



Editorial

Dear readers,

Some of you may have been wondering about the delay of this newsletter. But, the wait has not been in vain as we can now report on the most important news regarding the implementation of the Steering Platform. The date for the next meeting has been set and the invitations have been sent out (see this page main article). The German EU-presidency is inviting to Berlin, together with the European Commission. DG Research has also provided us with a report on the association status of the Western Balkan countries in the Seventh Framework Programme (see page 2). FP7 was launched on January 1, 2007 and therefore we have dedicated a great part of this eJournal to aspects of international cooperation in this major funding programme (pages 3-5; 9 and 10 dealing with the thematic focus on Food, Agriculture, Fisheries, and Biotechnology). We have also focused on national initiatives by Turkey, Austria, Greece and the Netherlands (page 6 and 7), and an introduction to the Croatian S&T system (page 8) is included. In addition some news from Bill, Kosovo and Montenegro is given (page 12). COST and SEE-ERA.NET introduce opportunities for WBC researchers (page 11, 13), you learn more about see-science.eu reports (S&T country reports and a needs/offer-matrix) and possibilities for information gathering through eNewsletters. We hope that it was worth waiting for all of you and we are looking forward to the next publication, which is due in May 07 - but continuous updates are always available on our project-website <http://see-science.eu/>!

Elke Dall
Project Manager of the Information Office see-science.eu

Imprint

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The German EU Council Presidency 2007

Education, research and technology are essential for the future of Europe as a basis for sustainable growth, increased employment, and cultural and social cohesion. The German Council Presidency, in order to take into account the question of the future of Europe and its pending constitutional process will operate within the following general framework in the fields of education and research:

- < the Lisbon Strategy to strengthen Europe's competitiveness,
- < the 50th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome on March 25, 2007,
- < the launch of the Life long Learning Programme and greater synergy between national and European measures,
- < the launch of the Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7) and the establishment of the European Research Council (ERC) and the Security Research Programme.



“Mit Forschung gewinnen” – “Success through research”

The review of the EU budgets, which is due in 2008, offers an opportunity for a in-depth examination of the needs and requirements of research in all the areas mentioned. The aim is to ensure not only that the 3 % target is achieved (which is the task of the Member States) but also that investments in research are increased at European level.

The new Research Framework Programme will include for the first time the key global issue of security under the thematic priority 'Security Research'.

And for the very first time, all the Specific Programmes of the Research Framework Programme will be open to cooperation with third countries. Following the adoption of FP7, the European Commission supported by the German Presidency will present a Communication during this Presidency concerning the further development of the European Research Area.

Until FP7, basic research had been reserved for national funding, whereas the focus of the FP was always on industrial research. A new chapter for European research funding is opened with the establishment of the ERC. The new knowledge that will be generated will provide a starting point for future innovations and for establishing and opening up markets. Excellent frontier research based innovations will help to overcome barriers, create new jobs and secure existing jobs, acting as an important element of the value added chain.

New Project Member in see-science.eu

In the previous issue, we introduced you to the team of see-science.eu and the two institutions carrying out the work: the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI), with Elke Dall as project manager, and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG). The new member of the project is Elli Tzatzani-Stepanovic, an expert in International Cooperation in FP7, who supports Ralf König in the Department of International Cooperation and Mobility in the European and International Programmes (EIP) at FFG.



see-science.eu Usage Statistics

More than 230 users have registered on the website of see-science.eu, which has received around 20,000 page requests since its launch in August 2006. To our readers the most interesting pages (available also for users without registration) were in the 'News' section: 8 Million euro to enhance the 'Research Potential' in the Western Balkans [<http://see-science.eu/news/776.htm>] and Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICAs) with the Balkans in FP7 [<http://see-science.eu/news/754.htm>]. Both have received more than 1,000 individual hits since January 2007.

see-science.eu Registration

In order to follow the links provided in this publication, registration at our website is required. Just submit your details via the webform: <http://see-science.eu/users/apply>

Specific initiatives of the German Council Presidency are directed towards the development of the European Research Area e.g. the discussion of the better use of structural funds concerning FP7 and of intellectual property rights at public research and higher education institutions.

For more information follow the link at <http://see-science.eu/link/1017.html>

Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries

The German Council Presidency agrees with the Team Presidencies (Portugal and Slovenia) to continue the development of the European perspective of the Western Balkan countries.

Regarding research, the integration of the Western Balkans in the European Research Area through instruments like the SEE-ERA.NET and the support of interregional cooperation is a priority for the cooperation of the German Federal Ministry on Education and Research with the WBCs.

In June 2006, the European Commission and the Austrian EU Council Presidency jointly launched the Steering Platform on research for the Western Balkan countries in Vienna.

The Steering Platform is to be used as a forum to bring together ideas and means and share information and experience, as was said in Vienna. To this end, the German EU Presidency and the European Commission are currently inviting the Western Balkan countries and the European Member States to attend the next meeting of the Steering Platform. It will take place in Berlin on March 29, 2007, back to back with the SEE-ERA.NET Steering Board Meeting. The German Presidency wishes to contribute to the successful work of the Steering Platform.

Links
Erika Rost
<http://see-science.eu/users/142.html>
Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany
<http://see-science.eu/org/81.html>

Four WBC Association Procedures in the Pipeline

EU Science and Research Commissioner Janez Potočnik, speaking at a policy meeting organised by 'Friends of Europe' in Brussels in the beginning of December 2006 on stability in the Balkan Region, recalled the so-called WBC Platform strategy and encouraged all Balkan countries to become associated to the Seventh Framework Programme on Research and Technological Development (FP7). He clearly said, 'I have made the conditions for Balkan countries to associate with FP7 as attractive as possible. I have done this because I believe that, more than in the past, research has become an important accession tool and, more than in the past, the Balkans need a clear message of our willingness to help.' In conclusion, Mr Potočnik said that he wanted the doors of the European Research Area to be wide open to all Balkan countries'. Full involvement would help these countries to develop, enabling them to become a part of the EU, and to permit collaboration between excellent scientists and researchers from the Balkans and the European Research Community. However, these are not the only reasons to pursue participation in EU research: 'I want Balkan countries to be fully integrated into research because it is also an undeniable step on the path to stability and integration into the EU,' he said.

And his strategy is already paying off: In mid-February 2007 Serbia, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia and Montenegro requested to become associated to FP7. For these four countries, the procedure has been launched (preparing a Memorandum of Understanding on terms and conditions for participation as an Associated Country in FP7), for approval of the decision by the European Commission. Once the internal EC procedure is finalised, and the Memorandum is also approved by the associating country, the signing ceremony can take place. These Memoranda of Understanding take, however, effect from January 1, 2007. This means that all researchers, institutes, universities and SMEs from these countries are eligible as Associated Countries in the calls for proposals organised under FP7 and can be project coordinators. Participation as an Associated Country means that the national researchers have equal status as researchers from the 27 Member States. Consequently, they enjoy more opportunities than if they had remained a third country under FP7. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania are also actively considering their association to FP7. With regard to Kosovo, research institutions and scientists from Kosovo, pending the status discussions, are encouraged to actively consider research cooperation with EU partners under the special calls for third countries (see further SICA calls).

(Information provided by Tania Friederichs, EC, DG Research)

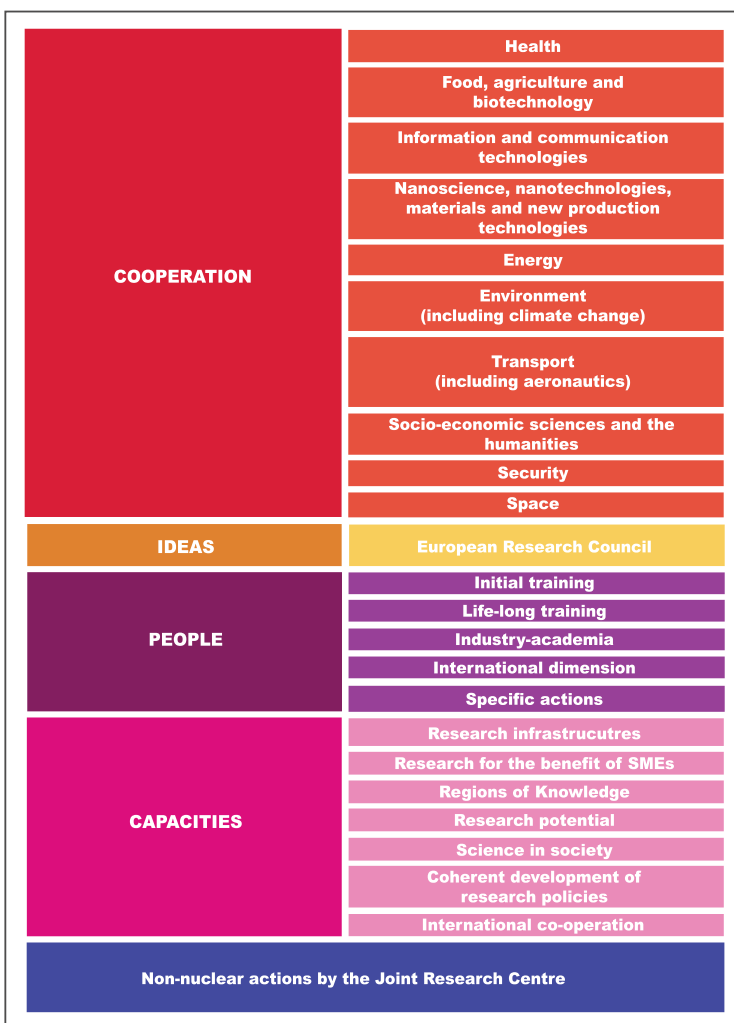


First Calls for Proposals Launched in Seventh Framework Programme

On January 1, 2007, the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) came into force. For the period 2007 to 2013 it is the EU's main instrument for funding research in Europe.

The first calls for proposals under FP7 were already published on December 22, 2006. They cover all four specific programmes of FP7 (Cooperation, People, Ideas and Capacities) and the research activities of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

Information on the calls is available via CORDIS.



For each call on specific subject areas under the four specific programmes, there is a call fiche, a work programme, a general work programme and various annexes available from CORDIS. A description of the programmes and their international dimension was provided in the summer edition of the eJournal and can be found in updated form

at <http://see-science.eu/news/330.html>

Links [CORDIS](http://cordis.europa.eu/)
<http://see-science.eu/org/508.html> |
 CORDIS Open Calls
<http://see-science.eu/link/713.html> |

8 Million Euro for Research Potential In cooperation with the EU's convergence regions

The call FP7-REGPOT-2007-3 under FP7, Capacities Theme 4, Research Potential is opening up possibilities to develop partnerships, exchange know-how and experience, and upgrade research capacities, specifically in the region of the Western Balkan countries.

Deadline for this call is April 24, 2007.

Projects in any research topic covered by the FP are eligible for funding, including acquisition, development, maintenance, upgrading and/or renewal of S&T research equipment for selected WBC research centres. This call is a unique opportunity to reinforce the S&T potential of the WBCs, in cooperation with partners from the European Union Member States in the convergence regions. It is intended to fund several Support Actions with an average of approximately 1.2 million euro per project for a duration of up to three years. The Community financial contribution may cover up to 100 % of the cost of the action. The allocated budget for the support in 2007 is eight million euro.



Links <http://see-science.eu/news/776.html> |
 relevant work programme:
<http://see-science.eu/doc/745.html> |

Specific International Cooperation Actions

International Cooperation in the FP7 Cooperation Programme is implemented in two ways:

First, by general opening up of the activities to researchers and research organisations from all third countries. This general opening includes the possibility of dedicated actions for third countries (mainly industrialised and emerging economies).

Second, by opening up of the thematic activities through Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICAs) dedicated to third countries which are listed as International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPCs, see page 4). SICAs aim at reinforcing the research capacity in non-associated candidate countries and neighbourhood countries and at addressing the needs of developing and emerging economies by means of dedicated cooperative research in given thematic areas. Specific participation criteria apply to 'Collaborative Projects' for SICA topics (participation of a minimum of two Member States or Associated Countries plus two targeted countries). Further information on these criteria is given in the work programmes and in the 'Guide for Applicants'. A glance through the first calls for proposals shows that there are a few targeted possibilities for the WBCs (see link to see-science.eu below). However, to the extent that the WBCs are associated to FP7, SICAs will no longer be geared towards WBCs. But of course, as Associated Countries, they are always eligible to be part of such projects.



Links [SICAs in Cooperation](http://see-science.eu/news/754.html)
<http://see-science.eu/news/754.html> |
 Overview on FP7 Cooperation
<http://see-science.eu/news/596.html> |



Evaluating and Monitoring FP7 Projects A Possibility also for WBC Experts

Experts from third countries may and are encouraged to submit an application to assist the European Commission as an evaluator, reviewer or monitoring expert. A call for experts for FP7 has been launched and an interface to register in the database is available on the web.

Experts for research activities assist the Commission in evaluating proposals of the Seventh Framework Programme and monitoring projects funded by the EU. Registering on the database does not ensure your participation in evaluation panels. Such evaluations are based on the number and the fields of calls, the number of applications, and finally the assessment of your application by the Commission. In order to achieve equal opportunities for women and men (the target being 40 % of women in panels), the Commission would particularly welcome applications from suitably qualified women.

Prospective independent experts for FP7 are expected to have a high level of professional experience in the public or private sector in one or more of the following areas:

- < research in relevant scientific and technological fields,
- < administration, management or evaluation of RTD projects, programmes or policies,
- < use of the results of RTD projects, technology transfer, innovation, and business cooperation, particularly with regard to SMEs,
- < issues at the interface of science and society (e.g. education, communication, ethics etc.),
- < international cooperation in science and technology,
- < development of human resources.

West Balkan researchers are encouraged to apply!
(ed)

Links
[CORDIS
http://see-science.eu/org/508.html](http://see-science.eu/org/508.html)
[Call for Experts
http://see-science.eu/link/971.html](http://see-science.eu/link/971.html)

IDEAS

The programme 'Ideas' funds projects based on proposals presented by researchers on subjects of their choice, evaluated only on scientific excellence by peer review. 'Frontier research' will open new ways for technological progress, and aims to resolve social and environmental problems. The actions are open to researchers of any nationality who would like to set up their research in any EU Member State or Associated Country. The work programme 2007 foresees a focus on 'Starting Independent Researcher Grants' (budget 300 million euro). Later this year, a call for 'Advanced Investigator Grants' will be published as well. The implementation body for the whole programme is the 'European Research Council' (ERC), the first pan-European funding agency for investigator-initiated frontier research.

Links
[European Research Council
http://see-science.eu/org/505.html](http://see-science.eu/org/505.html)
[Relevant work programme
http://see-science.eu/doc/735.html](http://see-science.eu/doc/735.html)



EU and FP7 Definitions: Where are we living?

Member States (MS)

The European Union has currently 27 Member States, including Bulgaria and Romania which joined on January 1, 2007. The funding for MS in FP7 is made directly through the general EU budget. All funding is done on a competitive basis through calls for proposals.

Candidate Countries (CC)

Countries that have submitted an official request for membership to the EU and obtained candidate status, i.e. Turkey, Croatia and FYR of Macedonia. Only for Turkey and Croatia association negotiations have been opened.

Potential Candidate Countries (PCC)

Countries that have a European perspective, but whose request for membership has not yet been submitted or accepted (i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia).

Associated Countries (AC)

Countries that have an association agreement with the EU either in the form of a bilateral S&T agreement granting association status (i.e. Israel and Switzerland) or in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (procedure for enlargement countries) or via an Amendment to the European Economic Area (EEA) in the case of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. All these agreements determine the financial contribution which allows the Associated Countries to be eligible for FP7 on equal grounds with the Member States.

Associated Candidate Countries (ACC)

Candidate Countries that have requested (and obtained) the association status for the Framework Programmes on RTD.

Third countries

Any country that is neither a Member State nor an Associated Country.

International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPCs)

Third countries which the European Commission classifies as low-income, lower-middle-income or upper-middle-income countries and which are identified in the FP7 work programmes with regard to the implementation of Specific International Cooperation Activities (SICAs). The group includes the Western Balkan countries (unless associated), the Mediterranean area, Eastern Europe and Central Asian countries, Latin America, Africa-Caribbean-Pacific, as well as Asia. The ICPCs list can be found via <http://see-science.eu/link/1009.html>

Industrialised third countries

Countries such as Australia, Canada, USA and the Gulf countries that can participate under the FP7 'Rules for participation', but under their own funding, unless the relevant work programme specifically sets out differently.

Although the Western Balkan countries fall into different categories i.e. candidate and potential candidate countries, with respect to association to FP7 they are all entitled to request association (see page 3). Once they have obtained the associated status they will be removed from the ICPC list. (ed)



A Frequently Asked Question - A Still Confusing Answer

At the Information Office, we have received a number of questions from our readers concerning the possibility of organisations from the Western Balkan countries acting as coordinators of FP7 projects.

We forwarded this request to 'Europe Direct' via a Maibox Form (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries/>) and received the following answer (Reference Number: 3559434), which we publish here as it seems to be a question of general interest:



From: mail@europe-direct.ec.europa.eu

To: Elke Dall, office@see-science.eu

-> Can institutions from not associated Western Balkan countries co-ordinate FP7 projects?

Dear Ms. Dall,

Neither the FP6 Rules for participation nor the FP6 model contract requires that the coordinator has to be EU-based entity. Therefore, as a general rule, there is no distinction that entities established in the MS are by definition "eligible" to be project's coordinators and entities established in other countries may do it only in certain circumstances. However taking into account nature and peculiarity of the tasks which the coordinator is responsible for, the Commission has to approve the choice of participant in this respect (i.e. the partner chosen by the consortium to act as a coordinator has to be accepted by the Commission). In the light of the above, despite there is no clear provisions restricting possibilities of entities established in the third countries as a coordinators, we cannot provide you with uniform answer to your question. The issue raised in your question, is discussed during contract's negotiation phase and decision is taken on a case-by-case basis, taking into account e.g. financial viability check results, contractor's capacity to coordinate the project and also other aspects.

This approach is to be continued in FP7.

Best regards,

Disclaimer:

The answer or information contained in this message is based on the information provided by you, which may not be sufficiently detailed or complete to provide a full and correct answer or response to your question. The Commission is committed to providing accurate information through the enquiry services, however, the information provided has no binding nature. The Commission cannot be held liable for any use made of this information or for its accuracy. Please note: whilst we endeavour to ensure that you receive the information requested or are directed to an appropriate source, we are unable to comment on specific issues pertaining to EU policy, and any information provided by EUROPE DIRECT / Research Enquiry Service may not be considered as legally binding.

see-science.eu Assessment

After discussion with several experts, we see the answer as follows:

- Theoretically partners from ICPCs (see page 4) are eligible to coordinate in all project types in the 'Cooperation' and 'Capacities' programmes.
- BUT it is questionable if a proposal, for example, for a large Network of Excellence coordinated by a third country institution will be positively evaluated (because of evaluation criteria such as relevance to structuring the European Research Area, managerial competences etc.)
- On the other hand, for 'Specific International Cooperation Activities' (SICAs - see page 3) the participation of ICPCs is a prerequisite and of high importance, so in that case the chances of being competitive are higher.
- The minimum requirements for participation have always to be respected. So for example, if the minimum requirement (laid down in the Rules for Participation) is that 'at least three legal entities must participate, each of which must be established in a Member State or Associated Country, and two of which may not be established in the same Member State or Associated Country', the ICPC partner can only be a 'fourth' institution. It can nevertheless be (theoretically, see point a.) the coordinator. For the indirect actions for specific cooperation activities dedicated to international cooperation partner countries (SICAs) different minimum conditions are specified (at least four entities, at least two established in Member State / Associated Country, at least two from ICPCs - see details in Rules for Participation). The participating partners in a project proposal 'shall appoint one of their number to act as coordinator'.

So in fact any legal entity participating in a project, regardless of its place of establishment, may coordinate the project. Its success or not always remains a question for the evaluators!

Author

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<http://see-science.eu/users/42.html>
 Centre for Social Innovation
<http://see-science.eu/org/29.html>



Turkey's Current S&T Initiatives in the Western Balkans



Turkey is very close historically, geographically, and culturally to the Western Balkan region and has bilateral Science and Technology Cooperation Agreements with Albania, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia (Turkey recognises

the country with its constitutional name Republic of Macedonia), Serbia and Montenegro. Not only the Western Balkans but also other Southern European countries such as Hungary, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Greece are among Turkey's cooperation countries with effective bilateral running programmes.

At the International Conference and High Level Round Table entitled 'Why Invest in Science in South Eastern Europe?', the acting president of TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey), Nuket Yetis, gave a presentation on the issues of 'Turkey's National Science, Technology and Innovation Initiative and the Necessity of Investing in Science'. The outcome of this presentation and the feedback from a number of Western Balkan country participants were very promising.

The Istanbul Agenda

Consequently, another important event entitled 'Integration of EU Enlargement Countries into European Research Area: Participation in EU Seventh Framework Programme' was held in Istanbul on December 7-8, 2006. At this event the 'Istanbul Agenda' was developed and adopted, with the participation of all the Western Balkans, Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries of the EU. A representative of SEE-ERA.NET also attended this event. The 'Istanbul Agenda' is a rolling plan of action to enhance the participation and performance of the enlargement countries under FP7 and their further integration in the European Research Area (ERA). The participating countries fully support this Agenda and count on the full cooperation and support of the European Commission. The plan will be subject to monitoring and review at the end of the first year of its implementation.

Participation of Turkey in regional projects

As far as the regional EU project SEE-ERA.NET is concerned, Turkey has not been in the Steering Board so far, but its participation in this network is now under consideration.

Turkey also contributes to the FP7 INCO-NET-WBC project proposal preparation and has expressed its willingness to play an active part.

Turkey fully participated in the EU's Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) and has just organised a FP7 Launch Conference (February 12-13, 2007 in Ankara) in order to speed up the RTD integration with the European Research Area as an Associated Candidate Country. Several S&T organisations from South East Europe participated in this

conference.

Beside the above-mentioned S&T relations with the Western Balkans, TÜBİTAK also has supported programmes for visiting scientists from all foreign countries (including the Western Balkans) - see the link to TÜBİTAK's website at <http://see-science.eu/org/95.html>

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Austria's Cooperation in Innovation and Research Programme CIR-CE

2nd Call for Proposals is open until April 24, 2007

The programme 'Cooperation in Innovation and Research with Central and Eastern Europe' (CIR-CE) promotes cooperation between innovative Austrian and Central and Eastern European companies. The geographic proximity of Austria to the Central, Eastern and South Eastern European countries offers a vast variety of opportunities. Viewed from a long-term strategy perspective, research, technology and innovation are important success factors. The programme CIR-CE offers a framework for transnational networks organised by intermediary organisations (such as competence centres, technology centres, clusters) to encourage transnational projects covering R&D, technology transfer, benchmarking, quality assurance etc.



CIR-CE is a strategic core activity of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. The Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) is responsible for programme management and offers guidance for prospective applicants and partners on proposals.

Objectives of CIR-CE projects are: establishment and expansion of transnational business-driven innovation networks (including SMEs) between Austria and CEE/SEE countries for the development and implementation of innovation and for increasing and strengthening R&D cooperation and technology transfer.

Potential partner countries include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR of Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

While the majority of the projects in the first call in the year 2006 were 'Networking Projects', the second call, which is now open, is focused on 'Innovations Projects': within this category projects have to feature an obvious element of RTDI and ideally are mostly influenced by the involved SME in cooperation with research institutions. CIR-CE applications have to be submitted by April 24, 2007. First projects will start in September 2007.

(Information provided by Ulrike Kainz, FFG)

Links

CIR-CE
<http://see-science.eu/links/920.html>
 Programme Management: FFG
<http://see-science.eu/org/125.html>



Greek View on S&T Policy towards the Western Balkan Countries



The strategic goal of Greece in the Balkans is to create the preconditions for stability, functioning democratic processes and institutions, cooperation, development and prosperity, as well as fulfilment of the political criteria, which will allow all the Balkan countries without exception to become members of the European Union. Up to now, political and economic crises in many countries of South East Europe, have dramatically affected the potential for research and technological growth. The impact from the reduction of national expenses for RTD and the reduction of critical mass because of the formation of new states and the simultaneous brain drain have been equally important.

The Action Plan on S&T

In June 2003, following an initiative of the Greek Presidency of the EU and with the support of the EC, the EU-Balkan Countries Action Plan in Science and Technology was adopted at the Thessaloniki Summit.

The Action Plan created a strong momentum for enhanced scientific and technological cooperation between the EU and the WBCs but also among the WBCs themselves.

Several activities originate in the Action Plan and contribute to the achievement of its goals: the launching of specific calls for proposals in the context of the FP6, the implementation of the SEE-ERA.NET project and of several other projects in the field of e-infrastructures (such as SINSEE, SEEREN, SEE-Grid etc.), and the Steering Platform for strengthening research cooperation between the Western Balkan countries and the EU within the framework of the European Research Area (ERA). It is essential that all necessary action should be taken for the reinforcement of the RTD capacities in each country and in the region. Specific actions should be focused on issues concerning the development of research infrastructures, the improvement of human potential, the creation of institutes and the promotion of common RTD actions in regions of mutual interest and more specifically in sectors that will strengthen innovation. Moreover, specific actions are required and these should be focused on the Western Balkans region. The Greek state is strongly interested in growth and research activities in the region.

Since 2000, the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Greek Ministry of Development has funded almost 250 bilateral joint research projects, especially in the Balkan countries, with a total budget of 3,472,833 euros. The following budgets have been allocated: Albania: 984,855 euros, Bulgaria 380,667 euros, Montenegro 120,000 euros, Romania 1,168,318 euros, and Yugoslavia-Serbia 728,993 euros.

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<http://see-science.eu/users/211.html>
 General Secretariat for Research and
 Technology (GSRT)
<http://see-science.eu/org/82.html>

Tackling Unemployment and Education Reform: A Dutch Initiative

South Eastern Europe, suffering both from its past conflicts and its present economic and political transition situation is characterised by high unemployment. One of the main causes is the discrepancy between the education offered and the skills needed in the labour market. The Academic Training Association (ATA) aims to increase the employment prospects in SEE in two main ways. First, to adapt curricula of higher educational institutions to market needs in line with the Bologna reform agenda. Second, ATA supports young entrepreneurs to start-up their own businesses by means of training, consultancy and micro-credit opportunities. ATA is working in these two areas and, more importantly, is forging a link between these two areas of expertise. ATA has various programmes to tackle higher education reform as well as micro-enterprise development. Programmes that focus on SME development include the establishment of a network of up to 25 Business Start-up Centres (BSCs) and incubators in the region, and a Private Sector Development Network.

New Business Start-Up Centres

As a result of a four year grant from the Dutch Government, ATA is operating five new Business Start-up Centres (including incubators) in FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These five BSCs are integrated into a new regional network of BSCs, that was established in Tuzla in October 2006: SENSI (Southeast European Network for Start-up Centres and Incubators). SENSI exchanges best practices, training materials and experts and promotes regional business opportunities between start-ups.

The establishment of the Business Start-up Centres is firmly embedded in ATA's Private Sector Development Network. Since 2005, this programme has been supporting cooperation between businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Ministries of Economics and Trade, and Faculties of Economics in South East Europe. Business skills training, conferences, economic research and other activities promote regional economic cooperation.

Support to Universities in SEE

ATA assists universities in the implementation of the Bologna Action Lines across the region. One of the largest programmes is the organisation of four annual international summer universities in Pristina, Bitola, Mitrovica and Tuzla. Approximately 1,500 students from the entire SEE region take part every year in one of these summer universities. They are fully working in line with the Bologna Action Lines, serving as an example for participating local universities. ATA is a dynamic non-profit NGO based in Amsterdam, with five field offices in South East Europe. It is mainly supported by the Netherlands Government and the European Union. It has a budget of five million euro for 2007.

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 Academic Training Association
<http://see-science.eu/org/653.html>



S&T in Croatia



Location: South Eastern Europe
Total land area: 56,594 sq. km
Population: 4,439,000 (2005, mid year, preliminary) - source: WIIW
GDP - per capita: 6,972 EUR (2005) at official exchange rate - source: WIIW
GERD: 1.24 % of GDP (2004)
BERD: 0.52 % of GDP (2004)
HERD: 0.46 % of GDP (2004)
GOVERD: 0.26 % of GDP (2004)

The European Commissions ERAWATCH reports, available via <http://see-science.eu/link/411.html> (see also page 16), provide overviews of the policy contexts, research policies, and current issues in S&T of all EU Members and Associated countries. An overview of important policy documents, the structure of the research systems, the funding systems and priorities, the research performers and stakeholders, as well as key research indicators are downloadable. Croatia is the only Western Balkan country currently covered by this initiative.

This see-science.eu 'Country Focus' presents the section 'Basic characterisation of the research system' of Croatia's ERAWATCH report:

Science, technology and education are perceived in Croatia as important factors of integration with European Union and transition from industrial to knowledge economy. Since 2000 Croatia invested a substantial effort to reform science and higher education sectors and to re-define the role of science and education in the national development, economic growth and competitiveness. The main reforms are planned in the sector of public research and higher education to meet the standards of the European Union concerning autonomy of university research, financing rules, scientific excellence, etc. In addition, the special programs and policy actions towards promotion of business innovation, technology development and science-industry cooperation were also initiated. Several important strategic documents have been formulated in order to drive Croatia towards "society based on learning and knowledge" such as "Croatia in the Twenty-First Century - Science" (OG 108/2003) and Science & Technology Policy of the Republic of Croatia 2006 - 2010 accepted by the Croatian government in May 2006.

The reforms are additionally supported by the accession negotiations of Croatia with the European Union (opened on the 4th October

2005) that brought Lisbon and Barcelona targets into the science policy agendas. The full membership into the Six Framework Program from January the 1st of 2006 confirmed the status of Croatia as an equal participant into the European Research Area and opened a new chapter for Croatian scientists in international collaboration.

The research sector of Croatia is rather complex system that consists of 6 universities, 26 public institutes, 11 research centres in industry, 3 academies, 20 colleges, 8 polytechnics, one military research centre, 5 technology centres and one business-innovation centre (MSES, 2006).

The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (MSES) is the responsible administrative body for planning, funding and monitoring of the overall science and education system. It works closely with the National Science Council (NSC) and the National Council for Higher Education (NCH E) that are principal advisory bodies tasked with the development and quality of science and higher education in Croatia. In 2000, the Croatian Parliament passed a law establishing the National Foundation for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development (NFS). NFS presents the first government agency responsible for funding scientific and developmental projects in addition to the MSES which used to be the single financier for R&D in Croatia.

Since 2000, the total expenditure on research and development (GERD) is constantly growing reaching 1.24 % of BDP in 2004 that places Croatia rather high in terms of research intensity. Croatia is among the leading countries in the region and above the average of the new Member States regarding the number of researchers and investments in R&D.

The state sector is largely dominant sector in the Croatian R&D system, especially comparing to research potentials in a technologically weak private business sector. Although the contributions of business sector versus government in both financing and performing of R&D have evolved in Croatia in recent years, still its contribution should be reversed in order to provide sufficient business support to R&D. As reported in 2003, the business sector employed 15 % of total researchers and financed 42 % of GERD. Although this ratio is more convenient than in many new Member States, it is still unsatisfactory in comparison to more developed countries. In addition, research intensity in business sector depends on investments of a few large industrial corporations while the sector of medium and small sized business is rather underdeveloped in terms of research and innovation (National Competitiveness Council, 2003).

Legal Framework:

Law on Scientific Activities and Higher Education
 Law on the National Foundation for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development
 Law on the Croatian Academy of Sciences
 Law on the Croatian State Science Award
 Laws on Protection of Intellectual Property: Law on Patents, Copyright and Related Rights, Law on Industrial Designs, Law on Indications of Origins of Products and Services, etc.
 Law on the Recognition of Foreign Education Qualifications
 Law on Professional and Academic Titles

ERAWATCH is a joint initiative of the DG Research and the Joint Research Centres (Institute for Prospective Technological Studies, IPTS). The inventory is updated on a periodical basis in cooperation with the ERAWATCH Network. Correspondent for Croatia is Jadranka Švarc, Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences, Zagreb.

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Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology as a Priority Area in FP7

The Specific Programme Cooperation of the Seventh Framework Programme on RTD (FP7) includes the theme 'Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology' (FAFB). In this area the European Commission addresses the following needs:



- < Growing demand for safer, healthier, higher quality food
- < Sustainable use and production of renewable bio-resources
- < Increasing risk of epizootic and zoonotic diseases and food related disorders
- < Threats to the sustainability and security of agricultural, aquaculture and fisheries production
- < Increasing demand for high quality food, taking into account animal welfare, rural and coastal contexts and response to specific dietary needs of consumers

On December 22, 2006 two calls were published in FAFB, creating the possibility to submit project proposals for academic and industrial researchers, as well as for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and programme managers/owners:

Links SICAs in FAFB
<http://see-science.eu/news/756.html>
 Relevant work programme
<http://see-science.eu/doc/716.html>

The Call FP7-KBBE-2007-1,

the deadline for project proposal application being May 2, 2007, addresses participants from the Western Balkan countries. The research areas are the following:

- < Sustainable production and management of biological resources from land, forests and aquatic environments
- < Fork to farm: food (including sea food), health and well-being
- < Life sciences, biotechnology and biochemistry for sustainable non-food products and processes
- < National Contact Point network

Requirements for participation and the minimum number of participating legal entities are dependant on the funding scheme, as set out in the respective 'Guide for Applicants'.

There is a significant list of research areas for Specific International Cooperation Actions (SICAs), some of which address all International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPCs), while others specifically address the Western Balkan countries!

The following research topics require participants particularly from Western Balkan countries:

- < FP7-KBBE-2007-2-1-02: Developing research tools for food consumer science in the Western Balkan countries
- < FP7-KBBE-2007-1-4-05: Enlargement network - agro-economic policy analysis of the Accession and the Candidate States and the Western Balkan countries
- < FP7-KBBE-2007-1-4-10: Containment of Sharka virus in view of EU-expansion

The Call FP7-ERANET-2007-RTD,

the deadline for application being July 31, 2007, is also open for ICPCs, including the Western Balkan countries. Eligible partners for these specific ERA-NET actions are programme managers and programme owners, i.e. legal entities which finance or manage publicly funded national or regional programmes.

The research areas are the following:

- < Sustainability of all production systems: plant health and crop protection: ERA-NET for coordination of agricultural research in the Mediterranean
- < Optimised animal health, production and welfare: ERA-NET for coordination of European research in the area of animal health

This ERA-NET scheme aims at developing and strengthening the coordination of national and regional research programmes, i.e. networking research programmes at a regional and national level, with a view to their mutual opening and the development and implementation of joint activities.

The minimum number of participants in ERA-NET consortia is three independent legal entities from different Member States or Associated Countries. After fulfilment of these minimum criteria, all ICPCs (including Western Balkan countries) can participate in this scheme. The FP7 NCP network, FP7 contacts in third countries and the specific projects set out below offer support.

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Food-N-Co - Western Balkan countries included in NCP network

A Specific Support Action called Food-N-Co started in February 2006 with a duration of three years. It is a cooperation network of 20 National Contact Points (NCPs) with a special focus on third countries in the areas of Food Quality and Safety as well as Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology. The project aims to give more visibility to researchers, research organisations and SMEs in these areas in order to form EU projects with international consortia. Partner search will be facilitated, seminars organised and personal contacts established through this initiative.

The Food-N-Co consortium also issues a quarterly electronic newsletter. It actively informs NCPs and scientists all over the world about the opportunities for International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPCs, former INCO countries) to participate in European research on Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology.

Via <http://see-science.eu/org/1006.html> you can find more information about this Specific Support Action, the partners involved (including partners from Croatia and Serbia) and its services.

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BALKAN AGRO FOOD NETWORK

The agrifood community from the Western Balkan is getting ready for FP7

An information platform identifying key players in the agricultural and food research sector has been set up at www.bafn.eu within the FP6 project BALKAN AGRO FOOD NETWORK (BAFN).

The project aims at facilitating the participation of researchers from the Western Balkan countries in the EU research programmes of the agricultural and food sector. The project, supported by the European Commission under FP6, started on May 1, 2006 and runs for two years. Partners from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and FYR of Macedonia, as well as organisations from Bulgaria, Hungary and Greece participate in the project. It is coordinated by Euroquality, a consulting company established in Paris. More than 460 research teams and 520 private companies have been identified in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and FYR of Macedonia. At the beginning of January 2007, the BAFN database already contained detailed information about more than 225 research groups, 535 researchers and 105 companies. These directories help to identify specific competencies in South East Europe and initiate cooperations. Those who register benefit from early warning and are informed regularly about the opportunities offered by the European Union.

Other major outputs of BAFN include a mapping report, identifying the research potential in the field of agricultural and food research and a recommendation report identifying possible future support policies and priority research areas, considered as the priority areas for agricultural and food research cooperation. The report will be a contribution to the implementation of the EU-Balkan Countries Action Plan in Science and Technology.



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EU-Balkan-FABNET – Training on FP7

The EU-Balkan-FABNET project, launched in January 2007, aims at encouraging stronger participation of Western Balkan research organisations in FP7 funded research projects. It complements the actions undertaken by its sister project, the Balkan Agro Food Network (BAFN).

EU-Balkan-FABNET has identified and incorporated key National Contact Points and experienced multipliers in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, FYR of Macedonia, and Serbia as partners, who will participate in mapping, networking, training and awareness-raising activities. These partners represent gate keepers for their country's respective research communities. They are supported by partners from Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Greece and Italy.

The target groups will receive assistance with FP7-related queries on a one-to-one basis, such as the search for suitable partners, or support for participation in major international events. Furthermore, the project partners will be able to actively promote the networking of local researchers and act as a conduit of information exchange.

Each partner in the project is responsible for organising three workshops for their local audience. The first workshop will target local multipliers, who could help in motivating the research community. The other two workshops will target researchers. Furthermore, the partners will compile an electronic handbook to further extend the reach of the project to potential FP7 participants. The handbook will cover basic information, such as project funding types, and will be translated into the language of each partner in the Western Balkan countries. A project website is currently in preparation and will soon be available on www.balkan-fabnet.eu. For further details contact

the project coordinator Gorgias Garofalakis at info@etat.gr

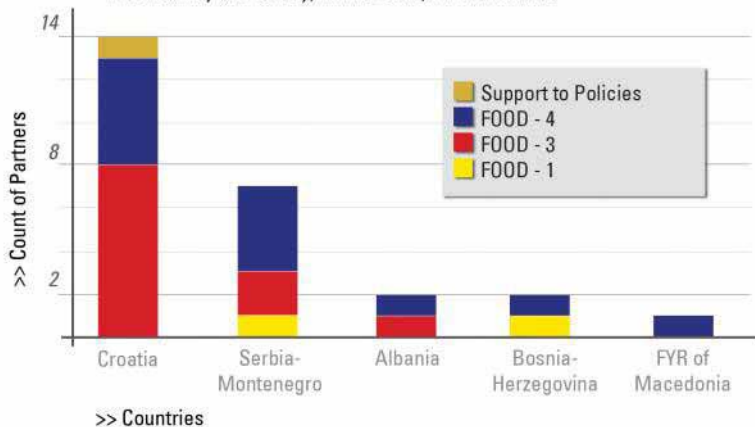
WBC Participation in FP6 Priority 5

15.9 million euro were allocated for International Cooperation in the thematic area 5. 'Food Quality and Safety' of FP6. 53 different third countries participated, with Croatia being one of the most successful seven (the top 3 were China, Brazil and Argentina). In total 293 partners from third countries participated in selected projects.

In comparison with other regions, there were more WBC participants in this thematic area than organisations from the Russia/NIS region or the Africa/Pacific/Caribbean region. Mediterranean countries, Asia and Latin America were more successful though. No WBC partner succeeded in being selected in the top up call.

This information on the participation of the WBCs in FP6 has been provided by Jean-François Maljean (DG Research, Directorate E 'Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology').

FP6-TP5 INCO Target Western Balkan Countries:
 Count of Partners per Country in Selected Proposals
 Food Quality and Safety, all FP6 Calls, all Instruments





WWW.SEE-ERA.NET



SEE-ERA.NET Scientific Workshops

In the beginning of February 2007, the Southeast European Era-Net (SEE-ERA.NET) organised three scientific workshops. Invited by fourteen national SEE-ERA.NET partners (the majority of them are the respective ministries), four to six researchers per country were able to use these events for extensive networking in order to form consortia and prepare future project applications.

Topics and locations of the workshops

Environment

Environmental Technologies:

FYR of Macedonia, February 5-7, 2007

Organiser: Ministry of Education and Science, FYR of Macedonia

Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology

Sustainable Production and Management:

Montenegro and Croatia, February 6-8, 2007

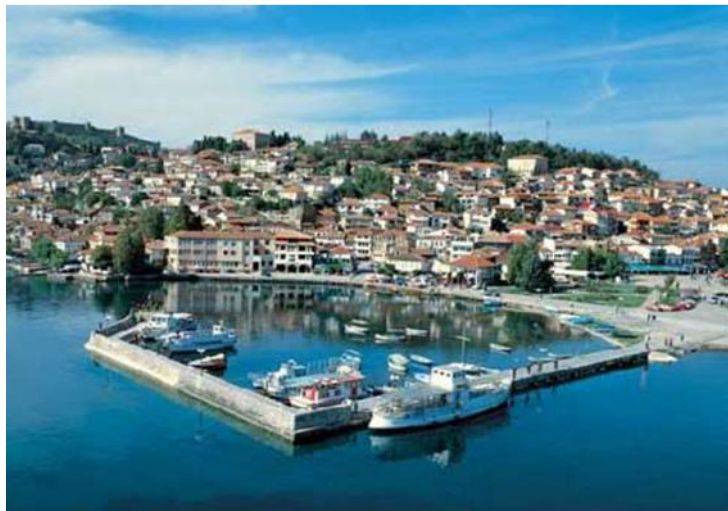
Organiser: Ministry of Education and Science, Montenegro

Information and Communication Technologies

Applications Research:

Serbia, February 12-14, 2007

Organiser: Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection, Serbia



SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call

The events are an accompanying measure to the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call 'Networking with Southeast Europe'. With a deadline on March 31, 2007, this call provides national funding for joint project applications from fourteen ministries in the region. Applicants have to form project consortia that consist (according to project type) of three to five partners from different countries, including partners from a Western Balkan country.

More information about the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call, the members of the SEE-ERA.NET National Contact Point network and the online application tool

can be found at:

<http://www.see->

era.net/pjc

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Outcome of the workshops

Over 150 researchers from the 14 SEE-ERA.NET partner countries participated in the workshops and more than 70 concrete project-proposal ideas with already formed consortia were presented. They will now be transformed into project applications in the framework of the Pilot Joint Call or they could be the starting point for potential participations in FP7. The workshops were accompanied by intensive media coverage in the countries, with the news being published on TV and in the press.



EC Fact-Finding Mission to Podgorica

On January 18-19, 2007, the European Commission represented by Tania Friederichs (Directorate General for Research) and Giancarlo Caratti (Joint Research Centre) visited Montenegro and met with officials from the Ministry of Education and Science, Secretariat for European Integration, the University of Montenegro and members of the Council for the Scientific-Research Activities. They also visited laboratories and met representatives of the research community. During the mission it became clear that Montenegro is determined to make research a high priority on the political agenda. Montenegro has potential in Information and Environmental Technologies and of course should develop all areas which will facilitate compliance with EU technical requirements and standards (acquis). The mission also allowed for the explanation of the important role that the JRC fulfills with concerning compliance with EU legislation and policy.

Following this mission, Montenegro confirmed its interest in being associated to the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

The internal procedure is under preparation but entry into force of the Association Memorandum may take some time pending the adoption of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement which is a pre-requisite to adopt the FP7 Memorandum of Understanding. The EC is making every effort to ensure entry into force in the coming months (mid 2007). (Information provided by Tania Friederichs, EC, DG Research)

High Speed Internet for Researchers in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Since January 2007, a new cross-border dark fibre cable has been providing high speed internet connection for the research community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The University of Banja Luka is the first university to be connected, having fulfilled all contractual obligations. The initiative is part of the South Eastern European Research and Education Network (SEEREN2) that aims to diminish the 'digital divide' that still separates most of the South East European countries from the rest of the continent. SEEREN2 aims to create the next generation of the South East European segment of GEANT, that intends to make leading-edge technologies and services available to the entire research/education communities and all scientific sectors, without discrimination between users, and helping in this way to build the extended European Research Area.

The link has been deployed as a result of monthly efforts by all the Bill partners and the National Research and Education Networks of Greece (GRNET) and Serbia (AMRES). The fibres are leased from Telekom Srbija and Telekom Srpska, whilst the communication equipments have been provided by Meriton Networks.

The realisation of the new link is of significant added-value as the inclusion of Bill to the backbone network leverages the European dimension in the execution of the project and supports the development of human resources and transfer of know-how via

cooperation with other academic communities in the Balkans and worldwide.

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Structuring Research and Higher Education in Kosovo

The system of research in Kosovo is in its early stages, not least because of the poor situation in higher education in Kosovo. Private universities with little or no research activities are mushrooming, while the largest public university in Kosovo, the University of Prishtina (UP), is confronted with a strong need for internal reform. However, with the inauguration of the new rector, Professor Enver Haxhi, in summer last year, a period of uncertainty in the leadership of the university ended and the international community seems again ready to support the upcoming change processes. In front of this background, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (bmwkw) and UNMIK acting on behalf and for the benefit of the provisional institutions of self-government in Kosovo (Ministry for Education, Science and Technology MEST) have decided on a comprehensive reform project whose operations started in February 2007. The 3-years' project, which is financed by the Austrian Development Agency, the bmwkw and the MEST, tackles the following issues:

- < support for the improvement of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and the ENIC/NARIC system in order to professionalise the system of accreditation of higher education institutions and academic recognition along European standards and practices,
- < support for selected UP faculties and staff to upgrade managerial, teaching and research capacities,
- < support for the implementation of the Kosovo Council of Research and Technology for the governance and conduct of RTD in Kosovo,
- < support for the development of science-industry links through the establishment of a Centre for Innovation Support and Technology Transfer at the MEST,
- < support for the connection of the Kosovar higher education and research system to European processes by establishing the Kosovo Centre for International Higher Education, Research and Technology Co-operation,
- < promotion of collaborative RTD in the region (implemented by the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Offices)
- < and, finally, direct support for the MEST in terms of sector programming.

The final intended beneficiaries are about 45,000 students of public and private universities, around 80 professors from the UP and 50 Kosovar enterprises which will be serviced by technology audits and technology transfer activities.

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WBC Needs meet Existing Offers

The see-science.eu Information Office produced a study screening international RTD funding programmes on their relevance and correspondence to existing needs of Western Balkan countries in RTD.

As such, the study is meant to be a handbook for researchers, policy makers and intermediaries who are looking to find support for their most prominent needs, such as support for RTD infrastructure, mobility, enhancement of RTD capacity of industry and SMEs, support for basic/applied research, institution building etc. At the same time, the study offers a concise overview of existing programmes for the WBCs, such as FP7, IPA, COST, LIFE+, NATO SPS, UNESCO initiatives, unilateral RTD programmes etc.

"It was an interesting task to set these two factors into relation and to quantify and qualify the correspondence of existing programmes and RTD needs of WBC. The matrix allows the identification of major gaps, where the offered programmes do not meet the needs and it allows the definition of areas for improvement, areas where forces need to be joined, both at regional and EU level, in order to reinforce the integration of WBC into European RTD programmes and to support their development on the way to knowledge based, prosperous economies", says Evelina Santa, the author of the study (Austrian Research Promotion Agency, FFG).

The resulting Needs/Offer Matrix is available online now: <http://see-science.eu/doc/1005.htm>

COST builds Science and Technology networks



COST (The European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research), an intergovernmental European initiative, is an active partner in the European Research Area and aims to foster cooperation between nationally-funded research activities. COST Actions are networks of scientists receiving support to enable them to cooperate and later to disseminate the results of their cooperation. Existing COST Actions operate across a wide spectrum of scientific fields, and can be multi-disciplinary in nature.

Following the 'bottom-up' principle, the scientists themselves propose new Actions, making COST an attractive forum for new and emerging topics. Since COST funds the networking activities and not the research itself, new partners can join throughout the life of an Action as the field develops.

COST, which was launched in 1971, has developed into one of the largest frameworks for research cooperation in Europe involving some 30,000 scientists from 35 COST member countries. On the basis of mutual benefit, COST also welcomes institutions from non-COST countries and from non-governmental organisations to participate.

As a precursor to advanced multidisciplinary research, COST is anticipating and complementing the activities of the EU RTD Framework Programmes, constituting a 'bridge' towards the scientific communities of emerging countries, increasing the mobility of researchers across Europe and fostering the establishment of 'Networks of Excellence' in its nine scientific domains: Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences; Food and Agriculture; Forests, their Products and Services; Materials, Physics and Nanosciences; Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies; Earth System Science and Environmental Management; Information and Communication Technologies; Transport and Urban Development; Individuals, Society, Culture and Health.

The cooperation has an annual budget of around 20 million euro, but it facilitates research valued at a hundred times this figure.

In recent years, the Balkan countries with the exception of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina have joined COST. Today, these countries are actively participating in nearly all the 200 running COST Actions. Thus, several hundred researchers from this region represent their countries in the Management Committees or are otherwise involved in the activities of the running Actions.

In the framework of the last Ministerial Conference held in 2003 in Dubrovnik, ministers responsible for COST agreed to strengthen cooperation with those countries of the Western Balkan which had not yet joined COST. The 'Near Neighbour Policy' of COST now also allows the financing of experts from the non-COST countries of this region.

For more information, in particular information related to the Actions, please visit the COST website.

COST Open Call for Proposals

COST invites researchers throughout Europe to submit proposals for research networks and new COST Actions contributing to the scientific, economic, cultural or social development of Europe. Proposals playing a precursor role to other European programmes involving ideas of young groups are especially welcome. The website of COST Open Call for Proposals provides links to the submission form for new proposals, further information regarding full text of the call and regarding the selection procedure as well as a list of new Actions.

A two stage process will be followed in the assessment procedures. 'Preliminary Proposals' should provide a brief overview on the Action and its potential impact. A pre-selection will rank the remaining 'Preliminary Proposals' and about 75 of these will be invited to submit a 'Full Proposal'. The next collection date for 'Preliminary Proposals' is March 30, 2007. Every year approximately 50 new Actions will be approved. The average financial support is approximately 90,000 euro per year over a four year period.

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 COST
<http://see-science.eu/org/468.htm>

Links

COST Website
<http://see-science.eu/org/468.htm>
 COST - Open Calls for Proposals
<http://see-science.eu/link/972.htm>



Newsletters - How to get the information you need

(and not more)

One of the consequences of the information age is the wealth of information that you can receive about nearly any topic. There are several eJournals, eNewsletters, and eNewsgroups that distribute news about research and higher education topics in South East Europe. One big advantage of the electronic services is the speed in which news gets around, but sometimes the amount of information can be somewhat overwhelming, for example when your inbox is bursting with messages after only a three days vacation. Therefore, it is necessary to adjust the selection of the information providers to your interests and time-budget. The following profiles should help you to do this, but please note that the selection and the assessments provided here are based on the personal opinions of the author.

eJournal of the Information Office of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries

The team from this publication with the wordy name provides information four times a year about latest developments in research and research policy in the region of the Western Balkan countries and South East Europe. As you are at the moment holding the latest issue in your hands (or reading it on your computer), I understand that you are familiar with the benefits of our publication.

Further subscriptions can be made at:

<http://see-science.eu/ejournal/list>

CORDIS - Community Research & Development Information Service

The Community Research & Development Information Service for the Seventh Framework Programme on RTD (FP7) is the supplier of official news and provides several services:

CORDIS Express is a weekly briefing on European research and innovation news, combining highlights of the week's news on European innovation and research with a summary of particularly important national or regional initiatives.

The CORDIS focus Newsletter is a magazine bringing together selected articles of particular importance from the CORDIS News Service. You can get it online or in paper version.

CORDIS Wire is a platform for European innovation and research stakeholders to disseminate information and press releases about their own activities. It can be found at:

<http://cordis.europa.eu/news/>

Balkan Academic News (BAN)

Balkan Academic News is an electronic email group encompassing over 1,300 scholars, activists, government officials, students and others dealing with or interested in the exchange of academic information in the Balkans.

It distributes calls for papers, conference announcements, book reviews, queries and academic discussions on the region. This list is one of the best sources for information; as this list is moderated you

will receive approximately 5-6 emails issued around two times a week. In order to subscribe send a blank email to: balkans-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Imp@ct

Imp@ct is a monthly eNewsletter from the Euroregional Centre for Democracy in Romania that I highly recommend. It spreads information in English about funding opportunities and event announcements in South East Europe; to subscribe send an email to: impact-subscribe@host.regionalnet.org (do not try to subscribe on the website as this is rather complicated).

News from internationale-koooperation.de

This information portal of the International Bureau of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research provides email alerts in German and English on international cooperation in education and research.

At <http://www.internationale-koooperation.de/emailabo.php> you can select areas of interest to you and you can later modify your interest profile at any time. The information provided has a focus on Germany.

Academic Information Network of South East Europe (AINSEE)

The AINSEE daily newsletter has been developed to provide up-to-date information about higher education in South East Europe to the academic population. At the moment the newsletter is only published sporadically.

To subscribe go to <http://www.ainsee.info/index.php>

e-Network of Academia in Social Sciences (e-NASS)

e-NASS aims to deepen interaction within the academic community of scholars, professionals and students from all branches and sub-disciplines of the social sciences in SEE and beyond. The list is not moderated, but those with a big inbox will get interesting information through this service. It is published in Turkish and English.

To subscribe send an email to: e-nass-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Balkan Women

Balkan Women and Friends is an electronic email group to facilitate discussions and exchanges of information between social scientists and others who conduct research about women in the Balkans. The information is focused on gender aspects and women, but the information is somewhat similar to that from Balkan Academic News.

Subscribe by sending an email to:

BalkanWomen-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Newsletter di BalcaniCooperazione

Published in Italian, this newsletter provides information with a strong focus on the Italian regions and their cooperation with the Balkan countries, including social, economic and scientific cooperation. It also publishes calls for project proposals. Subscribe for the newsletter at:

<http://www.balcanicooperazione.it>

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The Central- and Eastern European Network CEEN

The Central and Eastern European Network CEEN is a platform for dialogue among the presidents (or their personal representatives) of National Academies of Sciences from Central and South Eastern Europe. CEEN was established in 2003 by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts with reference to the EU enlargement. Members include the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, respective institutions in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia as well as the World Academy of Art and Science. The main aim of CEEN is to support the further integration of the region into the European Research Area. Invited guests join the regular meetings of the network, e.g. officials from the European Commission, the European Parliament or representatives from stakeholders such as SEE-ERA.NET. In 2007, one of the meetings will be organised by the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts (June 1, 2007).

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ERA WESTBALKAN+ Meets Stakeholders

The successor to the project ERA WESTBALKAN, which ran from 2004-2006, began on January 17, 2007. The aim of the original project was to build up and enhance the capacities of FP7 National Contact Points (NCP) in the Western Balkan countries and to develop a database of Westbalkan researchers. The continuation of the project, called 'ERA WESTBALKAN+', also funded by the INCO programme of FP6, will further develop the NCP cooperation. The project has also been enlarged by additional partners from Croatia and Albania. At the outset, one major aim was immediately addressed: the networking with stakeholders in the EU Member States. The project co-ordinator FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency) organised together with the ZSI (Centre for Social Innovation) a meeting of ERA WESTBALKAN+ with stakeholders from Austria (see picture).



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<http://see-science.eu/org/125.html> |

STI Indicators in South East Europe

A workshop entitled "Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators: Trends and Challenges in South Eastern Europe" will be organised by the UNESCO Office in Venice (BRESCE) in cooperation with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics in Montréal (UIS, Canada) and with the financial support of UNESCO and the Italian Government. The workshop will be held March 27-31, 2007 in Skopje (FYR of Macedonia).

It aims at bringing together ministerial officials and technical officials responsible for STI (Science, Technology and Innovation) statistics in order to: analyse recent international trends concerning STI relevant statistics and indicators and their role in science policy-making; strengthen national capacities for the production of quality STI statistics and indicators in SEE; promote close interaction between policy-makers and statistical officers; raise awareness for evidence-based STI policy making; and share experience and foster regional cooperation among policy-makers and statistical officers from SEE countries.

The participants addressed are technical officials responsible for STI statistics in the National Statistical Offices and Ministerial Offices from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey, as well as high-level specialists from UNESCO, UIS, OECD, EUROSTAT, UNIDO etc.

For information on the workshop, contact Iulia Nechifor at UNESCO.

Links

Link to the provisional programme
<http://see-science.eu/link/1003.html> |
 Iulia Nechifor
<http://see-science.eu/users/234.html> |

Spotlights

Budapest Round Table

The 'Budapest Round Table' is an annual event organised by the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. It is an open discussion between the young and older generations, the focus being on current pressing issues.

The most recent topic under discussion was 'Entrepreneurship'. Students, entrepreneurs and professors from 13 countries attended, including participants from the Balkan region: Croatia, Greece, Romania and Slovenia. (Information provided by Gilbert Fayl)

Timeline for New TEMPUS Programme

After the end of TEMPUS III in December 2006, the preparation for its successor is under way. The timeline will probably be:

- > March 5-6, 2007: decision-meeting about the new programme by EC and the EU Member States on ministerial level
- > Mid-2007: publication of the new programme
- > November, December 2007: first deadline for project proposals

ERASMUS-MUNDUS: New Homepage

The new web-presentation of ERASMUS-MUNDUS, the EC co-operation and mobility programme with third countries in the field of higher education, is now online. You can access it via <http://see-science.eu/link/998.html>

At the moment the information is given only in English, to be followed in the coming months by French, German, Italian, and Spanish translations.





The Central and Eastern European Network of Academies of Science

The publication of the Central and Eastern European Network of Academies of Science (CEEN), produced in cooperation with the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS), describes specific aspects of the national scientific communities and establishments in CEEN member countries. Furthermore, the network itself, its functions and experiences are introduced. Contributions from the Academies of Science in Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia are included.

Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (ed.): The Central- and Eastern European Network of Academies of Science. A special IPTS Report. December 2006.

Links A pdf version of this text can be downloaded via
<http://see-science.eu/doc/890.html>
 (for free)
 ISBN: 92-79-02302-0



Publications ERAWATCH

ERAWATCH is a joint initiative of DG Research and the EC's Joint Research Centre, which has been conceived to support policy making in the research field in Europe. Its objective is to provide comprehensive information on the national and regional research systems and the environment of EU Member States, states associated with the Framework Programmes and other selected countries, such as the USA and China. From the Western Balkan countries, Croatia is currently included (see page 8).

ERAWATCH is built on the systematic collection of data on national and regional research profiles, research policy documents, programmes, organisations and links and presents them via an online platform.

Links <http://see-science.eu/link/411.html>
 A pdf version of this text can be downloaded via
<http://see-science.eu/link/965.html>
 (for free)



FP7 Factsheets

An overview on FP7 for newcomers and the 'FP7 leaflet - taking European Research to the forefront' is provided in Slovenian, Bulgarian, English and all other languages of the European Union by DG Research.

Links A pdf version of the leaflets can be downloaded via
<http://see-science.eu/link/973.html>
 (for free)

see-science.eu country research profiles drafted and open for discussion

The 'Information Office of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries' has published country reports reviewing the situation of Science and Technology in the region.

The reports are a compilation of main papers published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Southeast European Era-Net (SEE-ERA.NET), the Austrian 'Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Forschung', and several independent scholars on the issue of S&T in the Western Balkans.

The objective of these studies is to enhance our understanding of national innovation systems. An overview of the situation in S&T regarding the main stakeholders, input and output indicators, national strategies and priorities and main documents and laws in the field is given.

The system of innovation approach was taken into account when compiling these reports, and covers important factors influencing the development, diffusion and use of innovations, as well as the relations between these factors. It does not place emphasis on individual firms or research organisations, but rather on innovation as an interactive and interdependent process.

Relevant organisations in this respect are firms, higher education institutions, government agencies etc., interacting to create knowledge and innovation. The macro-level of the system is analysed using indicators such as R&D personnel ratios, R&D expenditure, patent application intensity rates etc.

The reports were compiled in summer/autumn 2006 by the Information Office and were reviewed by local actors. They are now accessible via the see-science.eu website: <http://see-science.eu/news/1018.html>

All readers are invited to add comments on the content and the structure of the documents. Please also suggest further resources that we can include - also any additional topics. Please send your input directly to Elke Dall at dall@zsi.at

Imprint

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