009
Science in Society	January 13, 2009
Activities of International Cooperation	January 12, 2009

Laboratory Renovated in FP6 Project

Projects funded by the European Commission in FP6 and FP7 show tangible results in the WBCs: upgrading of laboratories is one of the possibilities. A good practice is the FP6 INCO Project "QUPOM-Reinforcing research center for quantum and optical metrology" at the Institute of Physics in Belgrade.

The new laboratory was renovated with resources provided by the framework of the FP6 QUPOM project. As shown on the picture an optical table was purchased by the QUPOM funds, resting on the concrete floor, which itself is separated from the rest of the floor and suspended on pneumatic legs. This has given the laboratory best possible conditions for vibration sensitive measurements, which are rarely found in the region and even beyond.

QUPOM objectives

The objective of QUPOM is to transform the laboratory for optics and lasers into a regional center for non-linear and quantum optics, precision laser spectroscopy and holography. This research is necessary for important applications, primarily in ultra precise metrology, new holographic materials and quantum information. The expected increase in the quality of the research and applications in this field due to QUPOM funding will enable the laboratory to perform a fast spectroscopy with cold atoms. Thus, the level of performance of optical primary standards in Serbia can be increased. The service that is provided to the region through several accredited measurements and time dissemination can be offered at a higher level as well.

The group also looks into quantum interference phenomena during laser-atom interaction that generates sub natural line width, the enhancement of the index of refraction, non-linear magneto-optical effects with applications in a new generation of atomic clocks, standards of length, ultra-precision magnetometry and into communication systems for pulse compression and for optical memories. Furthermore, new holographic materials are developed, using novel applications of holographic methods and materials in biomedicine



and nano-scale patterning as well as optical coherence tomography for accurate measurement of internal dental structures. Moreover, the group develops holographic nanostructures, which are used in photonic crystals.

QUPOM's impact

The most direct impact from QUPOM can be observed in the improved environment, in which the students work. Better knowledge of more advanced technical and technological details associated with quantum optics, ultra precision measurements, holography and photonics will help them in their careers in either academic or industrial jobs. The better-equipped laboratory will facilitate the involvement of students in more challenging work and provide them with a better education. The new center of excellence will be scientifically stronger at the end of a three-year period.

High-tech start-up companies will only be founded by highly educated PhD students in emerging fields of science as this one with many potential high-tech applications. A further impact of QUPOM is the dissemination of knowledge, accumulated during years of QUPOM's duration, to students in Serbia and in the region.

At the end of the project the institute expects to be internationally competitive in the area of both fundamental and applied research in quantum and optical metrology. Furthermore, the group will also be able to contribute in future European projects by other European research laboratories. A further plan is to transform the center into a multi-user facility for multidisciplinary research including bio-physics and medical physics.

LINK *Institute of Physics, Belgrade* ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/org/385.html>

FP6 Project Organises Regional Multidisciplinary Workshop in Bio-medicine

The Regional Multidisciplinary Biomedical Workshop organized under auspices of the FP6 project NEUROIMAGE (<http://files.bio.bg.ac.yu/news/fp6.htm>) will be held in Opatija (Croatia) December 4-7, 2008. The meeting will be co-organized with the Croatian Microscopy Society Molecular Morphology Workshop and participants of the COST Action "Neural Regeneration and Plasticity" (www.nereplas.eu) are invited as well. A selection of papers from the workshop will be published (after peer review) in the Croatian Medical Journal.



The NEUROIMAGE team

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Great news: Bosnia and Herzegovina to join FP7!

As from 1 January 2009 also Bosnia & Herzegovina research entities will be able to participate in FP7 as associated participant.

The Memorandum of Understanding associating B&H to FP7 will be signed in Brussels on November 24, 2008 by Commissioner Potocnik for the European Commission and Minister Novic of Civil Affairs for B&H. This association should increase the research opportunities in the first place for B&H but also at regional level among WBCs and with Member States.

SOURCE *Tania Friedrichs, European Commission DG Research*



Results from the SEE-ERA.NET Accompanying Measures

SEE-ERA.NET has funded accompanying measures aimed at needs of the Western Balkan countries such as the lack of equipment and the need for evaluation and benchmarking in the region.

Herman Potočnik Noordung Award Ceremony

On the occasion of the meeting of the Steering Platform on Research for Western Balkan Countries, which took place in Ljubljana on June 13, participants highlighted the actions and programmes leading to a stronger integration of Western Balkan Countries into the European Research Area.

This integration depends greatly on the modernisation and renewal of the research infrastructure, one of the most urgent needs of all Western Balkan Countries. Therefore, science and research institutions in the region still need international support with regard to the research infrastructure development. In order to raise awareness of this problem in the general public and among relevant stakeholders, the Slovenian Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the SEE-ERA.NET project consortium have launched the HERMAN POTOČNIK NOORDUNG AWARD for donations within the framework of RTD collaboration with Western Balkan Countries.

The essence of this initiative has been to invite potential donors (research and technology organisations, universities, philanthropic organisations, scientific organisations and private companies) from EU and other European countries

to join our activities and donate for the development of infrastructure and research equipment in Western Balkan Countries.

The initiative has resulted in positive echo and response from many addressees. In the course of the HERMAN POTOČNIK NOORDUNG AWARD Ceremony, which was held in Ljubljana City Museum on June 13, 2008, the Slovenian Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, at that time, Mrs Mojca Kucler Dolinar thanked the representatives of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission and the Slovenian company Sava for their donation of research equipment for Western Balkan research institutions.

Some potential donors also suggested extending the period for donations. Thus, the Selection Committee decided to further support the initiative by extending collection of equipment and setting November 30, 2008 as next deadline. We would still like to encourage potential donors to get in touch with the initiative. Details are available on the website: www.investsciencesee.info/infrastructure.html

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SEE-ERA.NET's International Conference on Evaluation and Benchmarking

A systematic approach concerning the different types of R&D evaluation is in the interest of Western Balkan Countries (WBCs). For this reason, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research of Germany and the Ministry of Education and Science of the FYR of Macedonia were jointly organising an International Conference on "Evaluation and Benchmarking of Research Institutions" in Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia on October 8-9, 2008.

This conference contributed to the discussion on approaches and criteria for evaluation and benchmarking of R&D institutions by offering expertise and European standards for a dialogue between the policy makers and the science community in WBCs. The overall aims were to raise awareness of the subject

of R&D evaluation and benchmarking, to introduce European "good practice" and to reach consensus on possible approaches to evaluation and benchmarking in the R&D system to be applied in the WBCs. An underlying objective was to foster the integration of the WBCs into the European Research Area and to contribute to the enlargement process.

As a so-called Accompanying Measure to the Pilot Joint Call for research and networking projects of SEE-ERA.NET, this conference is financed by all 14 countries participating in SEE-ERA.NET.

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New SEE-ERA.NET Coordinator Appointed

Marion Haberfellner was appointed to new coordinator for the SEE-ERA.NET project.

The well-known face of SEE-ERA.NET, Peter Mayr, has already moved to Brussels to work for the European Commission.

Therefore, the Centre for Social Innovation, the coordinating institution of the SEE-ERA.NET project, has appointed a new coordinator. Marion Haberfellner holds a Master in German Literature and Theatre Studies from the University of Vienna. She has previously worked as a lecturer at the German Department of King's College London and other universities in Germany and Bulgaria. Ms Haberfellner gained a second Masters from Birkbeck College London in Contemporary History and Politics with specialisation on the Balkans.

From 2003 to 2008 she worked in Skopje as Austrian educational coordinator on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Science and Kultur-Kontakt Austria. In this function she implemented the projects ECO NET and Tour.reg. The project ECO NET introduced the idea of training firms in the eco-

nomic secondary school in order to allow and encourage pupils to transfer their theoretical knowledge into practice. The project Tour.reg focussed on the modernisation of the tourism training by offering teacher training, equipment and support in the revision of curricula.

Currently, she is participating in the "Leadership Academy", which offers training for leaders initiated by the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

Please contact her at mhaberfellner@zsi.at or her colleague Jana Machacova at machacova@zsi.at for any inquiries in relation to this project.



Marion Haberfellner

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Report on the Activities of the Regional Cooperation Secretariat Published

On October 6, the report on the Activities of the Regional Cooperation Secretariat was published by the Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council, submitted to the Regional Cooperation Council Board.

The report covers the period between May 20, 2008 and October 1, 2008. The RCC Secretariat has achieved full operational capacity and has by now recruited the majority of its staff. Following the meeting of the RCC Board held on 20 May, 2008 in Pomorie, the RCC Secretariat focused on the consolidation of its operations and activities with special emphasis on the implementation of the Strategic Work Programme of the RCC from 2008 to 2009.

In the reporting period, the RCC Secretariat embarked on a process of dialogue and concrete cooperation with all the main stakeholders in the region, starting from the European Commission, over to international organisations

and relevant international financial institutions and EU and non-EU donor countries. The Secretary General of the RCC and other officials of the RCC Secretariat also participated in a number of meetings, conferences and other events of relevance for regional cooperation in South East Europe.



RCC Secretary General Hido Bišćević (left) at the presentation of the report
© RCC/Selma Ahatović Lihčić

LINK Download the full report from ■
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/doc/17275.html>

News from the Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital

The Task Force Fostering and Building Human Capital (TFBHC), entrusted by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) with the promotion of coherency between education, higher education and research, held its constituent meeting on June 13, 2008 in Ljubljana in the framework of the Slovenian EU Presidency back-to-back with the meeting of the Steering Platform on Research.

As outlined in the previous issue, the TFBHC succeeds the Task Force Education and Youth (TFEY) of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and is in charge of the coordination of activities in the priority area "Fostering and Building Human Capital" of the RCC.

The Task Force, which is led by a core team of Romania as chair and Austria and Croatia as co-chairs, is composed of the Members of the Regional Cooperation Council Board, the Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council, the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding from Istanbul, the Task Force Education and Youth, the Members of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) and the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkans as its founding members.

As a platform for dialogue and cooperation between the actors involved in the sectors concerned, the Task Force's mandate includes awareness-raising, setting agendas and lobbying, promoting of regular dialogue and information exchange as well as the coordination with other priority areas of the RCC and the promotion of partnerships and activities.

The work of the TFBHC as an overarching network for trans-sectoral cooperation in the framework of the "knowledge triangle" of education, research and innovation will be led by and will encompass the European and the regional challenges in this domain. This role was already acknowledged by Ministers responsible for education from the region of South Eastern Europe, who on the occasion of the Informal Ministerial Conference in Oslo in June 2008 pledged to support the work of the RCC and the South Eastern European Cooperation Process as members of the TFBHC and of the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe.

Following the constituent meeting and the prior endorsement of the profile and structure of the TFBHC by the RCC Board Members, the Task Force began



Constituent Meeting in Ljubljana, June 2008 back-to-back to the Steering Platform meeting

its work based on several Short-term Priorities of Action, as agreed by the participants of the constituent meeting.

Besides the cooperation within the political framework of the South-East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme and other priority areas, the joint identification of common priorities, the instruments and the implementation of activities will be of particular importance in view to a provisional plan of action to strengthen regional cooperation in line with the Istanbul Memorandum between the Ministers

responsible for education, science and research and the Human Capital priority area of the RCC.

As regards the identification of mid-term thematic priorities, relevant contributions are expected to be presented in a conference on building human capital of the Task Force leadership on 6-7 March 2009 in Romania.

The next meeting of the TFBHC in December 2008 shall focus on the identification of mid-term thematic priorities. Relevant contributions are expected to be presented in a conference on building human capital of the Task Force leadership on March 6-7, 2009 in Romania.

Furthermore, a Regional project in support of the Task Force's contribution to Building Human Capital was submitted under the "South-East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme 2007-2013. As one of its first measures to promote information exchange and coordination of activities, the TFBHC is currently setting up an online calendar of relevant events accessible for all Task Force members.

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SEE Programme: Announcement of Proposals Invited to the Second Step

Based on the decision of the Monitoring Committee of the SEE Programme, which met in Belgrade on September 25 to 26, 2008, the list of the projects invited to submit a complete application for the second step of the call has been defined and is now available for download on the website of the SEE Programme. The next call for proposals is scheduled to be opened in late March 2009.

Out of the 822 valid Expressions of Interest (Eols), which have been carefully checked in order to ensure their formal and qualitative compliance with the Programme requirements, a number of 95 Eols, which have obtained the highest scores, have been selected to participate in the second step of the call. The second step will most probably be open on October 13, 2008 for a period of six weeks. The second step of the call is open until November 21, 2008. It is recommended to all those interested to regularly check the Programme's website and keep up to date with the latest developments.

Following the selection of the projects invited to submit a complete application in the second step of the call for proposals. A Lead Applicant seminar was organised in Budapest and several events at national level will take place in November, with the purpose of preparing the applicants for submitting their proposal in the second step of the Call.

LINK *Joint Technical Secretariat of the SEE Programme* ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/21572.html>
Link to the selected proposals ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/17750.html>

Partner Search Tools for New Innovation Support Actions Now Online



In order to facilitate partner search, an online Partner Search Tool is now available on the Europe INNOVA and PRO INNO Europe® websites.

This new tool allows stakeholders to express interest in participating in the next phase of Europe INNOVA or PRO INNO Europe® foreseen for October 2008 as e.g.

- potential project leaders willing to manage and coordinate a project
- potential partners offering specific expertise and competencies in certain areas of transnational cooperation;
- potential contributors articulating their interest in being associated with the work in certain future areas of Europe INNOVA or PRO INNO Europe®

The service also provides access to useful data on the main orientations of the next phase of the initiatives, including descriptions of actions and possible activities, as well as information on other stakeholders expressing interest in the development or implementation of the actions or possible activities. Another tool, the website www.westbalkanresearch.net provides information on partners in the region and has also been updated and relaunched in the last months.

LINK *For further information on partner search tools* ▪
<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/1822.html>

Tender open: Supporting Science and Research in Bosnia and Herzegovina

EuropeAid published a tender for service in "Capacity building and institutional strengthening of Science and Research in Bosnia and Herzegovina". Deadline for applications: November 17, 2008

Still within the programme CARDS 2006, the European community is opening a tender for technical assistance.

The project will establish a functional system for dealing with science and research issues in the country harmonized with the EU standards. It shall support the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Research Area (ERA) through the development and implementation of an integrated research and innovation policy, through the capacity and institution building activities and the development of an S&T strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The maximum budget amounts to 500,000 EUR.

On the basis of the applications received, between four and eight candidates will be invited to submit detailed tenders for this contract. If the number of eligible candidates meeting the selection criteria is less than the minimum of four, the Contracting Authority may invite the candidates, who satisfy the criteria to submit a tender.

Provisional Timetable:

- Provisional date of invitation to tender: December 2008
- Provisional commencement date of the contract: March 2009
- Initial period of execution and possible extension of the contract: 12 months

LINK *EuropeAid* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/2072.html>
Tender No: EC/BIH/07/023
Publication reference: EuropeAid/125962/C/SER/BA

EURAXESS Comes to Croatia

The Croatian Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes establishes EURAXESS in Croatia.

Croatia is taking great efforts to promote research and become more desirable to researchers from abroad. At the forefront of this effort is the Croatian Agency for Mobility and EU programmes. On June 1, 2008 the agency took up the role of the EURAXESS Bridgehead Organisation and is planning the launch of a helpdesk as well as the Croatian EURAXESS Services Network.

Research and development (R&D) activities in Croatia are relatively well developed, but it is hoped that the debut of EURAXESS, along with other measures, will give Croatian research a significant boost.

There is a strong research community in Croatia, which employs close to 16 000 people. But Croatian R&D often lags behind that of the EU. Therefore the Croatian government has adopted the Science and Technology Policy of the Republic of Croatia 2006-2010, which increases investment in R&D.

This policy combined with the establishment of the EURAXESS Bridgehead Organisation is working to make Croatia a more appealing place for researchers both from Croatia and abroad. The EURAXESS Bridgehead Organisation is currently undertaking the creation of the EURAXESS Service Centre, help desk and mobility network. These bodies will provide researchers and research organisations with information about mobility as well as offering personalised assistance to researchers with questions concerning mobility.

Such steps are essential to boosting Croatian R&D and mobility and will help to bring Croatian research into the European Research Area.

LINK *EURAXESS website* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/18467.html>

Unity Through Knowledge Fund

The Unity Through Knowledge Fund (UKF) is a Croatian Programme aiming at enhancing the cooperation between the national scientists and the Croatian scientific diaspora.

Brain drain or large emigration of scientists and individuals with technical skills or knowledge is one of the most prominent problems of countries in the framework of a globalised economy. Especially affected are countries like Croatia, which are not able to invest heavily in science and technology and lacking large-scale scientific equipment and infrastructure. Brain drain is not only a problem of scientific and cultural development, but usually it is regarded as an economic cost. Therefore, the national government tries to cope with this problem by creating various programmes to encourage the scientific diaspora to return home or to cooperate with domestic scientists.

Following this line, the Croatian Government launched the Unity Through Knowledge Fund (UKF), a program established in the framework of the Science and Technology Project (STP) that is co-financed by the World Bank Loan.

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports holds the general responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the UKF and the STP. Its mission is to unite scientific and professional potential in Croatia and and the diaspora aiming at the development of a knowledge-based society following the motto: CONNECTIVITY, COOPERABILITY, and CREATIVITY.

The initial idea for establishing this fund resulted from the First Congress of Croatian Scientists from the Homeland and Abroad, held in Zagreb and Vukovar, from November 15 to 19, 2004.

At the congress, more than 500 scientists discussed the future of Croatian science and signed a Declaration of Congress, which clearly states that "brain drain is simultaneously one of the greatest threats to countries as is Croatia and one of the greatest gifts that any country can give to the world, can be transformed from a disease into a cure for the homeland."

The goals of the fund are as follows:

- Supporting research that is competitive on an international level by financing two types of projects – those that attract experts and investments to Croatia and those that enable the cooperation in European and other projects;
- Fostering research that creates new values for the Croatian economy by the development of innovations, patents, commercial and other applications of scientific results and support to the investments made by the business sector into scientific projects;
- Supporting projects that help the development of research infrastructure in Croatia through the cooperation with the diaspora.

Its main focus lies on financing and supporting research projects, the advancement of young researchers (post-doctorate and early-stage), short-term visits – mobility, long-term visits – appointment, research equipment, conferences / lectures, entrepreneurial activity based on a high technology, consulting and the development of research infrastructure.

The UKF provides the grants through a number of different UKF Grants schemes

OVERVIEW OF THE UKF GRANTS:

- Homeward Grant
- Gaining Experience Grant
- My First Research Topic Grant
- Research in Industry Grant
- IPR Protection Grant (in preparation)
- Crossing Borders Grant
- Homeland Visit Grant
- Reintegration Grant
- Innovation Grant (in preparation)

The Croatian government plans to increase investments into the R&D sector, to restructure the scientific system in order to make the investments more efficient, to strengthen the cooperation between science, the government and the industry in the creation of new knowledge and goods, and to increase the participation of its researchers and organizations in the European Framework Programmes. The UKF is one of the means for achieving these goals. Its efficiency is already obvious in the fact that dozens of researchers already have returned to Croatia and preparations are made for more to come.

Information about the UKF are available at: <http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx>

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Scientific Diaspora in the Spotlight – Croatian Marin Soljačić

His WiTricity concept is among the 70 most extraordinary and genial ideas of the year.

One of the young scientists, who had also left Croatia pursuing better working conditions and scientific challenges is Dr. Marin Soljačić – assistant professor of physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

He has recently become famous because of his successful theoretical work and experiments in Wireless Power Transfer (WiTricity) for which he received the MacArthur's Fellowship ("genius award") in 2008. Stated in simple terms, he demonstrated that the transmission of electric power is possible without wires.

In the scientific scene he has of course been present for some time now, e.g. in the area of electro-magnetic phenomena, nonlinear optics and nano-photonics. Currently a professor at MIT, he was born in 1974 in Zagreb, where



Marin Soljačić

he finished high-school and left for MIT on a scholarship to graduate in Physics and Electrotechnics.

He received his Master's degree and PhD in Physics and Princeton University and soon after started the Pappalardo Post-doctoral study at MIT. He is the author of more than eighty articles in the most prestigious science magazines and of seventeen patents.

He is also a winner of the Optical Society of Americas "Adolph Lomb Medal" in 2005, and the Technology Review's "TR35" award for the best innovators under 35 in the year 2007. "The New York Times"

magazine enlisted his "WiTricity" concept among the seventy most extraordinary and genial ideas of the year.

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Measures and Policies for Women in Science and Research in Western Balkan Countries

In EU countries, in R&D female scientists still represent a minority compared to male scientists. In particular, they have no access to such knowledge and occupations that play a key role in modern society. A series of programmes and projects have been undertaken to enhance the quantity and quality of information on female participation in R&D and to encourage their wider involvement in management structures.

The Science and Technology Policy Research Centre (STPRC) of the Institute Mihajlo Pupin had a very challenging task to fulfill in 2007, which was a part of one of the FP6 projects. Associates of the STPRC were members of the project team dealing with "Benchmarking policy measures for gender equality in science" in EU member countries and, for the first time, also in Western Balkans countries. Project leaders were Prof. Nick von Tunzelmann and Elyse Ruest-Archambault from the University of Sussex.

This project was so important as a confirmation of the long years of voluntarily undertaking efforts in keeping up with women in science issues and, somehow, with statistics and indicators about women in science and engineering in Serbia.

Monitoring Serbia's R&D system over the past ten years has revealed structural changes in all resources, and in human resources in particular. Among the numerous negative trends we have emphasized a decrease in the number of researchers in natural and transfer (engineering & technologies and biotechnology) sciences. The female portion of the Serbian R&D population was covered by the general restructuring trends.

While doing this job on a voluntary basis, we often have been in the position to discuss reasons for dealing with these issues and, concerning this, the importance of creating policies targeting at gender equality in S&R. Research is, besides the statistics and policies, the motivation for sociological consideration of this part of the human resources' role in the S&R systems in the WBCs as a geographic periphery to the European Union.

All we have done in this project, we have done in a really enthusiastic way. Some of the highlights from our joint study are:

- The extent to which a country's national system of innovation is developed is related to the degree to which it is committed to gender mainstreaming, as well as to the degree to which networks for women in science are elaborate.

Countries that are innovation leaders and innovation followers are usually fully committed to gender mainstreaming and have detailed science-based networks. Catching-up countries mostly have partial mainstreaming policies and only more general women's networks. Finally, mainstreaming policies and women's networks are usually lacking in trailing countries and the Western Balkan countries.

- Seven EU countries (Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania and Spain) and three associated countries (Croatia, Israel and Turkey) as well as four WB countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia) do not present any data on funding applicants and beneficiaries segregated by sex. These data are fundamental as the literature shows a gender bias in the current grant allocation systems internationally.

- There is a need for harmonized data collected systematically across countries that examine the pay of researchers compared to salaries of other qualified professionals. An indicator for female researchers' pay could also be developed that compares their hourly income with all female workers' hourly wages. A parallel indicator could also be developed for male researchers.

- Finally, the statistical and policy analyses indicate that one of the main factors hindering women's participation in science is the unequal gender division of labour related to housework and family care. In order to achieve equal participation of women and men in science, fundamental work-life balance solutions for dual-career couples and single parents need to be implemented in the business community and society at large.

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COST Committee Meeting in Belgrade and New COST Call Open

The meeting of the COST (European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical research) was held on June 18 and 19, 2008 in the Sava Center in Belgrade. COST also launched a new call for proposal with the collection date of March 27, 2009.

Assistant Minister Viktor Nedovic opened the meeting. He welcomed the participants, who came from 30 different European countries, and expressed his pleasure that such an important meeting was being held in Serbia. He added that a collaboration between European scientists, which is the priority of the COST programme, is of great importance to Serbia.

The meeting was being chaired by Francesco Fedi, the director of COST. During his stay, Prof. Fedi also met with the Serbian Minister of Science at that time, Ana Persikan. He thanked the Ministry for its initiative to hold the meeting in Belgrade and also said he was pleased with the activity of Serbia and Serbian scientists in COST actions.

New Annual Database on FDI in CEE and SEE

The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (Das Wiener Institut für Internationale Wirtschaftsvergleiche – wiiw) added a new database focusing on Eastern Europe and a new database on FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in Central, East and Southeast Europe.

The database provides a systematic survey of FDI in the region, with more than 3.700 time series, which are regularly updated. All time series start in 1990 (when data is available) and have the following indicators: FDI total, by form, by country and by activities. Data stems are obtained from the host countries' national banks or from the central bureaus of statistics. Countries covered are: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the FYR of Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine, Hungary and Belarus.

The wiiw Database on FDI in Central, East and South East Europe is now also available via the FIW Database Retrieval Tool.

LINK *The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/1294.html>

WBC-INCO.NET Involved in Two Upcoming Events on ICT Research Cooperation

The projects WBC-INCO.NET and SCORE co-organise a networking event for WBC researchers in France and a joint conference in Belgrade

The two projects WBC-INCO.NET and SCORE ("Strengthening the Strategic Cooperation Between the EU and the WB Region in the field of ICT") organise a joint networking session at the conference "ICT 2008" in Lyon, France. Furthermore, they cooperate in view of a future conference "Towards an Information Society for the Balkans" to be held in Belgrade, Serbia.

The EC is organising an information and communication technologies (ICT) conference and exhibition entitled "ICT 2008: 'I's to the future: invention – innovation – impact" from November 25 to 27, 2008.

This biennial ICT event, which will be hosted by the French Presidency of the EU, is the most important forum for discussing research on and public policy in ICT at the European level. It will bring together researchers and innovators, as well as policy and business decision makers working in the field of digital technologies.

The networking session for WBC researchers at ICT 2008 constitutes a chance for actors in research in the EU and WB ICT sectors to investigate real cooperation opportunities in the fields:

- ICT for Government & eGovernment
- Internet & broadband technologies
- ICT for Enterprise & eBusiness
- ICT for learning & eLearning

The participants are able to confront each other on the still existing barriers from the WBCs' side to an effective ICT R&D collaboration, so as to put forward remedial actions and reforms to support and leverage future EU FP initiatives and take full advantage of them.

WBC-INCO.NET and SCORE also co-organise a conference "Towards an Information Society for the Balkans", on December 11 and 12, 2008 in Belgrade, Serbia.

The conference will address ICT researchers and experts and representatives from WBC Ministries dealing with ICT research in the WBCs. Strengths and weaknesses together with the priorities identified in this field will be presented and discussed. Alternative paths for the integration of the region in the wider European effort will be furthermore suggested to achieve a Knowledge Society.

LINK Registration available through the SCORE project ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/2421.html>

WBC-INCO.NET promotes calendar on its website

The WBC-INCO.NET events calendar <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/list> is already filled with more than 100 events tackling the issues of

- research promotion and networking of researchers
- scientific cooperation in and with the region
- science and research policy development
- training seminars and info sessions on funding programmes

The calendar is provided also in the "ical" format and can so be imported directly to your electronic calendars: <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/ical>.

Users are invited to provide information on their events at office@wbc-inco.net

Conference on Role of National Academies in the 21st Century

The international conference "Role of National Academies in the 21st Century" was held on October 10, 2008 in Podgorica, Montenegro.

The thematic focus of the conference were National Academies in Central and Southeast Europe.

The conference examined how National Academies are preparing to be able to manage the challenges of the 21st Century. It showed the role, usefulness and potentially unique value-added of National Academies at the national level. Furthermore, the conference demonstrated that regional issues can be successfully addressed through networks of National Academies.

Under the patronage of H. E. Milo Djukanović, Prime Minister of Montenegro, the conference is organised by the Inter-Academy Panel (IAP), Central- and Eastern European Network of academy presidents from the region (CEEN), European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA), The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS), South-Eastern European Division of World Academy of Arts and Sciences (WAAS-SEE), Inter-Academy Council for South-Eastern Europe (IAP-SEE), and the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts (MASA). The participants included senior individuals from National Academies in Europe and the developing world.

AUTHOR Gilbert Fayl ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/886.html>

Event Review: Science & Education Policies Conference in Moldova

Two documents contributing to the improvement of policies on science and higher education in the region were issued during the conference.

As a result of the International Conference for the Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus and Baltic States on Science and Education Policies, which was held September 18-21, 2008 in Chisinau, there were issued two documents: Final Communique & Declaration, as a contribution to developing better science and higher education policies in the regions targeted by the Conference and beyond. As well, these documents constitutes a contribution of the Central and Eastern European countries, Balkans, Caucasus and Baltic States to the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, July 2009) and World Science Forum (Budapest, November 2009).

The programme of the Conference addressed several challenges affecting science and higher education policies today, mainly: strengthening international impact of national research and education programs; strengthening research in higher education; developing a knowledge-based economy; stemming and reversing brain drain. From the website www.asm.md presentations made during the sessions can be downloaded.

LINK Download full declaration ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/21575.html>
Download final communique ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/17809.html>

AUTHOR Elena Severin ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/17705.html>

New Strategy on International Cooperation: ERA Must Be Open to the World



At the launch of a new European strategy for international cooperation in science and technology, Janez Potočnik insisted that the European Research Area needs to be open for international cooperation.

In the document "A strategic European framework for international science and technology cooperation. COM(2008) 588 final. 24 September 2008." the FP7 INCO-Net projects are also mentioned – supporting regional platforms for an S&T policy dialogue and priority setting at the bi-regional level. They involve Member States and ENP partner countries in identifying future research priorities and coordinated actions.

The EU and its Member States must 'transform Europe's research labyrinth into a European Research Area open to the world, attracting the best brains and contributing to address global challenges', said European Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potočnik.

The strategy has two overarching goals: to integrate Europe's neighbours into the European Research Area (ERA) and foster cooperation in strategic areas with other key partner countries around the world. Furthermore, the aim is to improve the overall framework conditions for international cooperation in science and technology.

The document highlights the importance of coordinating Member-State and EU-level international cooperation activities. 'Global challenges call for global responses. There is no area where this is truer than science,' stated Commissioner Potočnik. 'Our international partners are attracted by Europe as a model of regional integration, but they are faced with a multitude of governmental actors and research priorities when they want to engage in concrete cooperation.'

According to the strategy, if Europe is to become the research partner of choice internationally, it must ensure it has adequate, competitive research funding, top class infrastructures, enhanced mobility for researchers and appropriate intellectual property rules.

The strategy underlines the importance of opening up the ERA to the rest of the world. It notes that many of Europe's neighbours are now fully associated to the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), meaning their researchers can compete for funding on an equal footing with researchers from EU Member States.

Bilateral science and technology agreements are important tools for strengthening links with countries that could one day be interested in full membership of the framework programmes. Furthermore, the Commission recommends that more efforts be made to provide reciprocal access to research funds through these agreements. The strategy also raises the possibility of a regional approach to international cooperation, which would entail working with bodies such as ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) or the African Union on joint initiatives.

Research infrastructures also feature strongly in the new strategy. The European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) has helped to initiate a debate on the world-class infrastructures, which will be needed in the coming years, and plans to turn many of these into a reality are already well underway. Nevertheless, according to the strategy, a more structured approach to developing global research infrastructures is needed.

Another section of the strategy addresses the issues surrounding researcher mobility. 'It is crucial that European researchers, who work in a third country remain part of the ERA,' the strategy reads. Furthermore, researchers from developing countries, who come to Europe, should be encouraged to contribute to their own country's development.

There is a strong focus on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the strategy. Europe is already a major exporter in this sector but

more needs to be done to strengthen this position.

'At a time when telecommunications, the Internet, mobile telephony and television increasingly impact our lives and the EU economy, it is urgent to improve the effectiveness of the EU's international action in information and communication technologies,' said Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media.

'If Europe wants to maintain its position as a global leader in Science and Research, we need to find the most efficient ways to collaborate within the EU and to transform our willingness to cooperate with our partners worldwide (into action), while targeting our priorities.'

This international cooperation strategy is the last in a series of five initiatives launched by the Commission with the aim of strengthening the ERA. The others, which concern the management of intellectual property by public research organisations, the promotion of research careers and researcher mobility, research infrastructures, and boosting cooperation between national research programmes, were launched earlier this year.

Internationalisation of R&D – CREST Report



In January 2008, the "CREST Report on the Internationalisation of R&D – Facing the Challenge of Globalisation: Approaches to a Proactive International Policy in S&T" was presented. It discusses drivers of internationalisation, policy objectives, priorities and policy measures. In particular, it focuses on recommendations, which are given on S&T policy strategies and measures at the level of member states and associated countries as well as on the coordination of R&D policies towards third countries between the member states and associated countries.

Opening to the World: Report of the ERA Expert Group

The strategy also builds on the report published by an expert group established by the EC for the Green Paper consultation activities related to International S&T Cooperation.

The report is also available in printed form and outlines the findings in the following main chapters:

- The context: why international cooperation is vital for the EU
- The instruments: how the EU advances international cooperation at present
- The prospects: a framework for a more effective EU approach



LINK *EU website on international cooperation in science and technology* ■ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm>
European Research Area (ERA) ■ http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.html
International cooperation under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) ■ http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/international-cooperation_en.html

EC presents Enlargement Strategy and Progress Reports

On November 5, 2008, the Commission adopted its annual strategy document explaining its policy on EU enlargement. Also the 2008 progress reports were published, where the Commission services monitor and assess the achievements of each of the candidate and potential candidates over the last year.

The enlargement package of information contains also a multi-annual financial framework setting out the financial assistance available over the next years to support the reform efforts of the candidate and potential candidate countries: Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Turkey, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo/UNMIK.

In each progress report also the developments in the science and research fields are assessed. Albania, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and from 1.1.2009 onwards also Bosnia and Herzegovina are associated to the Seventh Framework Programme. Successful participation, as it is highlighted in several of the reports, depends on the enhancement of administrative capacity and national research capacity.

The full details of the reports in the field are extracted on the wbc-inco.net website, overall the EC assesses the progress of the Western Balkan countries in science as follows:

In Albania preparations are "advancing moderately"; in Bosnia and Herzegovina, "preparations have started" but "sustained efforts remain necessary"; in Croatia "good progress has been made" "but further efforts remain necessary"; for FYR of Macedonia it is concluded that "progress has been made on organisation of research cooperation at national level" and "overall, the country is on track" but "implementation capacity is still insufficient" and "further efforts are necessary, in particular as regards the integration into the European Research Area"; as regards Montenegro it is acknowledged that "there has been good progress on research, particularly regarding development of a strategy and of regional and international cooperation, including with the EU"; for Serbia it is stated that it "needs to continue its efforts to develop and adopt actions to facilitate its integration into the European Research Area"; and finally in the progress report on UNMIK/Kosovo the reports inform that "some progress was made but no overall research policy was adopted or specific measures taken to improve research cooperation and integration into the European Research Area".

LINK Download full report from <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/21134.html>

Defining and Strengthening Sector Specific Sources of Competitiveness in the WBC

Recommendation for a regional investment strategy

A European Commission funded report examining the potential sources of and obstacles to competitiveness in the West Balkan Countries has become available on line. "A Recommendation for a Regional Investment Strategy", published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), notes that to compete effectively, the Western Balkans need to leverage both short-term cost advantages and the region's proximity to EU markets, and to invest continuously in value-added services and innovation.

LINK Download full report from <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/19706.html>



From Fragmentation to Cooperation: Tertiary Education, Research and Development in South Eastern Europe

The objective of this paper, published by the World Bank in June 2008, is to analyse the situation in Balkan countries, outline the directions for policy reform in tertiary education and research and development, and identify options for World Bank support to these countries, both through national projects and different types of regional collaboration.

Tertiary education and research and development contribute to economic growth and competitiveness by providing highly skilled graduates prepared to take up their role in an open economy and democratic society, as well as by the creation, transfer, and adaptation of knowledge.

The region's economies are already rewarding individuals for their level of educational attainment. The gap in labour market outcomes between those with and without tertiary education is substantial. There are signs that more successful companies in the region are seeking stronger skills among employees – in particular, higher education skills – as a part of their competitive strategy. The supply of a highly skilled labor force with tertiary qualifications to meet this rising demand is, however, weak in Balkan countries. In higher education, dropout rates are high and graduation rates are low. These countries also report stagnating or even decreasing numbers of graduates with an advanced degree at the master's or doctoral level. Talented people from these countries are more likely than residents of other European countries to leave their country to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

AUTHORS Toby Linden and Nina Arnhold with Kirill Vasiliev

LINK Download full report from <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/14206.htm>

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