



Celebrating Association to FP7

Editorial

Dear Readers,

This summer has been a milestone for science and research communities in the Western Balkans - the association of Croatia, FYR of Macedonia and Serbia to the Seventh Framework Programme. Our main article focuses on this step towards full integration of the region in the European Research Area (ERA). On page 2 we inform you about the current developments in the other Western Balkan countries.

Major developments have also taken place here at the Information Office: the next and bigger initiative, planned to support the Steering Platform, has been successfully evaluated by the European Commission and the so-called WBC-INCO.NET project is currently under negotiations. Furthermore, the date for the next Steering Platform Meeting has been set for November 29. The meeting will take place in Thessalonica (Greece).

To fully exploit the possibilities of FP7, we give information about participation possibilities (open calls, relevant documents, etc.) on pages 5 and 6, and the specific research priority "Transport" on page 11.

"Association" is also discussed for the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programmes, on page 4. ERASMUS MUNDUS, TEMPUS and the Lifelong Learning Programme, relevant to the Western Balkan countries' higher education institutions, are dealt with on page 7. The Bologna Process in the Western Balkan countries is dealt with on page 3 by David Crosier from the European University Association, while Günther Siegel provides an update on the activities of COST on page 9.

The country in focus is Montenegro. We also have news on bilateral initiatives as well as S&T cooperation between Cyprus and the Western Balkans.

SEE-ERA.NET is providing information on the funded projects under its Pilot Joint Call and the upcoming SEE-ERA.NET Award - please read more on pages 12 and 13. We round up with event announcements and updates on various projects: the Medical Research Initiative South Eastern Europe and ERA WESTBALKAN+ as well as some recommendations for further reading.

Further news is regularly published on the website of the Information Office - <http://see-science.eu>. We recommend subscribing to our RSS news feed.

Best regards from Vienna,

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Imprint

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Three Western Balkans countries and Turkey joined FP7

On June 13, the Republic of Croatia (Minister for Science, Education and Sports Dragan Primorac), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Minister of Education and Science Sulejman Rushiti) and the Republic of Serbia (Minister for Science Ana Pešikan) signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the European Commission (Commissioner Janez Potočnik) to enable them to participate fully in the EU's Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7).

"Associated status" allows these countries (as well as Turkey, which signed a similar Memorandum on June 1) to participate in all calls for proposals and compete on an equal footing with the EU Member States for research co-operation and support actions funded by FP7.



Group photo (from left to right): Volkan Bozkir, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the EU; Dragan Primorac, Croatian Minister for Science, Education and Sports; Ana Pešikan, Serbian Minister of Science; Janez Potočnik and Sulejman Rushiti, Minister of Education and Science of FYR of Macedonia. © European Community, 2007

At the signing ceremony Commissioner Potočnik expressed great satisfaction that less than a year after he had announced in Vienna (at the launch of the Steering Platform), the opening of the doors of the European Research Area widely to all Western Balkan countries, signing of the Memoranda of Understanding could already take place with three Balkan countries. This matches his high expectations. He was also very proud that the Western Balkan countries, which are for various reasons close to his heart, were among the first to become associated to FP7. The Memorandum of Understanding entered into force on June 13, but it is applied as from January 1, 2007.

We report on page 2 on the progress and status of decision-making for the other Western Balkan countries.

(Information provided by European Commission, DG Research)

ZSI successful coordinator for WBC-INCO.NET

As mentioned in the last newsletter, an INCO-NET proposal for the Western Balkan countries was submitted in May 2007 by the same coordinator as for the Information Office - the ZSI / Centre for Social Innovation.

The proposal scored 14.5 out of 15. Evaluators stated that *“the impact is expected to be high due to the fact that the proposal will be concentrated in structuring the bi-regional dialogue on S&T, supporting the regional dialogue on S&T, developing concrete research priorities of mutual interest in the thematic fields relevant for FP7, structuring and improving statistical indicators on science and technology available for the WBC, structuring and improving the information available on research in the WBC (RTD Information Systems), supporting the transfer of know-how to multipliers (in particular head researchers and NCPs, financial managers, research managers), and will enable concrete networking between researchers of WBC and EU MS/AC. Dissemination activities are planned and designed to fit the work plan and to rise the impact of the project. ...”*

see-science.eu Response to ERA Green Paper

August 31, 2007 was the deadline to submit comments on the European Commission's Green Paper Relaunching the European Research Area. The Information Office has also participated in this consultation process. The short input paper can be downloaded via <http://see-science.eu/doc/2203.html>

State of Play in WBC's further Association to FP7

Montenegro

The next Association Agreement will be signed with Montenegro as soon as Protocol 8 to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement is adopted (provisionally September 2007), after which the internal decision-making for association to FP7 can be launched. In any event, it is expected that for Montenegro the association status will be applied as and from January 1, 2008.

Albania

Several contacts with Albania took place which allowed all necessary information on the association status to be provided including the legal and financial implications. On that basis Albania announced that it will inform Commissioner Potočnik of its interest in becoming associated to FP7. As soon as their expression of interest had been formally transmitted, the Commission indicated that it will start the internal decision-making procedure. Application of association status can be considered as and from January 1, 2008.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Commissioner Potočnik will visit Bosnia & Herzegovina in the beginning of October 2007. Discussions on association to FP7 are on the agenda. It is to be hoped that also BiH will also become associated to FP7 in which case the entire Western Balkan family will be associated to FP7 and this in turn gives greater opportunities not only for BiH but for the entire region.

(Information provided by Tania Friederichs, European Commission, DG Research)

Next Steering Platform Meeting to be held in Thessaloniki

During the last Platform Meeting in Berlin, Germany, colleagues from the Greek Ministry of Development, General Secretariat for Research & Technology announced their availability to host the next Steering Platform meeting. Official invitations will be sent out to the representatives of the relevant Ministries for Science and Research through the Commission Services. But we would like to already now invite the Steering Platform members to mark October 29, 2007 in their agenda. The event will take place in Thessalonica, Greece. (Information provided by Nikos Sidiropoulos, GSRT)

WBC-INCO.NET - what it means for the Steering Platform

WBC-INCO.NET's core objectives are to support the bi-regional dialogue between the EU, associated FP7 countries and the West Balkan countries, and to enhance the participation of WBC researchers in European RTD projects by structural measures. The partners include both S&T ministries from the Western Balkan countries and S&T ministries from Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Slovenia and Turkey. This adds critical mass and momentum to the project. The political dimension at the bi-regional level is closely intertwined with the Steering Platform. The first Workpackage is designed to support the bi-regional dialogue in the platform, the dialogue within the region as well as information exchange with several EC Directorates General and international stakeholders. Under this “Workpackage 1”, led by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research, WBC-INCO.NET will support the organisation of

- 8 Steering Platform Meetings (the first one being held during the Slovenian EU Presidency)
- 4 regional S&T policy meetings
- annual meetings with Directorate Generals of the European Commission (e.g. DG Enlargement, DG Information Society, DG TREN, DG Education etc.) to discuss interfaces of S&T policy issues with other policies (e.g. use of IPA funds; better coordination with the LifeLongLearning Programme etc.)
- 3 face-to-face “Round Tables” with multilateral initiatives and strategic programmes and projects (e.g. COST, UNESCO, World Bank, OECD, etc.; relevant ERA-NETs and specific support actions that target the West Balkan region)

The dialogues are substantiated with several analytical inputs and enhanced with capacity building measures. The negotiations between the coordinator on behalf of the consortium and the European Commission are currently under way. Evaluators remarks can be read in the box on the left.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please address Elke Dall at dall@zsi.at



The Bologna Process

Higher Education in South East Europe: outcomes from the London Ministerial Conference and Trends V report

The Conference of Education Ministers in May in London this year appropriately ended in an upbeat mood, with ministries, higher education institutions, students, and social partners feeling proud of the scale of achievement since 1999. They all renewed their commitment to intensify efforts to create the joint European Higher Education Area by 2010.

The Bologna process, combined with other global and national forces driving the development of knowledge economies and societies, has brought about enormous changes to the European higher education landscape. It is extraordinary that an agenda for higher education reform is even being discussed, let alone shared and agreed upon, among as many as forty-six countries - and this is now being increasingly acknowledged across the world.

Nowhere are these reforms more important than in South East Europe. The countries of the Western Balkans are facing the problems of transition economies that are shared by other former socialist bloc countries, as well as the necessity to respond and adapt to the fast-changing global environment. What sets them apart is that they are facing these challenges during a period of societal recovery from conflict, and experiencing them as a key element of democratic societal development within a new European future. Moreover the current generation of students were children during the period of violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, and it is therefore a humanitarian responsibility to support their educational development.

So how does South East Europe compare to the rest of Europe in terms of implementation of reforms? At one level, there is a great deal of similarity in terms of the progress being made on the Bologna action lines. Degree structures are changing, credit systems are being introduced, quality assurance mechanisms are being established, and people are beginning to think differently about the purposes of education, as well as its organisation.

Yet many problems persist. The European University Association's (EUA) Trends V report, prepared for the Ministers in London on the basis of quantitative and qualitative research, highlights the issue of university integration as the key challenge in South East Europe. Unless institutions move away from their traditional organisation as independent and loosely connected faculties, other reforms may prove impossible to realise. Universities, not faculties, must have the autonomy to organise their activities themselves for the benefit of the communities they serve. What is the point of introducing ECTS credits if there are no possibilities for students to move between faculties, let alone for study periods in other institutions to be recognised? Are curricula really being reformed to reduce the amount of overloaded content - much of which may be irrelevant to future societal needs? In many cases, the Bologna process has brought these issues to the fore, and developments are beginning.

The main challenge ahead is that universities in the region must address the real implications of student-centred learning. When student-centred learning becomes the main focus of reform, re-thinking curriculum will no longer be a matter of dividing study programmes into shorter cycles, but instead questions will focus on what students actually need from study programmes. This approach to curriculum - thinking about the outcomes required by students and society before looking at the inputs from academic staff - may yet prove to be the most important pedagogical revolution not only in South East Europe, but across the continent as a whole. Higher education is certainly changing, and the momentum needs to be maintained.

Links

EUA Trends Report V Universities Shaping the European Higher Education Area
<http://see-science.eu/doc/2166.html>
 EUA Involvement in Bologna Process
<http://see-science.eu/link/2168.html>

The European University Association



The European University Association (EUA) represents and supports higher education institutions in 46 countries (including all Western Balkan countries). It is open to membership from individual universities and national rectors' conferences, as well as associations and networks of higher education institutions.

It provides its members with a unique forum to cooperate and keep abreast of the latest trends in higher education and research policies. Publications, electronic newsletters, and other information are distributed to anyone interested.

According to its mission, EUA supports universities by

- Promoting policies to enable universities and other higher education institutions to respond to growing expectations regarding their contribution to the future development of a knowledge society for Europe
- Advocating these policies to decision makers at different levels and ensuring that the voice of universities is heard
- Informing members of policy debates which will impact on their development
- Developing its knowledge and expertise through projects that involve and benefit individual institutions while also underpinning policy development
- Strengthening the governance, leadership and management of institutions through a range of activities targeted at mutual learning, exchange of experience and the transfer of best practices
- Developing partnerships in higher education and research between Europe and the rest of the world in order to strengthen the position of European universities in a global context

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Openness of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme

CIP informs national authorities in third countries about participation possibilities

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP, for more information on the programme see box) is in principle open to:

1. EFTA countries which are members of the EEA, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement;
2. candidate countries benefiting from a pre-accession strategy, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of these countries in Community programmes established by the respective Framework Agreement and Association Council Decisions;
3. countries of the Western Balkans, in accordance with the provisions to be determined with those countries following the establishment of framework agreements concerning their participation in Community programmes;
4. other third countries, when agreements so allow.

A specific website in the CIP portal provides information for national authorities and explains that, it is for each country to judge whether it might benefit from participation in the CIP or in one of its three specific programmes, with the benefits outweighing the costs in terms of financial contributions to the relevant budgets). This analysis should take into account:

- the needs and priorities of the country;
- the capacity of administrative and financial infrastructures and institutions to effectively use the CIP instruments and deliver the benefits;
- the level of development of the potential beneficiaries;
- that the instruments of CIP are designed to support excellence and are based on competitive tenders or market principles;
- that CIP does not provide technical assistance or support cohesion objectives;
- that no principle of 'juste retour' (benefits in proportion to relative contributions) is applied.

Applying to participate in the CIP

Participation of third countries may be open for one, two or all three specific programmes of the CIP. Countries that wish to participate in the CIP should express their interest by way of a letter from the relevant Minister to the relevant Member of the European Commission (more details on the CIP website).

The financial contribution ("entry ticket") for participation is based on a multiplier which is applied to the annual budget for the relevant specific programme. For the EIP and ICT specific programmes, this multiplier is calculated according to the ratio of the GDP of the country concerned in relation to the GDP of EU Member States. Details about the calculation of costs are provided on the CIP Website. IPA is stated as one possible source for co-funding.



What are the necessary steps?

After a country expresses interest, the relevant Commission services submit calculations for the "entry ticket" to the diplomatic mission of the country concerned. The country then indicates agreement and confirms interest. The Commission services draw up a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to regulate the country's participation. Once this MoU has been signed by both parties and has entered into force (this requires parliamentary ratification in certain countries), the country may participate in activities of the programme. The current planning is for Croatia and FYR of Macedonia to join this autumn and possibly the other Western Balkan countries (except UNMIK/Kosovo) to join in 2008.

Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway are already associated countries for the CIP. The process was formalised in June 2007.

Other possibilities available for working for the CIP

It is possible for organisations providing business and innovation support services in third countries to co-operate with the network of such service providers established under the CIP. This is possible even where the country concerned is not participating in the CIP, but in this case no financial support would be available from the CIP budget.

Links

CIP Webportal
<http://see-science.eu/link/2029.html>
 CIP third country participation
<http://see-science.eu/link/2028.html>

What is the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP)?

The Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme CIP aims to encourage the competitiveness of European enterprises, with SMEs being the main target. The programme runs from 2007 to 2013. It includes three operational programmes:

Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP)

- Access to finance for SMEs through "EU financial instruments"
- Network of business and innovation service centres
- Initiatives to foster entrepreneurship and innovation
- Eco-innovation
- Support for policy-making

Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP)

- Developing a single European information space
- Strengthening the European internal market for ICT
- Encouraging innovation through the wider adoption of and investment in ICT
- Developing an inclusive information society, more efficient and effective services in areas of public interest

Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE)

- Fostering energy efficiency and the rational use of energy sources
- Promoting new and renewable energy sources and energy diversification
- Promoting energy efficiency and new energy sources in transport



EC Publishes Updated FP7 2007 Work Programmes

On June 15, 2007, the EC published updated 2007 Work Programmes for most parts of the FP7 Co-operation Programme (Health; Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology; ICT; NMP; Energy; Environment; Transport; Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities; Space; and Security) and the Capacities Programme (Research Infrastructures; Research for the Benefit of SMEs; and International Co-operation).



Most of the changes to the 2007 Work Programmes reflect revisions to indicative budgets, where earlier versions had unconfirmed amounts planned to be taken from the 2008 budget. Each of the changes to the 2007 Work Programmes from previous versions is highlighted on the relevant cover page. In many cases a new table has been added to clarify whether the budget being used is from 2007 or 2008.

We advice downloading the most updated version from the CORDIS website: <http://see-science.eu/link/713.html>

Currently Open Calls for Proposals in FP7 Cooperation

Food-Agriculture-Fisheries-Biotechnology

FP7-KBBE-2007-2A: The currently open call in the field does not specifically target the region of the Western Balkan countries, but specific sections concern International Cooperation partner countries.

Deadline: September 11, 2007

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/1954.html>



Health

FP7-HEALTH-2007-B: "Childhood and adolescent mental disorders" is a topic for Specific International Cooperation Action (SICA) with the target region Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Western Balkans. Another topic addresses Health care intervention research - optimising hospital care and calls for small or medium-scale focused research projects with the target region of the Western Balkans. Some topics, in the same call, address all International Cooperation Partner Countries. HEALTH-2007-4.1-8: promotion and facilitation of international cooperation in areas relevant to the objectives of this theme is particularly interesting for stakeholders active in international cooperation in the field.

Deadline: September 18, 2007.

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/755.html>

Information and Communication Technologies - ICT

FP7-ICT-2007-2: The second call has three specific activity lines for the Western Balkan countries: ICT-2007.3.7: Networked Embedded and Control Systems, ICT-2007.5.3: Virtual Physiological Human and ICT-2007.6.3: Environmental Management and Energy Efficiency.

Deadline: October 9, 2007

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/1940.html>

FP7-ICT-2007-C - FET Open scheme: The call is constantly open until December 31, 2008, with several cut off dates for first stage proposals (short, strictly anonymous proposal of maximum five pages). Research will target radical interdisciplinary explorations of new and alternative approaches towards future and emerging ICT-related technologies.

FP7-ICT-SEC-2007-1: Joint Call with the Security Theme, see below.

Security (and ICT)

FP7-ICT-SEC-2007-1: In the Joint Call between ICT and Security with themes on Critical Infrastructure Protection, international co-ordination is envisaged in the first focus (ICT). A part of the Security themes budget is also available for international cooperation.

Deadline: November 29, 2007

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/2078.html>

Socio-economic sciences and Humanities

FP7-SSH-2007-1: There are several topics which generally call for participation of international partners e.g.: SSH-2007-1.2.1 Globalisation and its interaction with the European economy (aspects of EU enlargements are explicitly included); SSH-2007-1.3.1 Macroeconomic policy, its interaction and cooperation with other policies (the context for the research are recent and future EU enlargements); SSH-2007-2.1.1 Analysing, comparing and evaluating the various societal models in a medium- to long-term perspective (research shall compare different European countries or groups of those countries, other developed countries and relevant developing or emerging countries); SSH-2007-2.2.1. Regional development challenges in an evolving international context (European enlargement and integration is a key regional development challenge to be addressed); SSH-2007-4.1.2. Development paths in a historical and comparative perspective and their impact on Europe; SSH-2007-4.3.1. Europe seen from outside; SSH-2007-4.3.2. Multilateralism and the new external relations of the European Union (EU integration and other regional integration processes are of relevance, as well as multilateralism and bilateral relations including enlargement and neighbourhood policy).

Deadline: November 29, 2007

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/770.html>

Currently Open Calls for Tenders in FP7 Cooperation

In addition to the "Calls for Proposals" also "Calls for Tenders" are published within the Cooperation Programme of FP7. Currently seven such tenders are open - dealing with the fields of nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies, Monitoring and Control markets, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in healthcare, future and past of the European Research Area, scale and scope as drivers of ERA, and S&T specialisation and lead markets. Deadlines are all mid/end of September 2007.

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/2169.html> .



Currently Open Calls for Proposals in FP7 Capacities

Activities of International Cooperation

FP7-INCO-2007-2 - Activities of International Cooperation BILAT: Bilateral coordination for the enhancement and development of S&T partnerships shall improve the provision of information on programmes and funding designed: to promote cooperation; to better identify and demonstrate mutual interest and benefit in S&T cooperation between the EU and specific third countries; and to share best practices via joint forums such as workshops and presenting the state of the art and the prospects for cooperation in particular fields. The WBC's are not a specific target region.
Deadline: September 11, 2007



Research for the benefit of SMEs

FP7-SME-2007-1 - Research for SMEs Call 1: The aim of the programme is to strengthen the 'innovation capacity' of SMEs and their contribution to the development of new technology-based products and markets.
Deadline: September 4, 2007

Research Infrastructures

FP7-INFRASTRUCTURES-2007-2: topic INFRA-2007-3.3 is open for proposals in the field of "Studies, conferences and coordination actions supporting policy development, including international cooperation for infrastructures". A further topic addressed in this Call: eScience Grid infrastructures.
Deadline: September 20, 2007
More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/1948.html>

Further news on FP7

Lump-sum method for ICPCs adopted

<http://see-science.eu/news/1943.html>

Guidance Notes on Audit Certification are now available

<http://see-science.eu/doc/2081.html>

DRAFT Guide for Beneficiaries is now available

<http://see-science.eu/doc/2082.html>

CORDIS available in six languages

The CORDIS FP7 Service is now available in German, Spanish, French, Italian and Polish, in addition to English.

Registration for Evaluators

<http://see-science.eu/link/971.html>

New service for the coordination of FP7 research activities

Information is provided on the ERA-NET scheme, Article 169 and Joint Technology Initiatives (JTI).
<http://see-science.eu/link/2080.html>

Current Open Calls for Proposals in FP7 People

FP7-PEOPLE-2007-2-2-ERG - European Reintegration Grants (ERG)
FP7-PEOPLE-2007-4-2-IIF - International Incoming Fellowships
FP7-PEOPLE-2007-4-1-IOF - International Outgoing Fellowships for Career Development
FP7-PEOPLE-2007-4-3-IRG - International Reintegration Grants (IRG)
FP7-PEOPLE-2007-2-1-IEF - Intra-European Fellowships for Career Development
PEOPLE-2007-5-4-NCP - People NCP
FP7-PEOPLE-2007-5-3-ERA-MORE - Trans-National collaboration among ERA-MORE Members (ERA-MORE)
More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/598.html>



FP7 People: New Marie Curie Action

International Research Staff Exchange Scheme IRSES

The newly implemented Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES) aims at strengthening research partnerships through staff exchanges and networking between European research organisations and organisations from countries having an S&T agreement with the EU or being covered under the European neighbourhood policy.

Support under this new scheme in 2008 will be provided to research organisations to establish or reinforce long-term research co-operation through a coordinated joint programme of exchange, by seconding and hosting eligible researchers, technical and management staff for short periods.

The expected impact under IRSES is the contribution to constructing and/or strengthening networks of beneficial international research collaborations between Member States and Associated Countries and those Third Countries covered by the S&T agreement or by the European neighbourhood Policy.

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Activities for European Human Resources in Research

The European Commission stepped up its activities in the field of human resources in research in 2006: the European Researcher's Mobility Portal (each month, this service is listing about 100 new job vacancies and reaches 24,000 users), the Network of Mobility Centres (composed of more than 200 Mobility Centres in 32 countries with numerous local contact points, which assisted some 17,000 researchers who want to move from one country to another between September and December 2006 alone), ERA-LINK (linking European researchers abroad), and many more.

More information: <http://see-science.eu/news/2123.html>



S&T in Montenegro

Location: South Eastern Europe
Total land area: 13,812 sq. km
Population: 620 145 (2005, mid year, preliminary) source: wiiw
GDP - per capita: 2.864 EUR (2005) at official exchange rate - source: MPIN
BERD: 0.05 % of GDP (2001)
HERD: 0.76 % of GDP (2001)
GOVERD: 0.21 % of GDP (2005)



Being the youngest recognised country in Europe has brought many changes to Montenegro in all fields, and to the RTD area as well. Taking this into consideration and bearing in mind the poor level of RTD activities throughout the region during the last 15 years, it is not surprising that Montenegrin RTD is at the very beginning of the reform processes.

Creation of both education and science policies is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science (Ministarstvo prosvjete i nauke).

Research funding

The Ministry is the main public funding body, but other ministries participate in financing projects from respective fields as well. Research funding provided by the industry is at a very poor level. It is important to mention international funding, obtained through various aid programmes in the past 10 years, such as CARDS, mainly dedicated to upgrading research infrastructure.

The legal framework

The new Law on Scientific-Research Activities was passed at the end of 2005. It stipulates that *"all scientific-research activities are of public interest, free and available to all, domestic and foreign, private persons and legal entities."*

Some of the goals prescribed by the Law are the following:

- Integration into ERA and EU Framework Programmes
- Sustainable development of the country
- Introduction of international quality standards
- Increased investment into scientific and research activities
- Connecting researchers at national and international levels

The Law stipulates the introduction of tax alleviation for the purchase of research equipment.

Legal Framework:

- Law on Scientific-Research Activities
- Law on Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts
- Law on Recognition and Assessment of Educational Certificates (Bill)
- Law on Higher Education

S&T Strategy

The Government established the Council for Scientific-Research Activities in August 2006, which is, among other things, responsible for the creation of the Strategy for S&T, for a period of 8 years. The Committee responsible for drafting the proposal of the strategy was appointed in March 2007. It is expected that this strategy will be completed by the end of October 2007. The Committee members are representatives of all scientific fields in Montenegro. Apart from defining the priorities of further S&T development, among which participation in all European scientific programmes takes top priority, this strategy should also define feasible mechanisms for increasing annual budgetary allocations for science, which are currently at a very poor level at the moment. The draft strategy should be put to public discussion and Government adoption.

The ongoing integration processes will also help the Ministry in defining future policy development in RTD.

Research activity

Most of the research activities are performed at the University of Montenegro - at its faculties and institutes and at the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. The research is carried out through annual national calls for research proposals, published by the Ministry of Education and Science. Funds allocated for this purpose are public, and have so far been restricted to Montenegrin nationals. For the first time, this year's first call for research activities was aimed at teams which involved unemployed PhD candidates as a prerequisite. The second call for scientific-research projects is going to be published in autumn.

International activities

Apart from the national research programme, Montenegrin researchers are also involved in bilateral and regional programmes, which have had great impact on improvement of the working conditions at the institutes and research centres. They have also created a good starting point for involvement of Montenegrin teams in wider European research programmes. In fact, Montenegrin researchers are starting to investigate more FP7 possibilities and are getting involved in projects with their international partners from previous common activities. For the time being, they are mostly interested in the 'Capacities' programme.

As of January 2008, Montenegro is going to be associated to FP7, following the legal procedure related to the signing of the Decision on participation in the European programmes, which is expected in late autumn (see page 2).

A network of National Contact Points (NCPs) has been established and has already carried out several info days for the research community, raising awareness on FP7. The Ministry of Education and Science, which coordinates the network, has registered 21 teams involved in project proposals in the first round of calls. As one of the measures for stimulating participation in FP7, the Ministry offers financial incentive of 1,000 euro for each positively evaluated proposal.



Industrial Research

Research in industry exists at minimum level following the processes of privatisation, but there are some improvements in businesses with new management structures. We believe that investing in research will again be set as a priority by those companies.

SMEs in Montenegro are mostly in a position to outsource technology improvements, but there is still a shortage of structures that could articulate and support their quest. Innovation Relay Centre has not been established yet.

Research statistics

In order to be able to fully understand the situation in Montenegrin research, it is necessary to reform the existing statistical system, which at the moment does not recognize almost any of the important Frascati indicators related to S&T.

Conclusions

We think that it is important at this stage to help Montenegrin researchers in networking and joining their capacities at both national and international levels, as well as connecting different sectors. The concept of mobility of researchers needs to be examined and enhanced through adequate policies and organizational structures. Montenegrin researchers are, in our opinion, under great pressure. In addition to their teaching and research commitments, they try to successfully cope with poor funding and lack of human resources, keep abreast of participation in international projects etc. They need very strong support and a much more favourable environment to be able to fully contribute to the development of Montenegrin and European societies.

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 Ministry of Science and Education

EU Integration is a Key Priority for Montenegro



In the Panel "Political Perspectives" at the 63rd European Forum Alpbach 2007 (Austria), Prof. Dr. Gordana Djurović (picture), Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, presented and discussed a paper "Promoting Main Principles of European Integration in Western Balkan Region through Regatta Approach - View from Montenegro".

Main topics discussed in the paper were:

- "Europesation" as Motor of Changes
- Chronology of European Integration Process in Montenegro
- Towards a New Development Strategy of Montenegro
- Political Criteria and Short Term Priorities in the European Partnership for Montenegro

The full paper is available via the website of the Info Office.

Links Full paper:
<http://see-science.eu/doc/2153.html>

COST Reinforces Activities towards the Western Balkan Countries

At its last meeting, the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) - the governing body of COST - discussed the further implementation of the decision taken by the ministers concerned regarding the provision of support in the scientific and technological field to the European Community's foreign dimension, including the Newly Independent States. It decided to extend its support substantially to researchers from institutions in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Montenegro) and Europe's "Near Neighbours", not already members of COST. This decision will allow COST to contribute to the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union. In the light of this decision, COST invites institutions from the countries concerned to consider joining COST Actions relevant to their research activities. The COST website provides detailed information about the nine Domains, as well as more than 200 running Actions.

What are the COST Domains?

- Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences
- Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies
- Earth System Science and Environmental Management
- Food and Agriculture
- Forests, their Products and Services
- Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Materials, Physical and Nanosciences
- Transport and Urban Development
- Others

For further information, please contact Mr Siegel, Coordinator of the COST Cluster on Life Science (and author of this article) to obtain information on the procedure for accession to a COST Action. At the same meeting, the CSO decided on September 30, 2007 (Sunday) as the next collection date for its continuous Open Call. COST invites proposals for new COST Actions contributing to the scientific, economic, cultural or societal development of Europe. Proposals playing a precursor role for other European programmes involving young groups' ideas are especially welcome (further details see <http://see-science.eu/goto/2198.html>).

COST Strategic Workshops

Furthermore, COST invites the research community to take advantage of its recently introduced instrument: Strategic Workshops. The Strategic Workshops aim to bring researchers and decision-makers together to discuss forefront topics, principally of an inter-disciplinary nature. In doing so, they can be used in the topic's future development and form the basis for future proposals, not only to COST but also to the framework programme and to other European organisations responsible for research networking. Proposals for Strategic Workshops focusing on the specific challenges of the Balkan region can be submitted through Mr Siegel at any time.

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S&T Cooperation in Cyprus



Cyprus' strategic position in the Mediterranean area has long established the island as Europe's stepping stone to the East. Cyprus is easily accessible from all major European destinations and has a highly developed telecommunications infrastructure, which enables easy access to international research networks. It also has an excellent educational infrastructure which facilitates the movement of foreign scientists and their families to Cyprus. Furthermore, its traditionally good relations with neighbouring countries provide a promising platform for fruitful cooperation and collaboration.

Cyprus' Strategy on Research and Development

The Research Promotion Foundation (RPF) was established by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus in 1996 to promote the development of scientific and technological research in Cyprus. Although the Foundation is a relatively newly established organisation, it has developed a wide range of activities. Among the RPF's main activities is the development of national competitive programmes for the financing of research projects and support of research activities. Moreover, the RPF has developed several activities to facilitate the creation of networks between Cypriot and foreign scientists, create links between academia and industry, support young researchers, enhance research infrastructure and most importantly create a research culture on the island.

Following the announcement of the Lisbon Strategy, which aims to increase member-states' investment in R&D activities to 3% of the GDP by 2010, the Cyprus Government set its sight on reaching 1% as a more realistic target. As part of Cyprus' 'National Reform Programme', a number of measures have been taken to increase and improve investment in R&D and especially in the private sector.

The Cyprus Government has recently decided to utilize EU structural funds to enhance research activities on the island. The funds will be incorporated in the new RPF Framework Programme 2007-2013 that is expected to be announced in June 2007.

Participation of Cyprus in the International and Regional Programmes

Cyprus participates in European Research Programmes such as the Framework Programme and COST and is a Member of International Organizations such as EUREKA and JRC. Currently, the RPF participates in a number of Specific Support Actions (SSA) and ERA-NET projects, funded under FP6, in various thematic priorities. The Foundation is also a member of the European Science Foundation.

With regard to international cooperation, Cyprus is currently participating in projects under the thematic priorities 'Regions of Knowledge' and 'Research Potential' of FP7 that emphasise collaboration with the Balkan Countries. In addition, the RPF intends to actively participate in projects such as WBC-INCO.NET and SEE-ERA.NET. Moreover, Cyprus is undertaking a number of activities aimed at the promotion of international cooperation, through signing of bilateral

agreements in the field of research. So far, agreements have been signed with Greece, France, Italy, Slovenia, Egypt, and Romania, whereas preliminary discussions are under way with various European and Arab Countries. The aim of this last initiative is to make Cyprus a link between Europe and the Arab world.

Author

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<http://see-science.eu/org/2098.html>

New National RDI Strategy in Romania

The new policy was developed within the project "Elaboration of the national R&D and innovation strategy for 2007-2013", launched by the National Authority for Scientific Research (NASR) in 2005, with the aim to re-evaluate and reconsider the priorities and objectives for the R&D and innovation field. The outcome were two policy papers detailing the national RDI strategy, which were recently approved by the Romanian government. They include the following key elements for the development of the RDI system in Romania:

- Promoting the creation and development of S&T knowledge, with a view on obtaining high level, internationally competitive, S&T results;
- Increasing the competitiveness of the Romanian economy by promoting the diffusion and transfer of S&T knowledge, and the innovation processes with strong economic impact;
- Increasing the quality of life through the development of S&T solutions with high benefits for society.

These strategy objectives are going to be achieved within the new framework for strategy implementation monitoring and in the context of a more transparent research market, based on a competitive system that promotes excellence.

The RDI Strategy 2007/2013 encourages regional cooperation, e.g. through instruments like launching of joint calls for R&D thematic of mutual interest, but there are no specific targets set for a given particular region (such as, for instance, the Western Balkans).

(Information provided by Ms. Rolanda Predescu
<http://see-science.eu/users/2177.html>)

Updates on Bilateral Agreements with Western Balkan Countries

In the last issue we gave a rough overview of the bilateral agreements between the European Union Member States, associated countries and the Western Balkan countries.

Current updates include:

- Cooperation Memorandum between Austria and FYR of Macedonia signed
<http://www.see-science.eu/news/2045.html>
- Croatia and Israel establishing a joint fund for science
<http://www.see-science.eu/news/2046.html>



Transport as a Priority Area in FP7

“Transport” in the region of the Western Balkan countries is not a focus in the 7th framework programme for the near future. Although all topics in the upcoming Work Programme 2008 “Transport (including aeronautics)” will most probably be open to international cooperation, only Russia, Ukraine and other Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries (the so-called EECA countries), China, India, and South Africa are specifically mentioned in the draft available.

However, as associated countries, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia have the same opportunities for participation in FP7 calls as their colleagues from the EU.

Topics that could be of special interest for the Western Balkan countries include “Interoperability and Safety” (although probably not call open in 2008), “Stimulation of International Cooperation within Surface Transport Research” (call probably open in 2008), and “International co-operation and awareness” (call probably open in 2008). The final draft of the Work Programme is envisaged to be finished by the end of August 2007, with its adoption in November. The next calls (2nd calls, Energy and Transport - TREN) are expected to open in November 2007.

Even if currently the participation of WBC countries is not specifically encouraged in the area of “transport” in the 7th framework programme, there are nevertheless several other interesting projects and initiatives working in this field:

South East European Transport Research Forum - SETREF

The South East European Transport Forum (SETREF) is an international non-governmental non-profit association of organisations devoted to the promotion of transport research and/or education, based in South East European countries. The organisation publishes a very good newsletter for the areas “research” and “transport” for South East Europe. See the most recent issue for more information about upcoming FP7 calls: <http://see-science.eu/link/2200.html>.

SETREF participates in two FP6 projects - PREMIA, which investigates the effectiveness of different measures to promote market entry of alternative motor fuels, and FRIGHTWISE, which aims to promote the modal shift of cargo flows from exclusive road use to intermodal freight transport.

More information: <http://see-science.eu/org/2178.html>

South East Europe Transport Observatory - SEETO

The South East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO) aims to promote the development of the core regional transport network, and is funded by technical assistance from the EU in the CARDS programme. The overall aim of SEETO is to encourage cooperation in the area of regional transport. With an office situated in Belgrade, the SEETO steering committee consists of ministries from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,



Montenegro, Serbia, UNMIK Kosovo, and representatives from the EC Directorate-General for Energy and Transport. SEETO has recently published the “South-East Europe Core Regional Transport Network Development Plan, Five Year Multi Annual Plan 2008 to 2012”.

Download: <http://see-science.eu/doc/2181.html>

Southeast European Cooperative Initiative - SECI

The Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) was established in 1996, to strengthen regional cooperation and to promote public private partnerships in Southeast Europe. Based on similar initiatives in other parts of Europe, the network established several PRO Committees, which are integrally related with customs authorities and relevant government organisations, and work in close cooperation with private sector bodies.

The SECIPRO network has been working for regional trade and transport facilitation, bringing together the public and private sector for improved policy making and policy implementation in this field.

The main activities are:

- Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Component of the World Bank programme for Trade and Transport Facilitation in Southeast Europe (TTFSE/TFC - see below)
- Identification and resolution of problems related to border crossing on a bilateral and trilateral level
- Raising public awareness of challenges and threats related to security and corruption
- Building capacities and local expertise through cooperation with international professional organisations

More information: <http://see-science.eu/org/2179.html>

Trade and Transport Facilitation in Southeast Europe Program - TTFSE

The objective of TTFSE II, a follow-up of TTFSE, will be to increase the trade competitiveness of Southeast Europe. The programme aims at improving the availability of adequate logistics services connecting the region with its neighbours, as well as regional and global markets. This will be achieved through supporting infrastructure and technical assistance, while strengthening the capacity of the private sector to provide logistic services. At the core of TTFSE II is the corridor approach to trade and transport facilitation in Southeast Europe.

The programme is the result of a collaborative effort between the national governments in the region, the World Bank, and the United States in collaboration with the European Union.

More information: <http://see-science.eu/org/2180.html>

Transport news

- Guidelines for Transport in Europe and Neighbouring Regions adopted <http://see-science.eu/news/2201.html>
- Conference TRA2008 in Ljubljana <http://see-science.eu/news/2202.html>

Links
 CORDIS Website on Transport
<http://see-science.eu/link/2215.html>
 European Commission - DG Transport
<http://see-science.eu/org/2230.html>





WWW.SEE-ERA.NET

„SEE-ERA.NET Award for RTD Infrastructure Donations in the Western Balkan Countries”

In order to raise awareness of this problem among the general public and among relevant stakeholders (such as science policy makers, potential donors etc.), the upcoming Slovenian EU-presidency and the project SEE-ERA.NET will organise an award for donations of scientific equipment within the frame of RTD collaboration with the Western Balkan countries.

There are huge differences among Western Balkan countries' research systems regarding human resources or legislation for example.

But, a common problem is that due to the poor financial situation of research institutions, the means for modernisation of scientific infrastructure are limited (i.e. research facilities, scientific equipment, laboratories, libraries, computerization, and Internet infrastructure). Private funding from the enterprise sector has also remained low and is unlikely to substantially increase over the coming years.

International donors have only occasionally shown interest in investing in the modernisation of research facilities and laboratories.

Therefore, it can be said that in the region of the Western Balkan countries science and research institutions are still in urgent need of international support with regard to research infrastructure development.

Implementation of the award

Until the end of September 2007, SEE-ERA.NET partners from WBCs will collect information to compile a list of the most urgent infrastructure needs in the WBC. With this information potential donors (research and technology organisations as well as universities with regard to second hand research infrastructure, philanthropic organisations, development assistance organisations etc.) from EU and other developed European countries will be approached and invited to take action in this important field.

Donations envisaged in this context will be either in the form of (second hand) scientific equipment or financial means to purchase/develop the infrastructure needed in WBCs with a value expected to be above 20.000 euro. The donations and the donors will then be presented during a special EU presidency event in Ljubljana, Slovenia and a special award will be given to outstanding projects selected by an international committee.

The event will be organised together with a meeting of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries in the first half of 2008.

Further information will be accessible via <http://see-science.eu/link/2199.html> and the SEE-ERA.NET website end of September 2007.

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Call Results: SEE-ERA.NET funds scientific cooperation for 161 research teams

Through the first Southeast European Era-Net SEE-ERA.NET “Pilot Joint Call for Research Proposals” 161 research teams from all participating countries in 31 selected projects will receive funding for cross-national research and networking. For a list of funded projects, see right side.

The projects involve three thematic areas:

- Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology; sub area: Sustainable Production and Management of Biological Resources from Land, Forest and Aquatic Environments
- Information and Communication Technologies; sub area: Applications Research
- Environment; sub area: Environmental Technologies

This call is funded by national contributions from the 14 participating countries: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

321 eligible project proposals involving 1,437 research teams were submitted by the deadline for the call on March 31, 2007, including 739 teams from the Western Balkan countries. This clearly shows the need but also the potential for more scientific cooperation with the Western Balkan countries.

For more details and statistics of the call follow the link to the website on the SEE-ERA.NET Pilot Joint Call: <http://see-science.eu/goto/2183.html>.

A New Programme for Southeast Europe

These encouraging results are one reason for the development of a new research-funding programme - the Regional Programme for Cooperation with South-East Europe - ReP-SEE. This programme will provide several calls for proposals with increased budget for funding scientific cooperation in the EU and the Western Balkan countries.

Please check the SEE-ERA.NET website regularly for more information and updates: <http://see-science.eu/goto/200.html>

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Networking Projects

Title	Coordinator	
A Collaborative South East Europe Seismic Network (CoSEESNet): Towards Early Warning System and Real Time Seismic Monitoring in South East Europe	National Observatory of Athens/ Institute of Geodynamics	Greece
Global epidemiology of phytoplasma diseases of economic importance in Southeast Europe (Network PHYTOPLASMA-EPIDEMIO)	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique/ Department of Plant Health and Environment (SPE)/ UMR-1090 Génomique Diversité et Pouvoir Pathogène	France
Multi-functional management of coppice forests. Contributions to rural development, maintenance of biodiversity, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in natural resource management	University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna/ Department of Forest and Soil Science/ Institute of Silviculture	Austria
Recreation of the BALKAN NET, network of conservation bodies in countries sharing continuous large carnivore populations	ARCTUROS NGO	Greece
Regional forest management support needs - comparative user requirements analysis with regional stakeholder groups in Balkan countries and middle and eastern European countries Re-FOR-MAN	Dresden University of Technology/ Institute for Soil Science and Site Ecology/ Forest-, Geo- and Hydrosiences	Germany
The importance of chlamydia infections in birds for animal and human health in Southeastern Europe	University of Ljubljana, Veterinary faculty/ Institut for Health Care of Poultry/ Laboratory for diagnostics of infectious poultry diseases	Slovenia
Use of lactic acid bacteria in production of hypoallergenic dairy products, and for the generation of mild antimicrobials	Institut National de La Recherche Agronomique/ Unité Biopolymères Interactions Assemblages (BIA)/ Fonctions et Interactions des Protéines Laitières (FIPL)	France

Research Projects

Title	Coordinator	
An integrated strategy to assess and evaluate water quality of Lake Shkodra	University of Heidelberg/ Department of Zoology/ Sediment toxicity and integrated monitoring group	Germany
Building Language Resources and Translation Models for Machine Translation focused on South Slavic and Balkan Languages	Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence/ Human Language Technology	Romania
Continuous water quality monitoring in surface waters at Monenegro and Serbia	European Economic Interest Grouping/ Environmental Technologies	Greece
Definition of research needs on identification, prediction and surveillance of emerging and re-emerging zoonoses in West Balkan area	Faculty of Medicine/ University of Pristina/Kosovska Mitrovica/ Preventive Medicine	Serbia
Development of a non-toxic, ecologically compatible, natural-resource based insecticide from diatomaceous earth deposits of South Eastern Europe to control stored-product insect pests	Agricultural University of Athens/ Department of Plant Science/ Laboratory of Agricultural Zoology and Entomology	Greece
Development of Molecular Tools for FIG genetic resources characterization and preservation in West Balkan Countries	University of Primorska/ Science and Research Centre of Koper (UP SRC)/ Institute for Mediterranean Agriculture and Olive Growing	Slovenia
Development of Strategy and Methods for Monitoring of Electromagnetic Pollution in the Environment of the Western Balkans	Space Research Institute/ Department of Aerospace management systems	Bulgaria
Distribution and initial molecular characterization of enterohaemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC) specific virulence factors of E. coli strains isolated from domestic animals and man: an assessment of zoonotic significance in the West Balkan	Veterinary Medical Research Institute/ Enteric Bacteriology and Foodborne Zoonosis	Hungary
Exploring the molecular biodiversity of medicinal and aromatic plants	Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania/ Natural Products and Biotechnology	Greece
Immobilized Yeast Cells in Hydrogel Carriers for Bioproduction of Alcohols	Institute of Polymers/ Polymer Chemistry/ Polymerization Processes	Bulgaria
Interactive Visual Analysis of Bio-signals	Jozef Stefan Institute/ Department of Communication Systems	Slovenia
Landscape and regional context of insect agrobiodiversity in Southeastern Europe: a pilot survey of selected hemipteran pests, their parasitoids and predators, and bee pollinator diversity	Faculty of Biology/ Department of Zoology/ Laboratory for Entomology	Serbia
Major allergens in apple and olive fruits	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/ Biology/ Botany	Greece
Phenotypic and genotypic characterization of Pasteurella multocida and Mannheimia haemolytica strains isolated from sheep and goats originated from Greece, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki/ Faculty of Veterinary Medicine/ Laboratory of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	Greece
Phenotyping and genotyping of cereal genetic resources to improve tolerance to abiotic and biotic stresses	Agricultural Research Institute/ Department of Cereal Resistance Breeding	Hungary
Population genetics of a highly invasive insect pest	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA), Centre d'Orléans / Département EFPA - Ecologie des forêts, prairies et milieux aquatiques/ Unité de Zoologie Forestière	France
Understanding Ionic Liquids as Novel Solvent in Green Chemistry	Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb/ Department of Chemistry/ Laboratory of Analytical Chemistry	Croatia
Use of Prescribed burning in Middle-East and South East Europe	University of West Hungary/ Faculty of Forestry / Institute of Silviculture and Forest Protection/ Department of Forest Protection	Hungary
Use of SNPs and SSRs for genetic diversity assessment within cultivated olive germplasm from Western Balkan Countries	Mediterranean Agronomic Institute at Chania/ Horticultural Genetics & Biotechnology	Greece

Summer Schools

Title	Coordinator	
European Association for Technology - Enhanced Learning (EATEL) Summer School 2008	Groupe des Ecoles de Télécommunications/ Institut National des Télécommunications/ Foreign Languages and Social Sciences GET eLearning	France
Summer school on "Biomonitoring methods for air quality in natural and man-made environment" (Biometh-Air)	Central Laboratory of General Ecology/ Functional Ecology Functioning of Terrestrial Ecosystems Research Group	Bulgaria
Summer School on Build Environment	Technical University of Sofia/ Department of Hydroaerodynamics	Bulgaria
Toxic cyanobacteria in drinking water sources - problem and sanitation	University of Pannonia, Department of Limnology	Hungary
Summer school on Preparation of Climate Atlas, 10-14 September 2007	Hungarian Meteorological Service/ Climatological Department	Hungary



Medical Research Initiative South Eastern Europe

MedResIn SEE
Medical Research Initiative
South Eastern Europe

On July 12-13, 2007, the 3rd Training and Proposal Building Meeting of the Medical Research Initiative South Eastern Europe (MedResIn SEE) was held in Belgrade.

This initiative by six partners from Austria, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, and Slovenia, is designed to foster dialogue in medical research at the level of individual researchers and projects. It serves to strengthen cooperation in biomedical research in Central and South Eastern Europe and beyond, and it facilitates the development of joint research activities by providing a platform for researchers to present and to pursue their ideas.

In Belgrade, more than 100 researchers from 15 countries from all over Europe met at the School of Medicine to discuss their ideas and develop project concepts into concrete research projects for submission to FP7. As they aim to submit their project to the 7th European Framework Programme, the event included an information session about FP7 and the People Programme, as well as specific and well-received seminars on proposal structure, writing strategies, and the Electronic Proposal Submission System. In the follow-up "proposal building workshops" the input was put into practice. While three project proposals developed in previous MedResIn Meetings had already been submitted to FP7 in the spring, five groups have been active in Belgrade and are working now to submit their finalized project proposals to the European Commission in the autumn.

In order to support cooperation in the region and with potential partners in EU Member States, an online platform for researchers to present and interlink their ideas is provided beyond the duration of the meetings. This platform is open for all researchers who wish to enter their profiles and to search for potential cooperation partners at <http://www.meduni-graz.at/medresin/profiles.html>

Information about the Medical Research Initiative South Eastern Europe (MedResIn SEE) is available at <http://www.meduni-graz.at/medresin>

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Free 47 minutes online training course for FP7 and the Balkans

Sean McCarthy, a highly experienced trainer for the preparation of proposals in the Framework Programmes, has prepared an e-training course for researchers from the Western Balkan countries.

Agenda of the course:

- Sources of Information on Framework 7
- Which countries can participate?
- The Research Priorities in Framework 7
- Which activities can be funded?



- Where to find the best partners?
- How to start and how to proceed?

Updated links are presented and handouts can be downloaded.

Sean McCarthy is consultant at Hyperion, Ireland. The course is sponsored by the Austrian Science and Research Liaison Office Ljubljana, so it can be offered without any costs for the WBC researchers.

Links Direct link to the course
<http://see-science.eu/goto/1985.html>
Sean McCarthy, Hyperion
<http://see-science.eu/users/1921.html>
<http://see-science.eu/org/1920.html>

ERA WESTBALKAN+ pooling research expertise profiles of Western Balkans' scientific communities

The ERA WESTBALKAN+ project (a Specific Support Action, financed by the European Commission under the Sixth EU Framework



Programme) started its operation in January 2007, having as overall objective during the Seventh EU Framework Programme (FP7) the acceleration of the opening up of the European Research Area to the Western Balkan Countries (WBCs), i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. The two main measures of the project are on the one hand to strengthen the position of National Contact Points (NCPs) in WBCs by deepening and enlarging their network with their counterparts in the European Union. On the other hand, the Western Balkan RTD community shall be supported in its participation in FP7 by offering researchers and research institutions hands-on information and training on FP7 relevant issues.

For more information on the ERA WESTBALKAN+ project, its activities and project partners, follow <http://see-science.eu/link/2186.html> to the project website.

A valuable and useful tool, already established during the previous project ERA WESTBALKAN, is the West Balkan Research Database. It provides ongoing support to increase the visibility of researchers as well as universities and organisations active in R&D in WBCs. Currently comprised of about 650 expertise profiles, it allows researchers in the Western Balkan to present their expertise and their research ideas/projects to other European R&D communities and players, who themselves benefit from a broad pool of R&D experts from WBCs in all themes of FP7 for potential strategic partnerships and international R&D cooperation. Using the tool, the region's scientific landscape can be searched by thematic area, as defined within FP7, by organisation type and by geographical region. Registrations in the West Balkan Research Database in all thematic areas of FP7 and partner searches are possible under the following link:

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<http://see-science.eu/users/606.html>
ERA WESTBALKAN+
<http://see-science.eu/org/578.html>



Event Announcements and Reviews

European University Association: "The Governance of European Universities post 2010"

The EUA's 2007 Autumn Conference is an opportunity for institutional leaders such as rectors, vice rectors and heads of administration from the Western Balkan countries to meet with their peers. The specific topic of the conference is "The Governance of European Universities post 2010 : Mission Diversity, Autonomy and Accountability". Registration for the event hosted by the Wroclaw University of Technology, Poland, from October 25-27, 2007 is now open.

The goals of the Wroclaw Conference will be to:

- Discuss the rapidly changing relationship between universities and the state and the impact of these changes on institutional governance;
- Investigate strategies for optimising institutional autonomy and ensuring accountability, taking account of the overall European policy context and the 'modernisation agenda' for universities;
- Identify ways in which university leaders can enhance their steering capacity using examples of good practice from across Europe.

Links

European University Association
<http://see-science.eu/org/452.html>
 EUA Conference Website
<http://see-science.eu/link/2187.html>

"Funding, Equity and Efficiency of Higher Education"

A conference on the topic of Funding, Equity and Efficiency of Higher Education will be held in Portorož (Slovenia), November 21-24, 2007, organised by the Institute for Economic Research Ljubljana, Faculty for Management Koper and University of Primorska.

The main aim of the conference is to acquire an overview of the situation and trends in both parts of the system of funding higher education: funding of educational institutions and state financial support to students in Europe. The Conference will focus on Europe, with special attention to former socialist countries of South Eastern Europe.

Topics of the Conference:

- Funding; including funding of higher education institutions, financial support to students, fairness in sharing the costs among different bearers (private, public sources)
- Equity; including equity in access and/or other economic dimensions of equity in funding
- Efficiency; including internal efficiency (study efficiency, etc.), external efficiency (rates of return: social and private), models of institutional and national financial reforms to enhance efficiency.

Links

Conference Website
<http://see-science.eu/link/2188.html>

"Development: Cooperation and Competitiveness"

The Association of Economic Universities of South and East Europe and Black Sea Region (ASECU) has sent a call for publications for its 4th International Conference, which will take place May 22-24, 2008 in Bucharest, Romania. The conference aims to encourage development, cooperation and mutual assistance among the countries, industries and companies of this region. The deadline for abstracts is January 20, 2008, and full papers should be sent by April 20, 2008. See <http://see-science.eu/link/2192.html>

Austrian-Croatian Science Days

The 3rd Austrian-Croatian Science Days are being organised in order to further stimulate and intensify the science, research and technology co-operation between Austria and Croatia on October 18-19, 2007 in Graz, Austria: see <http://see-science.eu/news/1993.html>.

Stability in South-Eastern Europe – a Challenge to Information Service

The 36th Scientific Working and On-going Educational Conference of ABDOS e.V. was making a contribution to networking research and information. A report on the outcomes of the event has been provided to the Information Office by Ms. Djekovic-Sachs and Ms. Elke Knappe: <http://see-science.eu/news/2106.html>

see-science.eu in the next euroCRIS members meeting

Twice a year the professional association euroCRIS (Current Research Information Systems) organises a members meeting. With these meetings euroCRIS aims at involving its members actively in ongoing actions and projects through parallel and plenary sessions covering the work of the Task Groups and the Board, as well as workshops on special topics. The next meeting will be hosted by Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien) and will take place on November 1-2, 2007. The SEE research and CRIS community is cordially invited to join this meeting. In addition to regular sessions and a workshop "Data Exchange between CRIS", there will also be a session in which speakers from the SEE research community will report on projects and ideas will be exchanged on access to and dissemination of scientific information in South Eastern Europe and collaboration with euroCRIS. Programming of this session will be coordinated by Elke Dall/see-science.eu. Moreover, a preview will be given to the 9th International Conference on Current Research Information Systems (CRIS 2008), Maribor, Slovenia, June 5-7, 2008. The Call for Papers will be launched in September and will be distributed also to the SEE community. Participation in this meeting is free; some travel grants for SEE speakers are available. For further questions please contact Mr. Harrie Laliu (<http://see-science.eu/users/2101.html>) and Elke Dall (<http://see-science.eu/users/42.html>). Interested people are kindly invited to complete and submit the registration form on www.eurocris.org (Membership meetings) before October 15.



Workshop: A Roadmap for the Western-Balkans: Using IPA and other EU Funds to Accelerate Convergence and Integration

The main aim of this one day workshop organised by the Centre for EU Enlargement Studies (Central European University Budapest) is to take stock of pre-accession funds available for Western-Balkan candidate and potential candidate countries, their ability to manage and absorb financial assistance received from the EU, and to contribute to identifying fields of programme implementation.

The workshop takes place on October 11, 2007 in Brussels and aims to discuss the role that new EU Member States can play in transferring know-how on identifying development needs and the management of fund absorption. As a result, convergence perspectives of the region

can be assessed, as well as the role of the wider region in assisting in the development of the Western-Balkans.

The workshop brings together junior researchers and academics with senior policy-makers from EU institutions, member states, and Western-Balkan countries. A call for papers is currently addressed to post-graduate researchers interested in presenting a paper at the workshop.

Sponsor: University Studies Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES)

Links
Workshop website
<http://see-science.eu/link/2172.html>
Contact: Anna Reich, CENS
<http://see-science.eu/users/2093.html>



Academies of Sciences in Today's World

Prepared for the conference "Global Science and National Policies: the Role of Academies", which took place in Moldova May 4-5, 2007, this input paper focuses on the role of Academies of Sciences, both in relation to science and the science community and in relation to society and relevant decision-makers.

Links
download the paper
<http://see-science.eu/doc/2173.html>
Conference Website
<http://see-science.eu/link/2171.html>



Towards a Common Surface Transport Policy for South East Europe

This paper from 2004 is a core text regarding the issue of forming a common transport policy for South East Europe. Its primary objective is the rebalancing of the future traffic flows towards more use of rail and maritime transport (including inland waterways). The paper examines in detail the specific factors that apply in the region of South East Europe and which may alter or influence the expected results of the application of this factors.

Links
link to download a pdf version (not for free)
<http://see-science.eu/link/2170.html>



Innovations in Governance in the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Balkans

The book analyses the challenges and opportunities that governments in the Mediterranean region have faced to improve their public administration systems. The book is divided in three parts: Part 1 provides an overview of successful practices that were nominated for the United Nations Public Service Awards between 2003 and 2006 from across the region. Part 2 offers case studies of specific innovations implemented in eleven Mediterranean countries. Part 3 examines key lessons drawn from these cases on what promotes innovation in government.

Links
link to download a pdf version
<http://see-science.eu/doc/2146.html>

Imprint

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