

CROATIA

PROGRESS REPORT¹

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (2st half 2011 or - May 2011 / Ohrid till December 2011 / Sarajevo)

1 Policy actions

- Within the national administrative structure of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes, which as of March 2011 houses the National Contact Points for the 'People Specific Programme' also took over part of implementation of the Specific programme on 'Cooperation', key areas Energy & Environment. The Croatian Institute of Technology – CIT Ltd still implements other 'Cooperation' thematic areas, as well as the Capacities programme, while the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, as a body which is in charge of FP7 programme in Croatia, continues its involvement as well within the Ideas programme.
- New FP7 national coordinator is Ms Josipa Češnovar, Ministry of Science, Education and Sports.

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

- So far, the scientific activity was carried out by the Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (2003); new legislative proposals were being carried out in the science and research area as well as in the field of higher education, proposing three new acts: Scientific Activity Act, the Higher Education Act and the Universities Act, which would replace the current 2003 Act on Scientific Activity and High Education; challenged by the public/academic debate the adoption of this legislation has been delayed
- preparation of the new Action Plan for Absorption Capacity of Croatia in the FP7

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

- 44 FP7 information days organized by NCPs (since January 2011)
- On 20 October 2011, the PEOPLE NCPs have held information day in Zagreb focusing on the so-called host-driven Marie Curie Actions (MCA). The speakers included the National Contact Points, Croatian researcher who has participated in a host-driven Marie Curie Action, and a representative from the Research Executive Agency - the public body that administrates the Marie Curie Actions for the European Commission. The info day was held in English language and was recorded for the purpose of availability to other WB countries.

(<http://www.euraxess.hr/sitegenius/article.php?id=880>, <http://www.euraxess.hr/sitegenius/article.php?id=874>)

- The mobility of researchers was further promoted through the EURAXESS newsletters (no.5 and no.6).

¹ The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage (www.wbc-inco.net) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to office@zwbc-inco.net until November 22, 2011.

- The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports published (5000 copies) the Croatian FP7 handbook which consists of translation of the booklet *FP7 in Brief* ('FP7 ukratko') and of a part concerning Croatian participation in Framework Programmes.

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

- Active continuous involvement within the ERA-NET "Towards an ERA in Industrial Biotechnology" (ERA-IB) in which the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic finances granted projects. Two of such projects involve Croatian researchers (Microreactor technology for continuous enzymatic reactions catalyzed by C-C-bond forming enzymes (MicroTechEnz) and Pseudomonas 2.0: industrial biocatalysis using living cells (Pseudomonas 2.0)).

- Final phase of joining the EUREKA's Eurostars Programme; National Project Coordinator - Business Innovation Centre of Croatia - BICRO Ltd.

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

- FP7 funding results (2007-2011): 165 Grant Agreements signed, with 203 Croatian partners involved and 35,7 mil. of € EC financial contribution
- Very successful Croatian participation in the FP7 'Research for the benefit of SMEs' call FP7-SME-2011 with 19 out of 47 applicants chosen for financing (success rate 40.43%) 8 of which as project coordinators

6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months

... Forthcoming elections (4th December 2011)