



Editorial

Dear readers,

The 8th edition of the WBC-INCO.NET Journal is published on the occasion of the 11th Meeting of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan countries, taking place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina on December 1, 2011. Some of the key issues to be discussed by the Steering Platform are the state of preparation of Horizon 2020 and synergies with the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) as well as the Implementation of the Regional Strategy on R&D for Innovation.

This time, the main focus of our journal lies on evaluation. Thus, we prepared some interesting articles addressing the general value of evaluation in RTDI, conducted evaluations and evaluation platforms (e.g. EVAL-INNO – Fostering Evaluation Competencies in Research, Technology and Innovation in the SEE Region). “Building blocks for an evaluation of Horizon 2020”, an article by Peter Fisch of DG Research and Innovation also allows us an insight into the challenges for an evaluation and monitoring system for the Horizon 2020 Programme.

For the year 2012, WBC-INCO.NET is planning to further emphasise its support to the region to integrate into the “Innovation Union”, by discussing innovation support measures and preparing further strategic inputs. Sharing information on the current FP7 and the upcoming funding programme Horizon 2020 will be continued and a thematic focus will be put on energy research.

We are also pleased to announce that we are currently launching our new WBC-INCO.NET website. The new website offers i.a. increased interactivity and more user generated content. As a registered user, you will be able to enjoy several new features and benefits such as to indicate your scientific and regional focus and all related information will be automatically brought to your personal zone. You can post your event announcements, enter your project in our database and post an item on the notice-board and a lot more. If after visiting the new website, you feel it could be improved in some way, please contact us by email detailing the changes you recommend.

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P.S.: WBC-INCO.NET also publishes a bi-weekly newsletter including all recent updates on its web portal. To register, please go to ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/ejournal/list>.

Imprint

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10th Meeting of the Steering Platform, Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia

10th Steering Platform Meeting: Conclusions

The Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries met in Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia on May 26, 2011. The meeting was co-chaired by the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on behalf of the Western Balkan Countries – who hosted the event – and the European Commission.

The Steering Platform heard the introductory statements from FYR of Macedonia, the Hungarian Presidency and the European Commission, from which it became clear that innovation is very high on the political agenda at EU and regional level as well as the preparation for the future Common Strategic Framework. From the presentations of the Progress Reports the Platform welcomed that all Members are actively implementing ongoing research funding activities. In this context, the work of SEE-ERA.NET PLUS was very much welcomed. The Platform was very encouraged by the different actions and measures taken by the Balkan countries to strengthen the research and innovation capacity at national level. Cooperation with both COST and Eureka has successfully continued. Several members also stressed the importance of future cooperation such as strengthening cooperation with the JRC for enlargement countries and implementation of the Danube Strategy. The UNESCO and CEI mentioned also several possibilities for future cooperation.

The Platform welcomed the presentation of the Strategy for the Danube Region by the Priority Area 7 Co-ordinators from Serbia and Slovakia. All expressed interest in pooling research efforts to meet the objectives of the Strategy and asked which actions (e.g. ERA-NET or ERA-NET PLUS) the Commission could consider under FP7 or later to support the objectives of the Danube Strategy. The Platform welcomed the continuous support of WBC-INCO.NET which is an essential tool for the integration of the region in the European Research Area and the contribution to the Innovation Union. The Platform also encouraged all enlargement countries to continue their cooperation. On the future Common Strategic Framework (CSF), the Platform took note *Continued on page 2*

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of the Consultation Process on the Green Paper and the Follow-up. The interest was expressed to be present at the Stakeholder Conference on June 10, 2011 in Brussels. The Platform welcomed the contribution on behalf of all enlargement countries as presented by TUBITAK. Several members offered to pursue the discussion in particular on the type of capacity building required and on the balance between small and larger research projects.

With respect to synergy between R&I funding and the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA), the beneficiary countries were encouraged to deploy more IPA for research capacity building under all components. The Platform asked that the post-2013 IPA would support more clearly the EU 2020 priorities and in particular support for building the Innovation Union and competitiveness in general. All members were encouraged to exchange ideas and best practices on IPA support granted so far.

The Platform took note of the progress presented by OECD on the regional competitiveness initiative (RCI) which supports national pilot projects on development of innovation and human capital. The Platform welcomed the presentation from

RCC and the World bank outlining the preliminary ideas on how to implement the project "Regional Strategy on Research and Development for Innovation for Western Balkans" on the basis of the Joint Statement of the Ministerial Conference held in April 2009 in Sarajevo. The need to mobilize knowledge and create more leverage was underlined building upon work that has been done so far in particular in the WBC-INCO.NET project and input from beneficiary countries.

The Platform welcomed the presentation made on survey on the research and innovation agenda in the region presented by the Institute of Economics in Zagreb. In this context, the importance of retrieving statistics, data and indicators was underlined. The Platform also welcomed the opportunity and ideas presented to enhance innovation. The Steering Platform took note of the progress made on the innovation support work package in the WBC-INCO.NET. Mapping of innovation infrastructures was considered a useful exercise to build upon innovation capacity.

LINK

Steering Platform Meeting in Ohrid ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/116907.html>

Review: WBC-INCO.NET at the Conference "Challenge Social Innovation"

From September 19 to 21, 2011 the "Challenge Social Innovation" Conference took place in Vienna, co-organised by NET4SOCIETY (the Network of Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities National Contact Points) through the support of the European Commission, the Centre for Social Innovation, Vienna and the Dortmund University of Technology.

The three day event brought together over 350 scholars and experts in the field of social innovation, representing more than 50 countries from all over the world. A series of sessions which took place over three days, moving from policy discussion and debate to FP7 networking and engagement, have also led to the development of the joint declaration called "Vienna Declaration – The most relevant topics in social innovation research". In her speech at the British Academy in London on November 10, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science emphasised that "the Vienna Declaration is a major contribution to a future research agenda on social innovation".

In the frame of the conference, WBC-INCO.NET co-organised the session: "Social innovation for inclusion and integration" including the following speakers from Croatia, Serbia, the USA and Portugal: Paul Stubbs (Institute of Economics, Zagreb), Sanja Popović Pantić (Mihajlo Pupin Institute, Belgrade), Sanja Crnković-Pozaić (consultant, Zagreb), Dennis P. Culhane (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia) and Ana Vale (consultant, Lisbon).

Demographic challenges, Social changes/inequalities and Transition are just some of the research topics recognised as important for the region during the session. Further consultations will follow.

Background Reports on SSH in the WBC

In the frame of the priority setting exercise of the WBC-INCO.NET project, seven background reports have been prepared on national research systems in the WBC in the field of social sciences and humanities, on social innovation and on priorities of SSH research. The reports were distributed during the conference "Challenge Social Innovation" at the WBC-INCO.NET stand and directly handed over to the European Commission together with a list of priorities for the region.

LINK

Download the reports ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/124477.html>

LINKS

Download the presentations ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/126923.html>

Download the Vienna Declaration ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131721.html>

Further information on "Challenge Social Innovation" ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/127762.html>

Consultation session in the field of SSH: Identification of research topics of regional priority for the WBC

The WBC-INCO.NET pre-conference event, which was attended by over 40 persons (eminent scientists and high-level researchers, National Contact Points from the region and project partners as well as persons from Science Ministries and Agencies), was used to further discuss the research topics identified in the background reports which are of a regional priority for Western Balkan countries. Employment/Employability, Economic clusters,

Current Calls in the Field of Social Sciences & Humanities

FP7-SSH-2012-1 – Collaborative large scale projects.

Deadline: February 2, 2012.

LINK

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/call/120369.html>

FP7-SSH-2012-2 – Collaborative small or medium-scale Projects as well as Coordination and Support Actions. Deadline: February 2, 2012.

LINK

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/call/120378.html>

The document "Opportunities for Researchers from SSH" published by NET4SOCIETY analyses SSH relevant topics in other thematic areas of FP7 and other ERA Initiatives.

LINK

Download the document ■

<http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/125754.html>

Building Blocks for an Evaluation of Horizon 2020

On 30 November 2011, the European Commission is expected to adopt the formal proposal for “Horizon 2020 – The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2014 to 2020”. This new Programme will be the successor to the current Seventh Framework Programme, but it will also integrate a wide range of new activities and therefore go far beyond the well established classical Framework Programme territory.

In the context of the current economic and financial situation, a proper evaluation of major public spending schemes is not just a formal obligation, it is a clear necessity – and the current FP7 and the future Horizon 2020 Programmes are no exceptions to this rule.

In 2010, an independent expert panel chaired by Rolf Annerberg, Director of the Swedish Research Agency FORMAS, carried out the Interim Evaluation of FP7. This document raised a number of issues and recommendations, which were not only discussed at the Council and the European Parliament, but had a clear influence on the shaping of the debate on the future of European research funding.

At this point in time – prior to the Commission Decision on the Horizon 2020 Programme – it is clearly premature to enter into a detailed description of future evaluation approaches. Instead, this paper aims at highlighting some of the key building blocks for such a future Horizon 2020 evaluation approach.

Although evaluation is a permanent task, attention will undoubtedly focus on the three **major evaluation reports** which can be expected in the years to come:

- The Ex-post Evaluation of FP7 in 2015,
- The Interim Evaluation of Horizon 2020 (around 2017), and
- The Ex-post Evaluation of Horizon 2020 (around 2023).

In line with the very positive experience of recent evaluations of FP6 and FP7, these evaluations will be

- Involving independent external experts,
- Based on comprehensive evidence base, and
- Formally communicated to the Council and the European Parliament.

Prior to the launch of the Programme in 2014, a detailed and explicit **evaluation strategy** for Horizon 2020 should be developed, notably to ensure adequate coverage of all areas and components and to provide detailed time-tables. This strategy should be revised later on to adapt to new developments, as in a fast moving area like research and innovation things are very likely to evolve substantially over the next decade or so.

A key component of such a strategy should be a comprehensive **governance structure**. This should of course clarify the roles and responsibilities across the different Commission services and agencies involved in Horizon 2020. Moreover, in view of the growing number of activities involving Member States and other stakeholders, their respective roles should also be clearly defined. Last but not least, independent expert advice at the strategic level might be a further asset to strengthen the overall efficiency of the Horizon 2020 evaluation system.

The aim is to implement a **coherent approach**, so that all thematic components of Horizon 2020 will be evaluated on a regular basis and in an adequate and coordinated manner. Key tools in this approach will be thematic evaluation studies for each of the various action lines, but also analytical work to shed more light on cross-cutting and transversal issues – such as participation patterns or international standing, just to quote two possible topics. Wherever appropriate, there should be an increased use of common templates and methodologies, and of course of a common set of key indicators, so that there will be an increased comparability and harmonisation of the reports.

Not surprisingly, a **solid evidence** base will be of paramount importance for the planned evaluation activities. This includes notably a continuation and development of the current Monitoring system, but moreover the development of new structures to capture the throughput, output and impact of Horizon 2020 activities. The very successful example of the common data warehouse CORDA indicates that substantive progress can be achieved. In this context, it seems important to step up research activities in order to stimulate the development and use of new techniques and to also foster the development of the European research evaluation community.

Finally, it is obvious that there needs to be maximum **transparency** at all stages of the Horizon 2020 evaluation. This should start with the development of the Horizon 2020 Evaluation Strategy, and notably include annual Monitoring Reports with key data on implementation and performance indicators. In addition, a new annual Evaluation Report could present key findings and features of the current evaluation work. The availability of all reports and findings should also contribute to further increase the relevance of evaluation work for the political and societal debate on European research policy.

As transparency is not just a promise for the future, but already a reality for the evaluation activities on FP7, please consult our dedicated website (see link below) to check for further details on the evaluation of FP6 and FP7. Most notably, this website allows you to download the full texts of all recent FP6 and FP7 evaluation studies.

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LINKS *European Commission – DG for Research and Innovation* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/99.html>
EU Framework Programme Evaluation and Monitoring ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/131942.html>

Planning the future knowledge base for evaluation

The “Planning the future knowledge base for evaluation” conference, organised by the Ex-Post Evaluation Unit in DG Research and Innovation and held in Brussels on September 30, 2011 used evidence drawn from the mid-term review of FP7 projects to discuss evaluation processes.

LINK *Read more about the conference* ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/128566.html>

Fourth FP7 Monitoring Report (August 2011)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/124075.html>

Commission Response to the Report of the Expert Group on the Interim Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme (February 2011)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/110987.html>

Interim Evaluation of the Seventh Framework Programme (November 2010)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/104746.html>

WBC-INCO.NET: Innovation-Related Activities

As of October 2010, WBC-INCO.NET entered a new, enhanced phase, putting a special emphasis on innovation-related activities. In this context, several reports have been prepared so far.

Mapping of the WBC Innovation Infrastructures

The "Innovation Infrastructure Reports" are mapping national innovation systems and relevant stakeholders in the Western Balkan Countries. The reports aim to facilitate the identification of potential partner organisations for STI co-operation from the Western Balkan countries. The reports identify innovation-related government institutions, programmes as well as innovation infrastructures such as Technology and Innovation Centres, Clusters, Technology and Science Parks, Business Start-Up Centres, Technology Incubators and other related organisations.

The Conclusive Summary Report summarises the seven reports on mapping of innovation infrastructures that have been prepared in summer 2011. They are covering several important aspects of the National Innovation Systems (NIS) and presenting the status quo of innovation institutions and programmes in the Western Balkan Countries.

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LINKS Centre for Social Innovation ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/29.html>
Download the Innovation Infrastructure reports ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/121802.html>
Download the Conclusive Summary report ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/128850.html>

Results of the survey on market and research innovation needs

The survey on market and research innovation needs aimed to pinpoint both present and likely future research and market needs, as well as to identify possibilities for collaboration in the region. The survey was carried out in two rounds, the second building on the results of the first. Two questionnaires were jointly designed by JRC-IPTS and Ivo Pilar, consecutively addressing market and research stakeholders.

A dedicated workshop shall take place in the near future with both industry and research regional stakeholders in order to refine and complement the findings presented in this report, based upon a mutual appreciation of different viewpoints and expectations. The identified potential needs for the region to be further considered in order to trigger joint innovation are related to:

- Investments in knowledge and technology sharing, expert consultations and collaborative research
- Decrease in regulation
- Strengthen human resources capacities
- Improve infrastructures (including ICT)
- Build awareness on innovation benefits
- Foster mobility
- Enhance communication between different stakeholders

These seem to be all critical to increase mutual understanding, support the identification of common interests, build mutual appreciation and achieve at a joint agenda. Finally, potential research topics to be further considered in the region to trigger joint innovation are:

- Environment surveillance through ICTs
- Automation of information management systems through artificial intelligence and agent based software
- New approaches and frameworks to enhance FDI and cross-regional investments in the region

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LINKS IPTS ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/987.html>
Download the results of the survey ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/130170.html>

Comparative analysis of the innovation capacity in the WBC with emphasis on joint cooperation needs in the field of innovation

The Institute Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, has carried out the study "Comparative analysis of the innovation capacity in the WBC with particular focus on joint cooperation needs" in the frame of the WBC-INCO.NET project. The study is prepared in cooperation with the Centre for Social innovation, Vienna which was responsible for mapping the innovation infrastructure in the WBC, and with JRC-IPTS, Seville, which conveyed the on-line survey on innovation needs.

The study presents an attempt to compare the innovation capacities of the WBC based on multiple analytical approaches with a view to understand the possibility of closer regional innovation cooperation. The final aim is to carry out the background report for a common innovation strategy and initiatives for establishing the regional innovation system.

The analyses reveal that the WBC differ significantly in overall development and related innovation capacities as well as in the performance of national innovation systems (NIS). Despite differences, the WBC share many similarities that provide a platform for mutual cooperation. One of the most substantial similarities is the nature of their competitive advantages, which refers to non-technological sectors, and technology efforts that include the absorption of foreign technologies and mastery of production capability.

Two factors turned out to be the most important for fostering regional innovation cooperation: removing the state and local administrative burdens for regional cooperation and improving science-industry cooperation at national and regional level. The most important policy measures for fostering science-industry cooperation address more funding for collaborative research between universities and businesses and more funding for knowledge/technology transfer activities and expert consultations. The most important joint actions to be taken for better regional innovation cooperation include the establishment of the regional venture capital fund, the regional financing programme for innovation, mobility of personnel, the legal framework for fostering direct foreign investments and the opening and liberalisation of the service market (for R&D services).

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LINKS Ivo Pilar Institute ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/967.html>
Download the Comparative analysis of the innovation capacity in the WBC ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131699.html>

CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology

The Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology of the Central European Initiative (CEI) took place in Trieste, Italy, on October 19, 2011 under the Serbian Presidency of CEI.

The delegations from Member States attending the meeting included six Ministers and six Deputy Ministers and/or High Officials, as well as a Representative of the European Commission (Directorate General for Research and Innovation) and other guests. At the inaugural session, delegates were welcomed by Minister Žarko Obradović in his capacity as Chairman, by CEI Secretary General, Amb. Gerhard Pfanzelter, who also sent regards from the President of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, Renzo Tondo.

The meeting aimed at promoting research and development in Central and Eastern European countries by strengthening the links between investments in research infrastructures and development of common research and innovation policies connected to the European Union Framework Programme. Special focus was devoted to the opportunities for synergies among the scientific communities in CEI countries and the Elettra (Synchrotron Radiation) and Fermi (Free Electron Laser) Laboratories in Trieste, Italy.

As part of the CEI mission – Regional Cooperation for European Integration – collaboration in the field of science is one of the priorities of the organisation. Through various projects and activities, the CEI promotes and facilitates research collaboration between research communities of its Member States, in particular by orientating the institutions cooperating in the framework of

the CEI Science and Technology Network, focusing primarily on the mobility of researchers.

The Ministerial Meeting also focused on next-generation biofuels, which represents a priority for any long-term strategy in the field of renewable and environmentally-friendly energy sources. In this context, the CEI Secretariat introduced a proposal for an integrated and interdisciplinary regional research project in the strategic field of next-generation biofuels.

The Ministers and other Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the Central European Initiative adopted “The Trieste Declaration”. In this context, they referred in particular to the proposed “Horizon 2020” EU Research and Innovation Programme, stressing the need that investments in Research Infrastructures should be developed and planned on all available financial instruments.

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LINKS *Download the Final Communiqué including the Trieste Declaration* ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/129156.html>
Central European Initiative ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/1313.html>

Regional Cooperation and R&D for Innovation: Why, What and How?

Launching event of the Regional R&D Strategy for Innovation in the Western Balkans

Building on the existing collaboration in the area of research, development and innovation between the EU and the Western Balkan Countries, the World Bank and the EU signed an agreement to implement a technical assistance program for the development of a Regional Research and Development Strategy for Innovation in the Western Balkans. The strategy will identify priorities in terms of legal requirements, infrastructure, education and training, policies and programmes to be implemented by the beneficiary entities.

Identifying a common ground for collaboration at the regional level should be the first immediate goal. This means identifying not only the problems that are common to the countries in the region, but also those which are worth being addressed at regional level and can benefit from a regional approach. The ultimate goal is to help countries mainstream R&D and innovation policies in their development processes. Given the scope of the existing collaboration between the EU and the Western Balkans, the value added of the EU-funded technical assistance is twofold. First, the focus would be on how to increase the economic impact of R&D in the Western Balkans. Second, the technical assistance would have a comprehensive approach integrating the three axes of the knowledge triangle, namely education, research and innovation.

As a launching event for the two-year activity, the World Bank, in cooperation with the European Commission, the Regional Cooperation Council and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia, has organised a workshop in Belgrade on November 23–25, 2011. This workshop aimed at setting the ground for a regional strategy preparation, namely by addressing

the questions why to cooperate at regional level; what should be the areas for cooperation; how this cooperation should be implemented; and how the project should help. The idea was to focus on issues related to four intermediate objectives which are, when taken altogether, expected to contribute to the overarching goal of increasing the contribution of R&D to innovation, competitiveness and economic growth in the Western Balkans. Namely:

- improving governance and policy-making of national innovation systems;
- strengthening the science-base;
- accelerating commercialisation and deepening collaboration with the business sector; and
- increasing business R&D and facilitating innovative start-up companies.

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LINKS *Launching Event “Regional R&D Strategy for Innovation in the Western Balkans”* ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/131748.html>
World Bank ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/768.html>



News from Albania

The Education and Research Network of Albania (ANA)

The Project on the “Creation of an Inter-University Service Center and a Telematic Network” aims at improving and strengthening the Albanian University System as the teaching source of the highest level in the country and at promoting scientific research. The Center will offer software services to both universities and research institutes, and will manage the educational and research Network.

Established for the first time in Albania, the **Albanian Academic Network** will connect all higher education and research institutions and agencies. Among other objectives, the project will contribute towards strengthening and boosting the management capacities of the Albanian universities and research institutions, thus developing high professionals' competence and guaranteeing participation in different research programs/projects both at European and international level.

The new learning model for 21st century is emerging: *networked education and research*. In this model, networked communities, networked tools and network management converge to transform the ways *all* students learn, teachers teach and administrators manage. Students participate in more personalised, equitable learning opportunities; lecturers rely on a vast array of resources that help to make education more relevant to students. Administrators depend on just-in-time, data-driven management.

The growing demand and complexity of Education and Research Management require a *professional network management*. University administration, student management and teaching functions necessitate separate security, access, services requirements and policies. In addition to the growing list of applications, ANA should be able to support and manage multiple and growing functionalities and applications external to universities.

Benefits of ANA: Professional Academic Network Management

1. Centralized administration to reduce support costs

Educational and research institutions in Albania typically operate with small IT staffs. To maintain acceptable software services and network performance with a reduced staff, efficient centralised management is critical. ANA may provide easy-to-use, web-based console and automated diagnostic capabilities to empower a small number of administrators to manage the software modules and networks.

2. Revenue generation to support specific education needs

By leveraging extra bandwidth allocation as a future member of GEANT (a pan-European data network dedicated to the research and education community), ANA will generate revenue and provide long-term sustainability for such initiatives as Research and Excellence Cluster, Computing Cloud, E-library, E-learning and future application development, network and hardware equipment upgrades and new software purchases.

3. Real-time, user-based applications

ANA will provide the software solution “U-Gov”, which is an integrated information system for university governance, aimed at defining objectives, strategies and means for achieving and monitoring results. Management of Human Resources, Research, Accounting, Planning and Student services should be operated based on an integrated architecture.

4. Complete network control, user and device monitoring

ANA will provide the expertise necessary to manage all of the technical elements of networked education-research connectivity. ANA will provide a combination of wireless and wire line (optical fiber), detect access points and determine when the network needs to be reconfigured to optimise performance. ANA will be able to monitor the network user live and understand how the network is performing, to tell when network problems occur and provide dedicated specialised Help Desks.

Future ANA Development

The Albanian academic system should regard ANA as an effective way to support 21st century education goals. Building blocks that rely on a solid network infrastructure such as communication tools, distance learning systems, student information systems, assessment tools, curriculum management systems and content and professional development services each will play an important role in improving student achievement, research and excellence clusters. ANA will manage all these systems and tools, ensuring they work seamlessly together. Furthermore, ANA will generate revenue to provide financial capacity for the development of specific-to-Albania future applications.

Lecturers will be able to share best practices and monitor project' progress more easily while they can work on joint projects across universities. Students will have easier access to learning resources both inside and outside school. Eventually, ANA will provide the vital infrastructure that will join everything together including Wide Area Networking, Internet filtering, E-mail hosting and the managed datacenter to hold the central U-Government system, E-learning resources and content for all students in Albania.

At some point in the future, in addition to the datacenter technology, ANA should have a true service provision package including:

- Wide Area Networking in a managed datacenter;
- U-Government platform hosted at the datacenter to provide a set of collaborative tools that allow administration, students and academic staff from different universities to share information and U-Gov software delivery of administration and academic services;
- Internet filtering as another important element so that there can be no on-line misbehavior, bullying and access to questionable sites.

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Academic Network Albania ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/132350.html>



News from Bosnia and Herzegovina

New Program to Create Innovation Support Network in BiH

The USAID-Sida FIRMA Project has launched an initiative to develop an Innovation Business Network (IBN) in Bosnia and Herzegovina to improve and support innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This new local network is linked to the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN), which was established by the European Commission and has more than 200 members from Europe and beyond.

The FIRMA Project initiated the network scheme earlier this year to encourage collaboration among organisations that support innovation. BiH must develop its innovative capabilities in order to develop a manufacturing sector that can respond to EU competitive pressures – a key element of the Copenhagen economic criteria for EU accession and the overarching objective of the USAID-Sida FIRMA Project.



FIRMA Project: Workshop on Effective Innovation Support for BiH enterprises, May 2011

In order to become a member, or Business Innovation Centre (BIC), however, organisations must fulfil certain criteria. They must demonstrate that they are stable in terms of finances and staff, and must offer (or intend to offer) some type of innovation services to SMEs.

As part of its initiative, the FIRMA Project has been presenting these criteria in a series of workshops around the country at which local research centres, development agencies, business groups and others that support BiH SMEs could complete a self-evaluation to determine whether they can become a BIC and join the BiH network. FIRMA is also helping BiH companies to prepare proposals and applications for funding in EU and other innovation support programs.

The USAID-Sida FIRMA Project – sponsored by the US and Swedish governments through their international development agencies, USAID and Sida – is a five-year project supporting sustainable economic growth, employment expansion and increased household incomes in BiH. The FIRMA Project focuses on three sectors of the economy – wood processing, tourism and metal processing.

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LINK FIRMA project ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/131873.html>

Info Days

In September 2011, the Ministry of Civil Affairs in cooperation with the University of East Sarajevo organised info days to present recent calls for proposals launched by the European Commission in FP7. The calls which were presented and discussed are open under the thematic priorities Health; Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology – KBBE as well as Environment (including Climate Change). The organisation of the info days on opportunities for researchers in FP7 was supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

Foundation for Innovation and Technological Development INTERA

A new foundation for innovation and technological development was established in Mostar. The aim of the INTERA foundation is to support innovativeness in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton (HNC), to strengthen the links between academia (two public universities are located in the area) and the business sector and to support initiatives that contribute to the development of economy, culture and education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The government of the HNC promised to support the work of INTERA in the future.

Women's Inventors Association "NOVA" in BiH

In cooperation with the Association of European Innovators (AEI) and the Pan-European University APERION Banja Luka, the Women's Inventors Association "NOVA" organised a conference dedicated to women's entrepreneurship and innovation.



Women's Inventors Association "NOVA"

This was an excellent opportunity for innovators, entrepreneurs and scholars to exchange experiences on the development of new technologies and to present their recent innovations. One outcome of the conference, held under the title "Women revitalize European creativity", was the establishment of the first association of women innovators and entrepreneurs in Europe – EWI.

Representatives of the governmental and non-governmental sector in BiH, the European Association of Inventors, French, German and Swedish associations of inventors, and innovators from Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina attended the conference which took place in Banja Luka on September 8 to 11, 2011. "It is our desire to create the preconditions for the development of programmes and strategies to protect intellectual property, marketing of new ideas, to exchange experiences on supporting innovation such as women and female entrepreneurship in civil society and government policies. In this way, we want to show that women from countries in transition can contribute to and participate in the construction of European prosperity", said Mrs Branka Kolar Mijatović, president of "NOVA", vice-chairwoman of the AEI and elected president of the EWI.

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LINK Ministry of Civil Affairs – Bosnia and Herzegovina ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/527.html>



News from Croatia

“Accelerating Innovation in Croatia”

The Business Innovation Center of Croatia (BICRO) is an Agency specialised in the development and implementation of governmental supporting programs for technology development and stimulating innovations in the Croatian business and scientific community. BICRO pursues two main strategic goals: (1) creating appropriate instruments for finance innovations and (2) development of business, scientific and technology infrastructure.

Proof of Concept Grant Fund (PoC)

The Proof of Concept Grant Fund (PoC) is a good example for a programme that matches both strategic goals of BICRO. Looking at benefits to beneficiaries, PoC is definitely a **new funding instrument** designed to support researchers from Croatian universities and research institutes, as well as small entrepreneurs to help them to turn their ideas into a global business. On the other hand, the **development and strengthening of business, scientific and technology infrastructure** has been initiated through the implementation process of the PoC. The Technology Transfer Offices of the Universities of Split and Zagreb and four TEHCRO centres in Varaždin, Rijeka, Osijek and Čakovec were involved in this process as “recognized centres”. The network of recognized centres administers the Fund and helps with project preparation and monitoring.

To be investor-ready

PoC is a new program designed and implemented by BICRO with the purpose to help SMEs and scientists to bridge the gap between their ideas or scientific results of commercial potential. Thus, a “Proof of Concept” is needed to demonstrate that a new process or technique is feasible and can potentially be used for commercial application. For a new business seeking investments, a successful PoC will give potential investors the assurance of technical viability or visualisation of a prototype or scale-up process that will help a company to attract customers and investors. The PoC enables the beneficiaries to undergo comprehensive commercial and technical verification and validation of research results with commercial potential, in order to reduce technical and commercial risks, identify the most appropriate commercialisation strategy and protect the invention in the ongoing commercialisation process. It also includes activities such as building a prototype, scale-up, patent application and technical feasibility demonstration.

Three calls for project proposals – 364 outline applications

Since BICRO launched the PoC programme in May 2010, three calls for proposals were published. The response was very positive; requested funding in each call exceeded the available budget of BICRO. Grants between EUR 5,000.– and EUR 50,000.– are available, with applicants expected to provide matching funding amounting to 25% of the total funding.

Number of outline applications	364
Number of full applications	238
Requested amount from the PoC Grant Fund	EUR 4,848,000
Number of approved projects	72
Amounts disbursed from the PoC Grant Fund	EUR 1,729,000
Number projects contracted with SMEs	46
Number of projects contracted with scientific organisations	26

Besides, 27 projects have been successfully finished and resulted in six patent applications, one patent protection, 17 basic prototypes and five techni-

cal feasibility demonstrations. Also, cooperation between the R&D sector and private companies has been achieved.

Priority sectors

There are several priority sectors for PoC financing, but the largest number of funded projects comes from the ICT sector:

- Digital technologies, ICT (22 projects)
- Health technologies (10 projects)
- Food and agricultural technology (8 projects)
- Energy (15 projects)
- Electronics, advanced materials (14 projects)
- Other (3 projects).

The positive response to the PoC program and its results that are already visible motivated us to further innovate and to bring our clients the needed and appropriate supportive measures to support the process of turning innovative ideas and research results into profitable business.

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Project example:	“Shell guardian”
Beneficiary:	Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries
Region:	South Croatia
Sector:	Agriculture and marine resources
Approved budget:	EUR 7.182,00
Recognized Center in charge of monitoring:	University of Split, Center for Science and Technology Development, Technology Transfer Office
Project summary:	The main objective of the project is to develop a device that emits specifically designed underwater sound signals at the shellfish farms, in order to stop the intense fish predation on young mussels. More than forty percent of the mussel (<i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i>) production loss is a result of the fish predation. Therefore, acoustic signals, which would reject the predation causative agents, will contribute to the economic sustainability of the shellfish production. After optimisation of the prototype, the process of protecting intellectual property rights will be initiated to protect innovation, achieve more favorable position in the Croatian and international market and provide alternative incomes through IP. To ensure the maximum potential commercialisation, a strategy will be developed in cooperation with the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), University of Split, in order to use their contact network and the base of the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), for the purpose of promotion and finding partners interested in licensing, cooperation or investment. The project is still in progress.



News from the FYR of Macedonia

5th RENAISSANCE Civitas+ Conference

The 5th RENAISSANCE Civitas+ conference and annual meeting was held in Skopje on September 7, 2011. The conference was entitled "Clean urban transport solutions for accession, pre-accession countries and the Western Balkans". Funding options for clean urban transport and examples of measures implemented by Civitas+ cities in Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria were presented. The conference was well-attended by both municipal officers as well as international and local politicians.

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LINKS Ministry of Education and Science – FYR of Macedonia ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/87.html>
RENAISSANCE Civitas+ ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/132357.html>

Two Info Days on Promotion of FP7 Open Calls

The Ministry of Education and Science organised two Info events in September 2011, dedicated to the promotion of the 2012/13 Open Calls in FP7. The first Info Day took place on September 12 at the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy in Skopje. It was devoted to the research community and academia and was attended by more than 70 participants. National Contact Points presented information related to almost all important themes under the Cooperation, Ideas, People and Capacity programmes. The second Info Day took place on September 26 and was organised in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, targeting at the business community, SMEs and industry.

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Researcher's Night 2011 in Bitola

The University St. Kliment Ohridski in Bitola hosted the "Researcher's Night" for the third time. The main event was held on the evening of September 23 on Magnolia Square in Bitola as an open science fare, parallel with events in 320 cities in 32 European countries. Research organisations, SMEs and NGOs presented their research activities. The manifestation started earlier the same day with the lecture "Marie Sklodowska Curie – The first steps into the deep snow", held at the Institute of Physics at the Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, and the Forum "Women in Science", held at the EU Info Center in Skopje. The events were highly appreciated, particularly by young people. The estimated number of visitors at the evening events in Bitola and in Skopje is about 5,000.



Poster advertising the Researcher's Night 2011 in Bitola.

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LINK St. Kliment Ohridsky University Bitola ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/19803.html>

The Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy at the University Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje

The Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy at the University Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje (FTM-UKIM; founded in 1959) covers the educational process and scientific research work in the field of technology and metallurgy, as well as all types of materials, food production and textile confection. FTM consists of six departments with over 100 employees and about 40 post-graduate students.



Lab at the FTM-UKIM

The laboratories of FTM are equipped, amongst others, with an X-ray diffraction unit (wide angle), differential scanning calorimetry – PE DSC-7, a thermogravimetric analyser – PE Dyanmond TGA/DTA, a dynamo-mechanical and thermal analyser – PE Dyanmond DMTA, a Fourie trasform infra-red spectrofotometer – PE FTIR and a scanning electron microscope. The FTM-UKIM has established wide cooperation in the frame of national, bilateral and international projects.

Food and feed safety and quality

"Reference" project activities at FTM include:

1. Improving Academia – Industry Links in Food Safety and Quality (TEMPUS; 2010–2013)
2. Evaluation of the research capacity and development of a strategy for further growth in chemistry in general and in food science particular (FP7-REGPOT; 2009–2010)
3. Bioencapsulation multiscale interaction analysis (COST; 2008–2010)

2. Nanomaterials and Nanotechnology

"Reference" project activities at FTM include:

1. NMP TeAM II- Improving the services of the NMP NCP Network through Trans-national Activities II (FP7; 2011–2013)
2. Nanocomposites based on biodegradable polymers and ceramic fillers (bilateral project with Slovenia; 2010–2012)
3. NATO-Advanced Study Institute Summer School on Nanotechnologies basis for advanced sensors (2010)

3. Environment

"Reference" project activities at FTM include:

1. Creation of university-enterprise cooperation networks for education on sustainable technologies (TEMPUS; 2010–2013)
2. Reducing Fuel Consumption and Air Pollution of Industrial Furnaces by High Efficiency Pebble Heaters and Fluid-Dynamical Valve (Inco Kopernicus programme; 2002–2009)
3. Integrated treatment of industrial wastes towards prevention of regional water resources contamination (FP6; 2004–2007)

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News from Montenegro

Darko Petrušić Appointed Deputy Minister for Science

Darko Petrušić earned his M.Sc. degree in London, majoring in Information Engineering, and was declared the best student in his generation. His areas of research interest and expertise are all areas of IT. Darko Petrušić was the Advisor to the Minister for IT in the field of e-government in British Columbia Government, Canada until September 2009 and has had his own consulting company. He has won several prestigious awards.

LINK Darko Petrušić ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/130664.html>

Open Science Days

The Ministry of Science organised a big promotional event called OPEN DAYS OF SCIENCE from September 19 to 24 in four locations in Podgorica. Organisers managed to slide the door of science open and to give all interested citizens the opportunity to peek into this magic world. The programme included the major IT event Knowledge Factory, the EU Science and Innovation Day and the Researchers' Night, as well as a large number of side events. The aim of the OPEN DAYS OF SCIENCE is to stimulate the development and affirmation of science in Montenegro, to establish a tradition of investment in knowledge and development potential, and to bring science close to citizens of all ages and levels of education.



European Research Day

European Research and Innovation Day

On September 22, the Ministry of Science organised a European Research and Innovation Day, aiming to inform the research community about developments in the main European instruments for financing research and innovation – FP7, CIP and EUREKA.

Ms Tania Friederichs (DG R&I) presented the achievements of Montenegro in FP7 and introduced the new EU policy orientation in preparation of Horizon 2020. The agenda comprised topics on Marie Curie Actions and REGPOT as areas of FP7 with significant capacity building opportunities. Mr Svatopluk Halada (EUREKA Secretariat) presented basic information about EUREKA, while a detailed training for potential project managers was held the following day.



Eureka Training

Government of Montenegro Adopts Feasibility Study for Setting Up Science and Technological Park

On September 29, 2011, the government of Montenegro adopted the feasibility study for setting up a Science and Technological Park (STP), developed by a consortium of five organisations with extensive experience with setting up STP in the region and lead by WUS Austria.

The study gave strategic guidelines and defined the cornerstones of the STP profile. The future park shall include characteristics of a technology park, an incubator and a business park, and initiate R&D in the different regions of Montenegro. The STP shall foster both academic and industrial R&D and build the basis for academic-industrial interaction.

Flash News from the Ministry of Science

- The annual call for co-financing scientific-research activities was announced in May 2011. The call for financing new national scientific research projects is endowed with EUR 5,000,000.– and co-financed by seven ministries.
- The Ministry of Science, the Directorate for Development of SMEs and Scientific and Technological Park Tecnopolis in Valenzano (Bari, Italy) signed an agreement on cooperation in the field of innovation in scientific and business sectors on July 19, 2011.
- Six Montenegrin research teams have been accepted to be involved in the current European COST actions. Montenegro expects to obtain the conditions for formal COST membership application this year.
- In June 2011, Montenegro applied for EUREKA membership. The first call for EUREKA projects will be published in 2012.
- Five bilateral projects have been accepted for financing at the Joint Meeting of the Austrian-Montenegrin Committee, held in Vienna on June 24.
- All 25 bilateral Montenegrin-Slovenian projects have been positively evaluated.

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LINK Ministry of Science – Montenegro ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/88.html>

Research Managers' Workshop: "Knowledge Transfer: Tools and Mechanisms for supporting Innovation"

The WBC-INCO.NET project has successfully organised a one day workshop for RTD stakeholders from the WBC in Bečići under the title "Knowledge Transfer: Tools and Mechanisms for supporting Innovation".

The organisation was supported by the local partner DDSME and the task leader SEERC from Thessalonica, Greece. The workshop was attended by 31 participants and 27 travel grants were awarded.

LINK Knowledge Transfer Workshop ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/121122.html>



News from Serbia

“Synchrotron Trieste meets Serbian Scientists”

The Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Italian Embassy in Belgrade and the Central European Initiative organised a meeting under the title “Synchrotron Trieste meets Serbian Scientists”.

More than thirty eminent researchers from eleven research organisations participated in the event held on June 27, 2011. The meeting was opened by HE Italian Ambassador in Belgrade Armando Varricchio and guests were welcomed by Assistant Minister for International Cooperation and European Integration at the Ministry of Education and Science, Viktor Nedović and President of Synchrotron Trieste Carlo Rizzuto.



Viktor Nedovic and Carlo Rizzuto

In the discussion that followed the presentation of good practice in CEI countries and the Serbian capacity in this field, participants agreed that the achievements and potential of the Serbian scientific community in these areas certainly will be strengthened through future co-operation.

First Session of the Serbia-China Scientific and Technological Cooperation Committee

In accordance with the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of Serbia, the 1st Session of the China-Serbia Scientific and Technological Cooperation Committee was held in Belgrade on May 19, 2011. The Chinese Party of the Committee was headed by Cao Jianlin, Vice Minister of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China. The Serbian Party of the Committee was headed by Radivoje Mitrović, State Secretary at the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia. According to the regulations of both Parties, the Committee selected 12 bilateral projects.

Serbia joined DARIAH (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities)

The mission of DARIAH is to enhance and support digitally-enabled research across the humanities and arts. DARIAH aims to develop and maintain an infrastructure in support of ICT-based research practices. At the beginning of September 2011 Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) signed the Memorandum of Understanding with DARIAH. “My colleagues and I are thrilled that the Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities will be coordinating DARIAH activities in Serbia,” said BCDH director Toma Tasovac. “This is an important milestone in our efforts to strengthen digital humanities as a scholarly discipline in our country and DARIAH will provide a framework for Serbian researchers in the humanities to tackle important issues such as open access, data management, digital curation, standardization and interoperability.”

LINK Belgrade Center for Digital Humanities (BCDH) ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/131886.html>

From Excellent Research to Innovative Products

The second forum of national technology platforms in Serbia was held on June 1, 2011, at the University of Belgrade.



A special session: From Excellent Research to Innovative Products

The organiser of the conference was the Academy of Engineering Sciences in partnership with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Education and Science. The topic of this forum was the University and its role in the revitalisation and transformation of the technological base of industry. As part of the National Technology Platforms Forum, a special session “From excellent research to innovative products” was organised in order to present the results of technological development projects in electronics, telecommunications and information technology, financed in the period 2008 to 2010. The forum was designed as a new framework for the system recovery and re-engineering industry of Serbia and the Ministry showed a concrete way of demonstrating the real potential of domestic science for industry, offering innovative solutions in the field of ICT. More than 60 projects were directly represented and project managers provided explanations on the types and scope of their results.

CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology Trieste, Italy – 19 October 2011



Group foto taken at the CEI Ministerial Meeting

For the first time in the history of the Central European Initiative (CEI) the Serbian Presidency has organised a Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology, held in Trieste on October 19, 2011. The opening session at the Sincrotrone Trieste “Elettra” Laboratory and the afternoon session at the CEI headquarters were chaired by Žarko Obradović, Serbian Minister of Education and Science. (Further details on this event are provided on page 5 of this journal.)

LINK CEI Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/calendar/129161.html>

AUTHOR Željka Dukić ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/178.html>

LINK Ministry of Education and Science – Serbia ■ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/91.html>

Recent developments in SEE-ERA.NET PLUS



Running from 2009 to 2013 and funding 23 joint research projects, SEE-ERA.NET PLUS is one of the key multilateral funding activities in the S&T domain.

In essence, the involved 17 partners and the EC provide three million Euros for multilateral research projects. Funding is administered by the principle of a common pot, a trust account established at the German partner PT-DLR.

Funded projects will end 2012 (although prolongation might be possible), but SEE-ERA.NET PLUS, project partners from EU MS and all WBC are on the lookout for future multilateral funding activities. According to an internal assessment in preparation for, and the opinions expressed during the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Steering Board Meeting in May 2011, all partners are highly committed and would like to continue joint funding in the following years.

The experiences with EC co-funding in the ERA-NET Plus scheme are perceived very positively by the partners; the contribution from the EC is essential for future motivation and continuation of the successful cooperation. The interplay of WBC-INCO.NET and SEE-ERA.NET PLUS is important for future

joint activities. The close cooperation between those two projects can support thematic call priority setting and support the decision making required for a follow-up.

Main challenges identified for the next years and expected windows of opportunities such as the INCO work programme 2013 might lead to a shifted focus – from the FP7-associated WBC to the wider Danube region – and a readjustment of research fields covered by future joint calls, covering more applied research domains or particular activities with impact on the innovation systems in the region.

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LINK Funded projects in SEE-ERA.NET PLUS ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/44489.html>

EVAL-INCO – Evaluators Database for International Cooperation

EVAL-INCO is a database of evaluators which is used to facilitate the assessment of proposals for research projects, submitted in the context of the Joint Calls of regional ERA-NETs like SEE-ERA.NET PLUS.

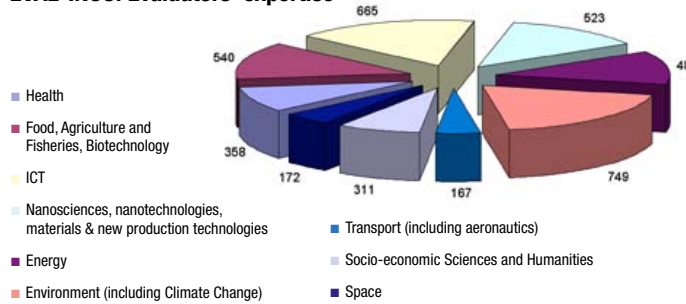
The database EVAL-INCO is directly linked with the web-based Call Management System of the Project Management Agency c/o German Aerospace Center (PT-DLR) "PT-Outline", providing full functionalities for the administration of the assessment process.

EVAL-INCO was firstly used during the implementation of the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Joint Call in winter 2009/2010. PT-DLR scientific officers assigned a total of 97 evaluators from 24 different EU Member States, the WBC and Turkey to the 163 Expressions of Interests (resp. the 71 full proposals) targeting several different topics out of the fields of ICT and AgroFood. Finally, 540 reviews have been prepared by the EVAL-INCO evaluators.

After its successful application to the SEE-ERA.NET PLUS Joint Call, EVAL-INCO was also used in the implementation of joint calls in other international ERA-NETs like the BLACK SEA ERA.NET and ERA.NET RUS (an ERA.NET for cooperation with Russia). In addition, EVAL-INCO supported also the international peer review process in national calls in Serbia and Russia.

Well, where do the evaluators in EVAL-INCO come from? As an initial step in late 2008, the "International Association for the Promotion of Cooperation with Scientists from the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union" (INTAS) – already being in liquidation – contacted all evaluators (more than 5400) of the outdated INTAS evaluator database and referred to the invitation of PT-DLR to register in the new EVAL-INCO database. Complemented by peer reviewers from the FP7 database, the nomination of peer reviewers by respective ERA.NET consortia partners and due to additional call PR for potential evaluators in various respective newsletters and via other channels, more than 3000 peer reviewers from around 60 countries have fully registered in EVAL-INCO at current (please see figure on the right).

EVAL-INCO: Evaluators' expertise



During the registration process, each evaluator is requested to choose keywords from two different lists in order to characterise his or her expertise. While one of the lists follows a more academic approach (with a total of 289 keywords), the other is derived from the current FP7 programme of the European Commission (comprising 271 keywords). In addition, the evaluator has the option to upload a CV and to describe his or her expertise in two free text fields. All personal data in EVAL-INCO are held strictly confidential according to the privacy statement of PT-DLR. Since EVAL-INCO is a living database, PT-DLR would like to invite experts in all fields of S&T to register (see link below) in order to be prepared for the upcoming Joint Calls.

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LINKS Registration for the EVAL-INCO database ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/132528.html>
International Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research at the Project Management Agency c/o German Aerospace Center (PT-DLR) ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/229.html>

Evaluation of Research Institutions in Kosovo

(under UNSCR 1244)

The National Research Council adopted “Guidelines for Evaluation of Research Institutions in Kosovo” based on best practices for benchmarking RTDI institutions from accession countries.

Pursuant to the Law on Scientific Research, the Government of Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) requested the National Research Council (NRC) to carry out an evaluation of public research institutions. According to the Law, public research institutions are the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Albanological Institute, the Institute of History and Universities.

The NRC decided to develop a methodology which is suitable for a range of different institutions, although the current plan is to evaluate the Albanological Institute and the Institute of History. NRC based its work on the experience of the RECORD Thematic Network project supported by the European Commission STRATA policy initiative. The main objective of this Network was to assist



The National and University Library

in learning the practice of benchmarking RTDI (research, technological development and innovation) organisations. In 2004, the Network published “The RECORD Manual – Benchmarking Innovative Research Organisations in European Accession Countries”.

In June 2011, the NRC adopted the document “Guidelines for evaluation of research institutions in Kosovo”. Given the level of development of RTD activities in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), the NRC considers that research institutions in Kosovo cannot be benchmarked based on parameters generally accepted in Europe, but the evaluation process should rather raise awareness of all parties on the actual situation and come up with recommendations that would improve the position of respective institutions in society.

Specific objectives of the evaluation are:

- to establish an inventory of scientific contributions of each institution, and analyse the factors which have contributed to its successes and failures,
- to help improve the performance of research institutions,
- to inform decision makers on fund allocation,
- to assist targeted institutions in building a culture of continuous self-evaluation.

Benchmark Groups

Based on the Law and best practices from European countries, the following benchmark groups were established:

1. General benchmarks (vision, mission, values, etc.)
2. Critical mass (researchers, infrastructure, investments, etc.)
3. Progressive management (strategy, management, ICT infrastructure, etc.)
4. Human resource management (staff development, development plans, etc.)
5. Innovative and creative teams (projects, innovations, international and domestic publications, supervising PhD candidates, etc.)
6. Mobility of researchers (mobility of domestic researchers, hosting foreign researchers, etc.)
7. Links to users (consultancies, commercial services, etc.)
8. Financial issues



The Academy of Science and Arts

For each of the eight benchmark groups, a certain number of benchmarks was defined to guide the evaluation process. For example, benchmark group 5 – Innovative and Creative Teams – consists of four subgroups including the following:

Projects:

- Research projects coordinated by the institution and their financial value,
- Research projects in which the institution participates as a partner and their financial value,
- National projects and their financial value,
- International projects and their financial value.

Innovations:

- Innovations in the last five years,
- Number of patents in the last five years,
- Plans for innovation.

National and international publications:

- National publications of the institution,
- International publications of the institution,
- Publications of researchers in domestic journals,
- Publications of researchers in international journals,
- Number of citations.

The evaluation procedure envisions the following major steps:

1. NRC initiates the evaluation process;
2. An evaluation team of 3 to 5 NRC members and international evaluators is established;
3. The Institution concerned produces a self-evaluation report based on an agreed format;
4. The Evaluation Team analyses the self-evaluation report and develops a plan for the site visit;
5. A 2 to 3 day site visit is conducted;
6. The draft evaluation report is shared with the institution;
7. The Evaluation Team produces the Evaluation Report and submits it to the NRC,
8. NRC reviews the Evaluation Report and establishes its final form.

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EVAL-INNO

Fostering Evaluation Competencies in Research, Technology and Innovation in the SEE Region



Fostering Evaluation Competencies
EVAL-INNO
in Research, Technology and
Innovation in the SEE Region



EVAL-INNO is a project funded under the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme running from May 2011 until April 2014. The key objective of EVAL-INNO is to strengthen regional as well as national evaluation capacities in order to improve the framework conditions for RTDI policies, programmes, institutions and projects.

Research, Technological and Innovation policy is a complex and increasingly broad field of public intervention. In this context, evaluations are important both as providers of information and (potentially) significant adjustment tools for generating and maintaining RTDI policy. In front of more and more differentiating RTDI policy and funding mixes in SEE, which increasingly leverage national budgets and bridge between different policy fields, the absence of sufficient endogenous RTDI evaluation capacities causes a serious bottleneck for the entire innovation management cycle.

Some of the identified key challenges regarding the evaluation capacities in SEE and particularly in the WBC relate

- to a lack of qualified evaluators for programme, institutional and policy evaluations in the field of RTDI as well as methodological deficits and weaknesses;
- to the fact that evaluation beneficiaries at policy-level are dispersed across sectors and governance levels, but exchange among them is limited;
- to a lack of knowledge on professional tendering procedures (incl. public procurement laws) to obtain the best evaluation results as well as
- to difficulties to access RTDI evaluation information and good practices and a general lack of completed good-practice RTDI programme-institution- and policy evaluations.

In summary, this means that RTDI capacities and results in SEE and particularly in the WBC are still limited and public interventions are deemed necessary. Under tight financial regimes however, public spending for RTDI has to identify the right rationales and mechanisms for performance based innovation funding right from the start.

Evaluations are a proper tool for ensuring transparency and accountability and contribute to an efficient new public management. Ex-ante, interim, terminal and ex-post evaluations have to be properly and reasonably tendered as well, and they have to be implemented in a way to secure strategic intelligence building and evidence-based decision making.

Generally, evaluation excellence can be promoted in many different ways: by elaborating harmonised standards and guidelines, by providing more education opportunities (MA and PhD programmes in evaluation theory and practice), by providing more and better access to quality training, or by sharing good practices through connectivity among evaluators – just to name some.

The EVAL-INNO project focuses on capacity building and institutional support in SEE

Its main target groups are policy-makers, policy-delivery systems as well as RTDI evaluators and potential RTDI evaluators in the region. In particular EVAL-INNO aims:

- to promote the role of RTDI evaluation as a crucial condition for a reflexive learning innovation system
- to develop needed capacities and competencies for comprehensive RTDI evaluations
- to provide procedural and methodological know-how and tool-kits both on the side of evaluators and on the side of awarding authorities.

An easily accessible and systematically structured “**Regional RTDI Evaluation Platform**” is programmed and subdivided in four distinct databases (Strategic documents – including evaluation studies and reports; Innovation infrastructures; Innovation stakeholders and actors; Evaluators and potential evaluators) which will be continuously updated. The Platform serves the information needs of both evaluators and awarding authorities (agencies, ministries). For the target groups, distinct training modules are prepared and implemented with an emphasis on methodological and procedural issues. Special training and knowledge for an optimum use of public procurement for RTDI evaluations is provided too. Different activities will be implemented in all six participating countries while partners from other SEE countries, especially WBC will also be invited to participate in the **trainings and capacity building workshops**.

In addition, **three RTDI programme evaluations** and a **comparative benchmarking** of intermediary innovation organisations will be carried out based on sound methodological designs. The elaboration of widely accepted **RTDI evaluation standards** will contribute to fostering an evaluation culture and ethics in the region. The standards will be published in English and translated into at least five languages from the region depending on their reception. Outputs and results of EVAL-INNO will be promoted through a large international conference which will take place in Vienna in early 2014. Furthermore, a business plan for sustaining the “Regional RTDI Evaluation Platform”, based on a fee-based membership system, will be developed.

The EVAL-INNO project is coordinated by the Centre for Social Innovation (Austria) with partners from Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Montenegro and Serbia:

- Applied Research and Communications Fund – Bulgaria
- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens –
Special Account for Research Grants – Greece
- Public Foundation for the Development of Industry – Hungary
- University of Montenegro (International Relations Office) – Montenegro
- Mihajlo Pupin Institute – Serbia

Despite the fact that innovation systems in the partner countries show a variety of policy mixes and institutional settings, all partners share the belief that an upgrading of evaluation capacities for RTDI policies, programmes and institutions towards international state-of-art standards will contribute to evidence-based decision making in RTDI policy, improve the framework conditions and pave the way for future innovation.

Please consult the EVAL-INNO website to check for further details on the project (see link below) or contact Martin Felix Gajdusek (project coordinator) if you have any further questions.

AUTHORS Martin Felix Gajdusek ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/287.html>
Ines Marinković ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/94539.html>

LINK EVAL-INNO ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/131640.html>

Innovation for Competitiveness – Evaluation of the Innovation and Competitiveness Support Programmes in Serbia

The Improved SME Competitiveness and Innovation Project (ICIP), in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, organised a very successful workshop 'Innovation Support Dialog – Innovation for Competitiveness?' on September 29 at the Mihajlo Pupin Institute in Belgrade, Serbia. The overall purpose of the workshop was to develop effective mechanisms for continuous inter-ministerial policy coordination and learning in all policy areas affecting enterprise competitiveness. As a part of the workshop, the results of the survey of nine SME competitiveness and innovation support programmes in Serbia were presented as well.

Specifically, the workshop was used to present best practice experiences of EU Member States on the importance of collaboration between science and economy and its positive impact on enterprise innovation and competitiveness. The key speakers were Slavo Radošević from the Centre for Comparative Economics, University College London and Gerd Meier zu Köcker, Director of the Institute for Innovation and Technology in Berlin. Djuro Kutlaca presented results and recommended policy coordination with improved measures for innovation and competitiveness that derived from the survey conducted by ICIP.

Evaluation of the innovation and competitiveness support programmes in Serbia

The ICIP has undertaken an in-depth analysis of the innovation and competitiveness support programmes in Serbia, aiming at raising awareness for strong policy coordination among main stakeholders to further adapt supporting tools in accordance with the needs of enterprises as well as business and innovation service providers.

The result of the assessment will also contribute to an improved service-friendly climate and new qualification of programme management and support staff.

In total, nine SME innovation and competitiveness support measures were evaluated:

- Project for Supporting SMEs to Invest in Innovation
- Project for Supporting the Development of Competitiveness of SMEs and Innovation
- Project EEN (Enterprise Europe Network) in Serbia 2009–2010
- CIP/EIP Programme in Serbia 2009–2010
- Competition for Best Technology Innovation
- EU FP7 Programme
- Business Incubator Network
- Innovation Fairs
- Innovation Projects

These programmes are implemented by the Government of Serbia and managed by the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (MoERD), the Ministry of Science and Technological Development (mSTD) – integrated within the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) since March 2011 – and the National Agency for Regional Development (NARD). For the assessment of the programmes, a sample group of 67 enterprises in total was consulted, using questionnaires and telephone contacts. In-depth interviews were held with managers of the support programmes. The assessment of the innovation and competitiveness support programmes is done against the government strategy for development of competitive and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises and the related policy aims and expected intermediate results. Reports were produced on each of the assessed programmes and support activities, including main findings and recommendations, which are the basis for the Summary Report. The individual reports, as well as a Summary Report –

Recommendations and Proposed Corresponding Actions – are available as separate documents. The assessment of programmes including the individual report formulation was undertaken by a team of the Mihajlo Pupin Institute, Belgrade, consisting of Senior Expert Djuro Kutlaca and Junior Expert Sanja Popović-Pantić as well as team members Dušica Semenčenko, (as MPI expert) and with the technical support of Marija Mosurović and Zorica Mitrović.

AUTHORS Djuro Kutlaca ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/users/1086.html>
Mihajlo Pupin Institute ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/1087.html>

LINKS Download the presentation and the reports ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131773.html>
Read more about the Improved SME Competitiveness and Innovation Project (ICIP) ▪ <http://www.wbc-inco.net/organisation/131769.html>

Useful resources on evaluation

As the profession and practice of evaluation has grown, a considerable library of evaluation guides articles, books and evaluation reports has been published. Here are some useful resources on evaluation and specific aspects of the evaluation process.

Documents

RTD Evaluation Toolbox: Assessing the Socio-Economic Impact of RTD-Policies

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131822.html>

Evaluation Standards in Research and Technology Policy (fteval Platform)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131828.html>

Evaluation of Cluster Policy: A Methodological Overview

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/document/131685.html>

Online resources

EU Framework Programme Evaluation and Monitoring

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/55637.html>

European RTD Evaluation Network

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/131838.html>

European Evaluation Society (including a comprehensive library with evaluation resources)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/131834.html>

EC EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of socio-economic development (including a Guide and three Sourcebooks)

LINK <http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/link/131836.html>

Evaluating Development Co-operation. A summary of key norms and standards



The Network on Development Evaluation is a subsidiary body of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) at the OECD. A key component of the Network's mission is to develop internationally agreed norms and standards to strengthen evaluation policy and practice. This publication contains the main elements of the OECD DAC's approach to evaluation, including evaluation criteria, core principles and quality standards.

LINKS

Download this publication ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/document/131788.html>

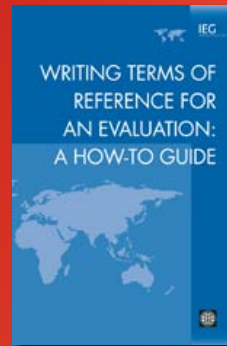
DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/document/131794.html>

DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/document/131782.html>

Writing Terms of Reference for an Evaluation: A How-To Guide



The terms of reference (ToR) document published in 2011 by the Independent Evaluation Group (IEB-WB) defines all aspects of how a consultant or a team conducts an evaluation. It defines the objectives and the scope of the evaluation, outlines the responsibilities of the consultant or team, and provides a clear description of the resources available to conduct the study. A quality checklist and some Internet resources are included in this publication to foster good practice in writing ToRs for evaluations and reviews of projects and programmes.

LINK

Download the guide at ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/document/131800.html>

INNO-Appraisal: Understanding Evaluation of Innovation Policy in Europe



The aim of the INNO-Appraisal project was to contribute to a better understanding of how evaluation is currently used in innovation policy in Europe, and how evaluation contributes to policy making. INNO-Appraisal was the first systematic attempt to provide an overview of evaluation practices in Europe. By doing so, it sought to achieve a second, equally important aim: to render evaluation practice accessible to the policy and evaluation community. A third aim was to contribute to a better-informed evaluation discourse across a better-networked evaluation community in Europe.

LINKS

Download the report ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/document/131806.html>

Innovation Policy Appraisals Repository (IPAR) ▀

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/link/131813.html>

EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

ICEIRD 2012 Conference

May 28–29, 2012, Sofia, Bulgaria

The International Conference for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development (ICEIRD) Consortium was formally established in 2008. The theme of the ICEIRD 2012 Conference is "Regional Development for Unleashing Growth throughout South-Eastern Europe". The call for contributions is currently open and authors are invited to submit abstracts of papers by December 12, 2011.

LINK

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/calendar/119646.html>

10th Biennial Conference of the European Evaluation Society

October 3–5, 2012, Helsinki, Finland

The international conference will take place under the theme "Evaluation in the networked society: New concepts, New challenges, New solutions". The Conference will help draw evaluation lessons learnt in distinct sectors and regions of the world. It will offer participants a wide choice of vehicles for the transmission of evaluation experience and knowledge: keynote speeches, paper presentations, panel debates, posters, etc. The pre-conference workshops will take place on October 1–2. The formal call for abstracts is expected to be issued by the end of November 2012.

LINK

<http://www.wbc-inc0.net/object/calendar/131841.html>

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