Carmen Siller

Analysis of the participation of the IS2WEB target group in the first calls of the 7th Framework Programme

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Table of Contents   Page

Executive Summary

Following the analysis of the short-term outcome of the support provided by the IS2WEB consortium to its target group of Western Balkan research organisations active in the field of Information Society Technologies (IST) conducted in autumn 2006, which met with great interest from various stakeholders, including the European Commission, the consortium decided to do the same exercise for the 1st ICT call of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technology.

In this discussion paper, the IS2WEB consortium reviews the outcome of the support it provided to its target group of Western Balkan research organisations active in the field of Information Society Technologies (IST) / Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The primary objective of this endeavour has been to compare the target organisations' participation in the last IST call of the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP) and the first ICT call of the 7th FP. A further aim has been to assess the overall project activities, in order to identify factors that enhance or impede the impact of projects with a similar aim and hence to provide input for the design of future support concepts.

The necessary input for our analysis derives from a series of telephone interviews conducted in June and July 2007. Of the 108 organisations listed in the IS2WEB online directory, a total of 32 organisations (that is 29.6%) share among them 53 participations in 49 different proposals submitted to 15 different calls of the 7th Framework Programme with a deadline between mid-April and mid-May 2007.

The two main findings of this analysis point in the same direction: during the project's duration so far and compared to the respective analysis of the 6th IST call[1], the IS2WEB target organisations became much more involved in research collaboration with EU organisations. They seem to be much more active than in the past. A large number of them indicated that they actively contacted their own contacts in order to join forming project consortia. Again, most of the participating organisations are newcomers to the Framework Programme.

In addition, the Western Balkan research organisations participated in a considerably larger number of different calls than in the previous survey from 2006 which shows that once the stakeholders have understood the principles and learned where to look for co-operation opportunities, they are able to pick those calls that are of interest to them.

Moreover, it should be noted that more different organisations are involved in project proposals; there is less accumulation of proposals than discovered by the previous analysis. Overall, in the lifetime of the IS2WEB project, a total of 43.5% of the institutions listed in the online directory managed to get involved for the first time in FP proposals.

These facts can be considered important and sustainable successes of the IS2WEB project.

Overall, Western Balkan research organisations still favour participation in smaller and clearly focused (research) projects. Accordingly, the recommendation from the previous survey is still valid that the Commission should continue to launch calls with a dedicated geographical focus targeting issues of interest to the research organisations in those countries.

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[1] "Analysis of the participation of the IS2WEB target group in the 6th IST call", additional deliverable published in November 2006; to be downloaded from the project's website http://www.is2web.org – Section "Project Documentation".

1. Introduction

The 1st ICT call was the first chance to submit proposals in the area of Information Society Technologies in the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme (FP 7) for Research and Technology. It came at a time where the target group of Western Balkan research organisations had been given the opportunity to participate in a mentoring workshop and the first of two thematic workshops in the individual countries, thus being able to acquire the necessary basic knowledge of the procedures and opportunities for co-operation in the Framework Programme.

In this discussion paper, we review the outcome of the support it provided to our target group of Western Balkan research organisations active in the field of Information Society Technologies (IST). The primary objective of this endeavour has been to compare the target organisations' participation in the last IST call of the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP) and the first ICT call of the 7th FP. A further aim has been to assess the overall project activities, in order to identify factors that enhance or impede the impact of projects with a similar aim and hence to provide input for the design of future support concepts.

2. Background

2.1. IS2WEB and Western Balkan research scene

IS2WEB is a Specific Support Action (SSA) aimed at identifying research organisations in the Western Balkan countries suitable for participation in future IST research activities, and assisting them to get informed about and actively participate in EU-funded research in the field of Information Society Technologies. Accordingly, the project strategy is founded on

- Identification of promising research organisations in the Western Balkan region that are suitable for participation in future IST research activities;

- Deployment of a series of IST mentoring and thematic workshops targeting the above organisations, in order to help them become partners in consortia that will submit proposals in the forthcoming calls;

- Pursuit of a dissemination strategy aimed primarily at facilitating the establishment of contacts between EU and Western Balkan research actors.

Activities so far have focussed on the implementation of the mapping of the ICT research landscape in the Western Balkans, the execution of FP6-focussed mentoring and thematic IST workshops on relevant strategic objectives, and the provision of participation-support services; the

latter have comprised both standard helpdesk-type activities as well as the more intense promotion of the most innovative and motivated amidst our target organisations.

2.2 Abstract of the Analysis of the participation of the IS2WEB target group in the 6th IST call

The 6th IST call was the last chance to submit proposals in the area of Information Society Technologies in the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme (FP 6) for Research and Technology, and the first call in which the IS2WEB consortium could fully support its target group of Western Balkans ICT research organisations in their efforts towards FP 6 participation.

Critical factors for Western Balkan involvement in IST research projects
These have been identified and are discussed in a recently published paper[2] analysing the outcome of the IS2WeB mentoring workshops and FP6 coaching support provided to Western Balkan researchers in view of the 6th IST Call. The related study has been motivated by the IS2WeB desire to evaluate the parameters that have enabled or hindered the project success to-date, so that the future project support activities can be more closely tailored to the target group needs regarding Framework Programme participation.

Key results: 20 organisations, 62 participations, 30 proposals
The necessary input for the above-mentioned analysis derives from a series of telephone interviews conducted between July and September 2006. Of the 86 organisations listed in the IS2WEB online directory as of April 2006, a total of 20 organisations (that is 23%) share among them 61 participations in 30 different proposals submitted to the 6th IST call for proposals. The majority of these participants and proposals come from Serbia and FYROM. Five of these 30 proposals have been retained for funding, in which a grand total of nine IS2WEB target organisations are involved. This translates to 16,6% proposal success rate, and a 45% participant success rate.

High percentage of newcomers
A further interesting and very positive aspect of the IS2WeB-related IST Call 6 participation is that 79% of the project target organisations are newcomers without any prior experience in the Framework Programme. This attests that the IS2WEB project has been able to mobilize so far untapped potential in the Western Balkans countries.

Main areas of involvement
The majority of Western Balkan participations in IST Call 6 are in Strategic Objectives 2.6.5.1d – International Cooperation for

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[2] The full paper is available for download at www.is2web.org in the section "Project Documentation

eGovernment and eParticipation in the Western Balkans, and 2.6.5.2 – Coordination Actions or Specific Support Actions focussed on identifying constituencies and potentialities for deeper strategic cooperation. In contrast, and despite the initially strong interest towards FP6 participation amidst our target organisations, there have been no IS2Web-related proposals targeting Strategic Objectives 2.6.1 – Advanced Robotics; 2.6.2 – Ambient Assisted Living for the Ageing Society; or 2.6.3 – Search Engines for Audio-Visual Content. This reflects the poor alignment between the topics of the latter objectives and our target organisations research expertise, and is consistent with the Western Balkan research landscape identified in an earlier project survey of promising ICT research organisations in the region.

Conclusions
The IS2WeB analysis has rendered clear that the two major IS2WeB successes – the high overall number of participations and the introduction of a high number of newcomers into IST proposals – have both been facilitated by the fact that the 6th IST call had a dedicated geographical focus on the Western Balkans countries. This in turn implies that there is a clear and ongoing need for the European Commission to continue offering opportunities towards the participation of Western Balkan research organisations in EU-funded research projects: as a result, the consortium recommends that the Commission continues to launch calls with a dedicated geographical focus and targeting issues of interest to the research organisations in those countries.

The IS2WEB own partner participation was crucial to the IS2WeB success
In addition to the above, a further critical factor impacting the IS2WeB target group FP6 performance has been the participation of IS2WeB partners in some of the related proposals – in fact a sizeable 43,5% of the IS2WEB target institutions got involved in consortia featuring other IS2WEB partners, too. This finding demonstrates that providing organisations with little or no FP6 experience with only theoretical information about how to participate is not enough, and also is fully in line with the conclusions of a 2003 IDEALIST survey on "How research project co-ordinators choose partners for IST proposals". In our case personal recommendations have certainly been crucial, with the IS2WEB own partners managing to act as door openers for a large number of Western Balkan research organisations. Hopefully, these newly successful organisations will be able to do the same for others in the future, extending the necessary networks and promoting the mutual exchange of relevant experiences.

2.3 Methodology

Preliminary information about the participation of the IS2WeB target group in the first ICT call has been gathered through a telephone survey conducted in June and July 2007 (Annex I). In order to obtain comparable data, the guidelines for the telephone interviews were

based on the ones designed by the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) for the analysis of the participation of the IS2WeB target group in the 6th IST call of the 6th Framework Programme. As previously, the survey was implemented by the Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, and Serbian IS2WeB partners[3]. The interviews themselves were designed to take about 5-10 minutes each, and provide answers on two sets of questions:

- Involvement in and experience of ICT Call 1 and other related initiatives (3 questions)

- Opinion about IS2WEB support (4 questions).

The component on other initiatives was included because experience has shown that other programmes and initiatives might also be of interest to our target organisations. On this basis, Question 1 of our telephone survey was designed to include all calls for which (1) the target group was eligible; (2) the topic could have been of relevance; and (3) the deadline was such that, if applicable, the ensuing participation could reasonably be attributed to the IS2WEB support provided. In addition, and in order to get an idea about what kind of projects the different target organisations got involved in, we also enquired after the type of instrument they applied for, if such a choice was contained within the related call for proposals. The added value expected from this type of information was knowledge whether the respondents got involved in research proposals or support actions, and the opportunity to set this insight into relation with the strategic objectives of ICT Call 1.

Questions 2 and 3 were only relevant if the interviewees indicated at least a single participation in any of the calls listed. They covered the way an organisation was introduced into the consortium (7 different options), and its experience with regard to involvement in the proposal preparation phase (5 different options ranging from a very passive to a very active role).

Questions 4-7 aimed at obtaining information on the appreciation of the IS2WEB assistance delivered so far, with a view to identify factors that enhance or impede the impact of projects with a similar aim and hence to provide input for the design of future support concepts.

In general, it can be said that the feedback on this action was much easier to obtain than in summer 2006. The questionnaire and telephone guidelines had been adapted in advance to the call deadline, as to implement the recommendation from the "Analysis of the IS2WEB target group in the 6th IST call", that it is advisable to conduct such interviews shortly after the deadline for proposal submission. In addition, the respondents were more willing to provide information as

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[3] Planet S.A. (Greece), Centre for Social Innovation (Austria), CIVET 2000 (Albania), Belgrade Open School (Republics Serbia and Montenegro), World University Service Bosnia-Herzegovina, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius – Faculty of Economics (FYR of Macedonia), ZaMirNet (Croatia)

the discussion paper resulting from last year's telephone interviews met with great interest among them.

3. Results

3.1 Analysis of IS2WEB target group's participation

The results of the above IS2WeB survey are summarised in Table 1 below. Exactly half (50%) of the institutions listed in the IS2WEB online directory participated in the telephone interviews. The local IS2WEB partners know that the majority of those that did not answer the survey did not participate in any call. Therefore it can be claimed that total of 32 organisations from the project's target group (that is, nearly 29.6% of those listed in the directory as of April 2007) share among them 53 participations in 49 different proposals submitted to 15 different calls with deadline in spring 2007.

It should be noted that for seven of the proposals (two ICT proposals) the interviewees could not remember the acronym. As none of the questions of the survey covered the involved consortium partners, there was no possibility to double-check and verify if these were indeed proposals with just one partner from the region. Considering the large number of proposals that have been submitted to the calls in question and the fact that the calls in question did not have a regional focus, the IS2WEB consortium decided to treat these proposals in the present analysis as new ones not mentioned by other target group organisations. In addition, two target organisations each indicated very similar or alike proposal acronyms for ideas submitted to allegedly different calls. Again, there was no way to double-check this information, so in the following they are dealt with as separate proposals.

In order to present the numbers we are dealing with in the present document at a glance, Table 1 below gives an overview of the particulars of the target organisations interviewed in this survey, namely the number of organisations (1) listed in the IS2WEB online directory; (2) answering the telephone interview; (3) participating in FP 7 proposals, and (4) the overall number of participations (in all calls covered) per country.

	Albania	Bosnia-Herzego-vina	Croatia	FYR of Macedonia	Republics Serbia and Montenegro	Total
Listed in Directory	22	15	16	20	35	108
Interviewees	10	16	12	2	14	54
Participating Organisations	3	15	7	1	6	32
Total Participations	6	24	11	2	10	53

Table 1 Overview of data pool for current IS2WeB study

Other than for the 6th IST call, we do not need to distinguish between the number of participations, participating organisations and proposals, as more different organisations are involved in project proposals and there is less accumulation of proposals than discovered by the previous analysis.

The spectrum of the different calls targeted by the Western Balkan research organisations interviewed is rather wide and includes apart from ICT also Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Socio-economic sciences and humanities as well as Ethics and Security research. However, half of the proposals in question were submitted to only three of the 15 different calls. Interestingly, while most proposals with participation from the IS2WEB target group of "promising research organisations in the Western Balkan countries for future collaboration in IST projects"[4] were indeed submitted to the 1st ICT call (nine), the REGPOT-2007-3 and REGPOT-2007-1 calls from the Capacities programme together received 31.9% of all proposals submitted with institutions from among the IS2WEB target group. The ICT theme in the Co-operation programme itself attracted 19.1%. Table 2 below provides an overview of the calls addressed by the IS2WEB target group at the beginning of the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development.

While the budget of the REGPOT calls was considerably lower than for the 1st ICT call (8 million Euro for REGPOT 1 and 23.5 million Euro for REGPOT 3, vs. 1194 million Euro for ICT), they had several advantages for the IS2WEB target group: Firstly, activity 4.3 – International Cooperation of the REGPOT call explicitly called for public and private research centres from the EC member states and the Western Balkan countries as participants. Secondly, proposals for activity 4.1 – Unlocking and developing the research potential could be submitted by a single entity; a fact not to be underestimated as contacts with the target group in the past revealed that the organisations preferred to be in charge of their own project ideas which in most cases can not be ensured when submitting to any given theme of the Co-operation

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[4] see Annex 1 – Description of Work for the IS2WEB Specific Support Action

programme. Last but not least, for both activities, the funding scheme was CSA – Coordination and Support Action with a maximum Community financial contribution of up to 100% of the total eligible costs. Considering these issues, the share of 19.1% of ICT submissions can be considered as a success for the IS2WEB project nevertheless, in particular considering the important general activation role.

Call identifier	No of proposals submitted by IS2WEB target group organisations
ICT 2007-1	9
Capacities – REGPOT-2007-3	8
Capacities – REGPOT-2007-1	7
Environment (including Climate Change)	5
Socio-economic sciences & humanities	4
INCO-2007-1	3
Food, Agriculture & Fisheries and Biotechnology	2
Energy	2
Capacities – Infrastructures-2007-1	1
ERC-2007-StG	1
NMP-2007-3.2-1	1
NMP-2007-3.3-1	1
SiS2007 – 1.2.2.3 – Ethics and security research, Area 5.1.2.2. Conditions for an informed debate on ethics and science	1
Transport (including Aeronautics)	1
Proposal for CIP	1
SUM	**47**

Table 2 Overview of calls addressed by the IS2WEB target group

Balazs Bodo, Managing Director of Geonardo Ltd notes in his "Excerpt from the Hitchhikers' Guide to FP 7"[5] that compared to the 119 million Euro requested by the 107 proposals submitted, the budget of 8 million Euro for the REGPOT 1 call was rather low, which resulted in a success rate of only 10.28%. However, the success rate varies according to country; out of the 11 funded proposals, seven are coordinated by Serbian, two by Irish, one by Macedonian and one by Croatian institutions.

As noted above, a total of 32 organisations from among the interviewed IS2WEB target group got involved in proposals. A breakdown of this

[5] Budapest 2007, available for download from
http://www.eutrainingsite.com/admin/doc/fp7_study.pdf

participation per country is illustrated in Figure 1 below. Compared to the 2006 IS2WEB survey, this time the major share of participating institutions came from Bosnia-Herzegovina (46.8% vs. 15% in 2006), while 21.8% were from Croatia (in 2006: 5%), 18.75% from the Republics Serbia and Montenegro6 (in 2006: 45%), 9.4% from Albania (in 2006: 20%) and 3.1% from the FYR of Macedonia (in 2006: 15%). Figures 1 and 2 below visualise this surprising change.
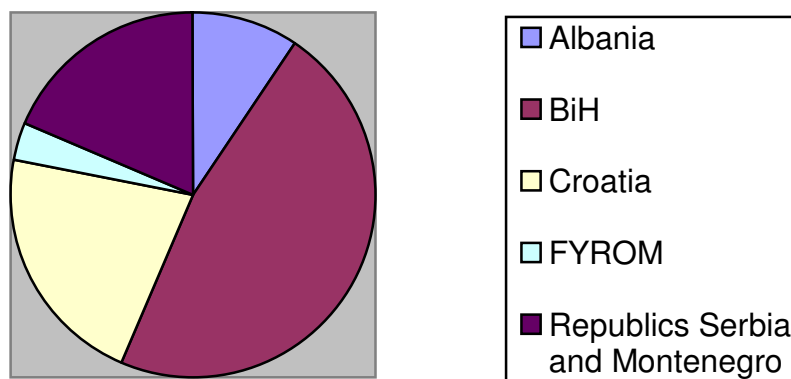
Fig 1 Share of participating IS2WEB target group organisations by country in first FP 7 calls
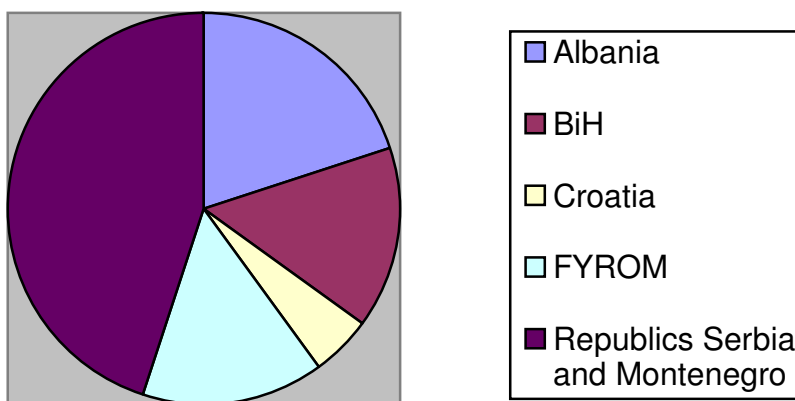
Fig 2 Share of participating IS2WEB target group organisations by country in the 6th IST call

Again, most of the participating organisations are newcomers to the Framework Programme. While the IS2WEB consortium expected that it would be easier for those organisations that participated successfully in the 6th IST call to get involved in ICT call 1 proposals (or others submitted to various FP 7 calls) again, as they would be able to take advantage of their newly established links to EU research organisations, this was not the case. Except from Serbia, were two organisations managed to participate in both calls, and Albania, where

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[6] For an explanation of why the data for the two countries is considered together, see section 4.1.5 below.

two organisations continued their history of FP participations, in all other countries of the region the organisations that were accepted as consortium partners in the first calls of FP 7 were different from those involved in IST call 6.

Table 3 below shows the number of participants among the IS2WEB target group from each country in the two calls as well as the difference and the number institutions involved for the first time in the first FP7 calls. In total, 24 of 28 organisations (85.7%) are newcomers to international cooperation with their EC counterparts. This means that in the lifetime of the IS2WEB project, a total of 40.7% of the institutions listed in the online directory (44 out of 108) managed to get involved for the first time in FP proposals.

	6th IST call	first FP7 calls	Difference	Newcomers
Albania	4	3	−1	1
Bosnia-Herzegovina	3	15	+12	12
Croatia	1	7	+6	7
FYR of Macedonia	3	1	−2	1
Republics Serbia and Montenegro	9	6	−3	4
Total	**20**	**32**	**+12**	**25**

Table 3 Number of participating organisations from IS2WEB target group

The reasons for this could be that Western Balkan organisations involved in proposals submitted to IST call 6 that did not receive funding did not get a chance to prove their expertise and establish themselves as reliable partners. As IST call 6 had a dedicated geographical focus, it can be assumed that those EU organisations responsible for developing the project ideas did not necessarily revert to the Western Balkan organisations again for proposals initiated for the 1st ICT call in FP 7. Also, those organisations that participate in successful proposals first had to digest the responsibilities taken over. Most of these projects were launched around the time of the publications of the new call. In addition, they might have not yet been sure how to judge their own involvement in these first EU-funded projects in order to continue acquiring new ones. Also, specific developments in the individual countries might have played a role, such as a focus on bilateral projects etc. (see also the reasons given for the Croatian performance in the 6th IST call in the relevant analysis published by IS2WEB).

It would be interesting to continue to monitor the target group and analyse if the research organisations in question will manage to continue with the next steps of experience in Framework Programme

involvement: proposal partner – consortium member (of support action) in project with geographical focus – consortium partner in competitive research project – coordinator of such projects in order to identify factors that enhance or impede such a development.

Another aspect with regard to the numbers of participation from Western Balkan research organisations is the status of the different countries concerning the association to the Framework Programme. One would think that being located in an associated country improves the chances of research organisations to be accepted as consortium partners, as the association agreement offers researchers from signatory countries the same rights for participation as EU Member States in all the research cooperation and supported actions funded under FP7. In 2007, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia and Serbia became associated to FP 7. For the last IST call of FP 6, only Croatia had the status as associated country.

Looking at the data gathered by the IS2WEB consortium, it can be said that while Bosnian research organisations dominated the participations from among the IS2WEB target group in the first FP 7 calls by sheer numbers, it is the only country with no submission to the 1st ICT call. On the other hand, two thirds of proposals with participation of Albanian institutions were ICT proposals. Table 4 below provides an overview of relevant numbers for all countries in the region.

	Albania	Bosnia–Herzegovina	Croatia	FYR of Macedonia	Republics Serbia and Montenegro
Total number of proposals	6	24	11	2	10
Number of ICT proposals	4	0	3	1	2
Percentage	66%	0%	37%	50%	20%

Table 4 Total number of proposals vs. ICT proposals by country

With regard to the instruments, an increase in the participation in larger research projects can be noted. While many respondents did not indicate the instrument of the proposal(s) they were involved in, the data available shows that the IS2WEB target group participated in at least four Integrated Projects (IPs) and two STREPs (Strategic Targeted Research Projects), while in the 6th IST call some 80% of the proposals submitted were Support Actions or Coordination Actions and only 20% research projects (STREPs only)[7].

As for the survey at hand – following one of the suggestions of the previous analysis of participation – the telephone interviews took place shortly after the closure of the calls in question, it was not

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[7] for more details on this, see "Analysis of the participation of the IS2WEB target group in the 6th IST Call", November 2006, p.9

possible to obtain information on the success rates of the proposals, as in most cases the evaluation results were not yet communicated to the proposal coordinators, least the partners of the consortium. As mentioned above, as the local IS2WEB partners have close relations to the target group organisations, it can be stated that most of the institutes that did not collaborate in the survey did not participate in any proposals.

Some further details on national participation are provided in sections 3.1.1–3.1.5 below.

3.1.1 Albania

This time, three of the 22 Albanian research organisation listed in the IS2WEB online directory participated in proposals submitted to the first FP 7 calls. Among them, they share four ICT proposals (one organisation was involved in three consortia), one proposal submitted to the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities call, and one proposal developed for the activity 4.3 – International Cooperation of the REGPOT 2007 call with a dedicated focus on the Western Balkans. This means, that 44.4% of the nine submissions to the 1st ICT call that involve IS2WEB target organisations have Albanian consortium partners. This is a very interesting finding, in particular with view to the fact that Albania until beginning of September 2007 was not yet associated to the Framework Programme (see paragraph above on page 9). An explanation approach, however, is the fact that two of the three participating research organisations are established players in EU research collaboration.

Of the two experienced organisations, one actively contacted their own contacts and one was contacted by a previously unknown coordinator or other consortium member, while the Albanian newcomer to the Framework Programme was contacted by their own contacts and invited to participate. With regard to their involvement in the preparation phase, two thirds indicated that they were asked to contribute text with regard to the tasks assigned to them while one co-ordinator developed the proposal on his own and the relevant Albanian institution had just to provide the administrative information for the A2 forms.

Overall, the support provided by IS2WEB was considered very useful by seven of the ten interviewees while the other three organisations found it somewhat helpful.

When it comes to the different measures of support provided, 90% each of the respondents appreciated the partner searches disseminated by the IS2WEB consortium as well as the thematic workshops and information material. Some 20% found the e-mail information service useful.

3.1.2 Bosnia–Herzegovina

A major success of the IS2WEB project is the improvement in the participation rate and degree of involvement of research organisations from Bosnia-Herzegovina. For the first calls of the 7th Framework Programme, the mobilisation of organisations from this country was much better than for the last IST call in FP6. While previously three institutions (20% of the 15 listed in the online IS2WEB directory) mentioned that they participated in the 6th IST call, this time 15 organisations (100%) were involved in proposals. However, these 15 organisations participated in nine different calls, but not in the 1st ICT call. During the last IS2WEB Thematic workshop in Sarajevo, the participants explained that Bosnia still lacks appropriate ICT infrastructures to participate in FP 7 ICT calls. They also expressed their disappointment about the selection of the objectives targeted to Western Balkan Countries (e.g. Virtual Physiological Human) in the ICT Work Programme, stating that they mismatched with real interests and capacities at least in their country.

Again, compared to other countries, some Bosnian organisations are very active and participate in a larger number of proposals. One institution submitted three ideas to the REGPOT activity 4.1 – Unlocking and developing the research potential. It should be noted, however, that proposals for this activity could be submitted by a single entity. Two more organisations were involved in three proposals submitted to different calls.

While in 2006 a full 50% of the participations were achieved through recommendations from the IS2WEB EU partners, this time the research organisations were more proactive. For two thirds of the proposals the answering person indicated that they actively contacted their own contacts, while in 53.3% they were contacted by their contacts and invited to participate. One participation (4.2%) was due to a recommendation by the local IS2WEB partner.

Another substantial change from the initial analysis of participation of the IS2WEB target group is the fact that the degree of involvement in the proposal preparation improved considerably. Only one interviewee indicated that the related proposal co-ordinator did everything on his own, whilst the Bosnian participant had only to fill in the required administrative forms. 20% were expected to give feedback on the proposal text, another 20% were expected to contribute text with regard to the tasks assigned to them, nearly 40% were substantially involved by virtual collaboration in writing the proposal and 20% even had a consortium meeting.

Regarding support from the IS2WEB consortium, 43.75% of the organisations that participated in the telephone interview requested help with regard to cost calculations, a rather high number compared to the other countries covered by this study. Three of the institutions (18.75%) required support in drafting their organisation

profile while help with filling in the administrative A2 forms was not necessary at all.

The IS2WEB support measure appreciated by most Bosnian organisations was the individual answers on request, 37.5% found these useful. Second ranked the e-mail information service with 25%, while 12.5% mentioned the 1st Thematic workshop and the related materials. Despite the proactive approach of Bosnian institutions mentioned above, still one organisation (6.2%) appreciated the matchmaking support.

3.1.3 Croatia

While the participation of Croatian research organisations was rather limited in the 6th IST call, this time seven of the IS2WEB target organisations got involved in project proposals. One of the reasons was that in spring 2006, there had been a temporal coincidence between the last IST closing date and a national deadline for submission of proposals for government funding. This year, research organisations apparently did not experience a similar shortage of resources. In addition, while the Croatian one was the last in the series of Mentoring workshops in 2006, which left less time for the target organisations to fully benefit from the IS2WEB participation coaching services; for the 1st round of Thematic IST workshops, Croatia was the first event to take place.

Two of the ICT submissions with Croatian IS2WEB target group organisations as partners were Integrated Projects, one was a STREP. This finding supports the assumption from the previous participation analysis that "This may […] reflect Croatia's relative advancement in respect to knowledge about EU procedures, and may be viewed as a sign that the country is not anymore "in the same basket" as the other Western Balkan countries in the area."

At the start of FP 7, 57.1% of the Croatian research organisations that participated in one of the first open calls of the programme required assistance from the IS2WEB consortium. Some 42.8% of these had questions about cost calculation, 14.3% wanted either information about how to prepare an organisational profile or on other issues, while a surprisingly 28.5% needed support with the A2 forms.

From those answering the relevant question, 57.1% rated the overall support of the IS2WEB project very helpful. Another 28.5% found it useful, while 14.3% of the organisations were undecided.

4.1.4 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Of the 20 organisations from this country listed in the IS2WEB directory, only two have answered the IS2WeB telephone interview questions in early summer 2007. One of them has participated in two proposals submitted to FP 7 calls (one ICT and one REGPOT proposal). As these numbers are far too small to have a statistical significance, the IS2WEB consortium decided to abstain from analysing them in detail. Of course their answers have been considered for the overall survey.

4.1.5 Republics Serbia and Montenegro

At the time of the submission of the IS2WEB project proposal, the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro where still joined in a state union. Consequently, the local IS2WEB partner is covering and representing both countries for the duration of the project. Therefore, the data for the two countries is presented together for the purpose of this analysis.

From the Republics Serbia and Montenegro, 14 organisations answered the telephone interviews. Of these, six research organisations participated in one of the first calls of FP 7. They share among them ten participations; that is some 21.4% of all participations of the IS2WEB target group. Two of these proposals were submitted to the 1st ICT call. Again, two thirds of the participating organisations are newcomers to the Framework Programme.

It is noteworthy that in the Republics Serbia and Montenegro the vast majority of the research organisations appreciated the IS2WEB e-mail information service. The share of 92.8% of the interviewees that indicated the usefulness of this measure is much higher as in any other country of the region (between 20% and 50%). It would be interesting to examine if the way the local IS2WEB partners handled these e-mail information did attribute to this difference in perception, but this is beyond the scope of this analysis. In addition, 71.4% each of the respondents found the workshop and its materials as well as the partner searches disseminated useful. Another 21.4% valued the individual answers on request. It should be noted that the last percentage includes all interviewees, not only those that asked such questions. One representative of a Serbian research organisation stated that

"the IS2WeB project was [our] first contact with the Framework Programme. 80% of the information about FP6 and FP7 [we] received through the mailing list, dissemination of information and workshop of the IS2WeB project. For [my] organisation the IS2WeB support was very useful. It is necessary to have more projects like IS2WeB." (see also Annex 3).

From those that answered the second question on how they got involved in the forming consortia, two each indicated that they actively contacted their own contacts or where contacted by a previously

unknown coordinator. One organisation was introduced in a forming consortium because of the recommendation by the local IS2WEB partner and another one was contacted by its own contacts and invited to participate. This means that now the ways to get involved in FP research collaboration changed for Serbian and Montenegrin research organisations. Previously, recommendations of the local IS2WEB partner and invitations by own contacts were by far the most important ways of involvement and helped more than 66% of the organisations.

Interestingly, with regard to the degree of involvement in the proposal preparation phase, there is a big change to the 6th IST call. While previously 57% of the organisations where only expected to provide administrative information and feedback on text written by others, this time the institutions contributed substantially. Three of them prepared proposals on their own, where no consortium was required for the respective call. One organisation provided substantial parts of text in virtual collaboration while another department provided text on the tasks assigned to them. Only one organisation was limited to provide administrative information only.

It is noteworthy that in 2007 the Ministry of Science of the Republic of Serbia, in charge for the research and NCP network, provided more active support for the research organisations. However, in order to understand the findings above, the following points have to be mentioned:

During the first half of 2007 there was a big confusion about the status of Serbian research organizations within the Framework Programme. In the beginning of the year the Ministry of Science announced that Serbia in the course of 2007 the country will receive associated status; which meant that Serbian research organizations and companies will be treated on the same footing as EU research organizations. While the information itself was true, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed only in June (coming into force retroactively since the beginning of FP 7). During the first FP 7 calls, this information was unofficial and not communicated to the research actors and organizations from EU countries which consequently were not aware of the possibilities of taking on board Serbian institutions as partners with equal rights. These factors contributed to rather low participation of research organizations from Serbia, since they were not sure if they will be treated as International Cooperation Partner Country (ICPC) or as associated country. One should also have in mind that Serbian research organizations (apart from few exceptions) are not very experienced in and skilled for participation in FP yet so this conflicting information just increased the level of their incertitude and definitely influenced overall participation in the first half of 2007 (and therefore the calls in question for the current analysis).

A second very important point is that the Serbian Ministry of Science prioritised and actively promoted the REGPOT-1 (targeted at convergence and outermost region) and REGPOT-3 calls (targeted at WB

countries). The Ministry claimed that Serbia as a whole would be treated as convergence region and strongly encouraged the research organisations to submit proposal to REGPOT-1 in particular. It organised not only Information Days during which special attention was paid on these two calls, but also supported organizations which were preparing proposals for these two calls (including constant communication with the Ministry and individual mentoring work on the project proposals). This fact should also be taken into account since most of the calls (also FP7-ICT-2007-1) were open in the same time8, and the research organisations are still limited with regard to resources (and skills) for preparing proposals for international cooperation schemes.

4 Discussion

When drafting the telephone interview guidelines, the rationale for including some questions assessing the IS2WEB support was to find out to which extent the activities of the consortium partners actively helped the target organisations to get involved in Framework Programme activities. Providing relevant information in the workshops and through preparation material and newsletters was a first step, and this was then followed by offering help-desk services answering concrete questions posed by the most proactive organisations as well as matchmaking support recommending certain organisations to EU proposal co-ordinators. In addition, an e-mail information service was established after the series of mentoring workshops in spring 2006, alerting the recipients to relevant information and open opportunities. By asking questions about the perception of the IS2WEB support, the consortium hoped to learn what kind of support activities were sought after and appreciated the most by the target Western Balkan research organisations, so that they could be continued for the rest of the project's duration and also provide input for the design of future support actions with similar aims.

4.1 General evaluation of the IS2WeB support

An overview of the target organisation views on the assistance offered by IS2WeB through its thematic workshops and post-workshop participation coaching services is provided in Table 3 below. It should be noted that multiple answers were possible for each of the four questions relating to the IS2WEB support, and that not all interviewees answered all questions.

---

[8] ICT Call 1 was closed on 8th May, Regpot 1and Regpot 3 closed on 24 April.

		Albania	Bosnia-Herzego-vina	Croatia	FYROM	Republics Serbia and Montenegro	Total
No of respondents		10	16	12	2	14	54
Support required	A2 forms			2			2
	Cost calculation	1	7	3		1	12
	Company profile		3	1			4
	Other			1			1
	None	2	7	5	2	1	17
Useful support	Workshop info & material	9	2	10	1	10	32
	e-mail info	2	4	6	1	13	26
	partner searches	9		2		10	21
	Answers to info		6	2		3	11
	Matchmaking support		1	1	1		3
	Other						
Overall support	Very useful	7	8	4		9	28
	Somewhat useful	3	3	2	1	5	14
	Undecided		5	1			6
	Not very useful						
	useless						

Table 5 Appreciation of IS2WEB support

Of the 54 organisations that responded to the telephone interviews in summer 2007, 31.5% asked for support from the IS2WEB consortium in the decisive phases of proposal establishment (period between publication and deadline of the call) during call 1. This was nearly 10% less than for the 6th IST call a year earlier. Of these, 64.7% (12 organisations) had questions about cost calculation, four organisations (23.5% of those requiring support) needed assistance with their partner profile, and two organisations (11.8%) asked for help with filling in the A2 forms.

The distinct rise in questions considering cost calculation (64.7% vs. 42.8% in the "Analysis of the IS2WEB target group participation in the 6th IST Call") is to be attributed to the fact that for FP 7 new rules

and regulations entered into force for an issue that is considered the most complicated by the majority of researchers. On the contrary, the lower numbers of questions on partner profiles and A2 forms (23.5% and 11.8% vs. 28.5% and 23.8% previously) indicate that it can be assumed that the principles of these topics are understood by most of the organisations, despite the fact that the vast majority of them are newcomers. This is a result of the FP 7 session in the Thematic Workshops.

Some 31.5% of the organisations that answered the telephone interview did not require any support at all during the proposal preparation phase: this percentage includes, but does not coincide with, the percentage of companies that did not participate in proposals submitted to the first calls of FP 7. If we now consider only those organisations that did participate in a proposal, 46.9% did require assistance (15 out of 32 organisations). It should be noted, however, that in the Republics Serbia and Montenegro four of the six organisations that participated in proposals did not answer this question at all; therefore the percentage for this country (16.6%) is not representative. In addition, in the FYR of Macedonia the only participating organisation did not require assistance (0%). Both incidents decrease the overall percentage considerably. In the other countries, between 33% (Albania) and 60% (Bosnia-Herzegovina) of the participating institutions did require assistance from the IS2WEB project.

Of all interviewees, 59.3% found the IS2WeB workshops and materials useful, something perhaps to be anticipated as even those organisations that did not request special support participated in the IS2WEB mentoring and thematic workshops. Some 48.1% appreciated the regular e-mail information service, alerting them to relevant topics in between the issues of the quarterly IS2WeB newsletter. This answer option was newly introduced for this round of the survey, as the provision of information via e-mail gained momentum and was established as a rather regular service only after the first year of the project's lifetime approximately. If we consider only those organisations that answered this question at all (44 respondents), 59% found it useful to be alerted to opportunities or relevant information by this means.

More than one third (38.8%) of the target organisations surveyed answered that they appreciated the partner searches disseminated by the IS2WEB consortium. Some 20.3% (25% of those who answered that question, i.e. from among the total sample of respondents, including those that did not participate in a proposal) replied that they found the answers to their requests for information useful. Matchmaking support was appreciated by 5.5% of all interviewees; much less than the corresponding percentage in the survey on the participation in the 6th IST call (16.6%). This last finding corresponds with the fact that in 2007 the research organisations in the region were much more pro-active than previously.

It is noteworthy that one of the Serbian respondents stated that IS2WEB was their first contact with the Framework Programme and that they received 80% of the information about FP 6 and FP 7 through the project's e-mail information service. They found the general dissemination of information and the workshops of the IS2WEB project extremely useful. The support for the organisation was considered very valuable. In their opinion, it is necessary to have more projects like IS2WEB.
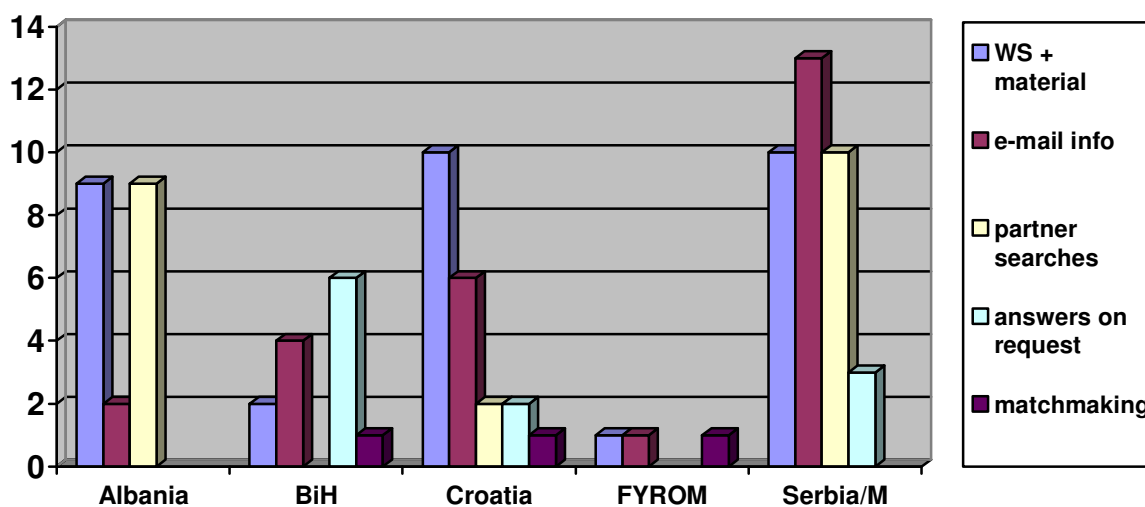
Fig 3 Appreciation of support measures by country (in absolute numbers)

Figure 3 above visualises the difference in the appreciation in the individual countries for the support measures offered by the IS2WEB project. Surprisingly, in each country the target organisations found other measures most useful. It would be interesting to investigate if this difference in perception is a result of the related efforts of the local IS2WEB partner who might have set a special focus or if research organisations in the individual countries just consider other kinds of support helpful. However, this was out of the scope of this analysis, as the data collected did not ask for information on this issue.

Collectively, the overall support provided by the IS2WeB consortium was judged as very helpful by 59.5% and somewhat helpful by another 29.8% of the forty-seven institutions that replied to this question. Six organisations (12.7%) were undecided about it, but no organisation rated our support as not very helpful or even useless.

4.2 Analysis of IS2WEB partners' participation

While again for this report, the IS2WEB partners filled in a questionnaire about their own involvement in the 1st calls of FP 7 (see Annex 2), the resulting data was rather scare and could not be interpreted easily. Therefore, the consortium decided to abstain from a thorough discussion of the partners' participations and, in particular, linking it with those of the target group.

In general, it can be said that the involvement of all project partners in the calls considered was much less than for the 6th IST call of FP 6. Considering the research (and regional) focus and orientation of the institutions in question and the topics of the 1st ICT call in particular, this is not too surprising. However, slowly but surely the IS2WEB Western Balkan partners establish themselves as experienced and reliable partners for international research collaboration projects with their EC counterparts and are invited to participate in more and larger projects.

4.3 Follow-up of feedback gathered by 2006 survey

Regarding the additional support wished for by the participants of the survey in early summer 2006, the major issue was "more workshops on similar issues/additional educational activities, which was mentioned 19 times. As foreseen by the Technical Annex of the project, two more workshops were held in each country, one at the beginning of call 1, the second shortly after its closure (but before the time of the telephone interviews). Each of these thematic workshops addressed two topics of the relevant call (ICT call 1 or call 2) and the agenda contained a slot about "FP 7 – the new EU framework for innovation, competitiveness and growth" and in particular "the ICT Theme in FP 7". This was added to the approach for these events it was strongly requested by the target group (mentioned 17 times).

The suggestion for institutionalised networking among the beneficiaries of the IS2WEB project could not be implemented in the frame of the project but since the end of ICT call one can be realised in the SCORE project, whose website (www.score-project.eu) contains a workspace for regional networking among ICT stakeholders.

According to the feedback of the initial survey, the consortium promoted more intensely its services such as, among others, the targeted messages highlighting certain partner searchers during the future IST open calls which apparently were appreciated by the target group, as around half of the interviewees mentioned their satisfaction with the information received via e-mail.

5 Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from this analysis of the IS2WEB performance in the first calls of FP 7 are twofold. For the European Commission the results here indicate that while the mobilisation of Western Balkan research organisation is progressing overall and their involvement in the Framework Programme is increasing call by call (both in terms of numbers of organisations and numbers of initiatives), they still favour participation in smaller and clearly focused (research) projects. Accordingly, the recommendation from the previous survey is still valid that the Commission should continue to launch calls with a dedicated geographical focus targeting issues of interest to the research organisations in those countries.

Regarding now the future activities for the target group, other projects, such as the recently launched SCORE project (a support action funded under the IST programme's 6th call) and the WBC-INCO.NET (expected start date: January 2008) should continue to build on the ever stronger networks established by the IS2WEB project and further promote the motivation of the target group. Those organisations that will now get their first experiences in EU-funded projects should be actively involved in future activities, making their experiences available for their counterparts and fostering further networking among them.

If possible, these projects should continue to monitor the target group and analyse if the research organisations in question will manage to build on their newly gained know-how and climb the "stairway of experience": proposal partner ⇨ consortium member of support action in project with geographical focus ⇨ consortium partner in research project in order to identify factors that enhance or impede such a development.

It would have been interesting to compare the findings described in this document with the overall participation statistics of the different calls, in particular with view to the region, in order to be able to set the IS2WEB performance into perspective. However, due to the fact that such statistics are not available to the general public, this was not possible.

Annex 1 – Telephone Interview Guidelines

Name of responding organization: _____

Name of responding person: _____

1. Did you participate in a proposal submitted to any of the following
   calls?

*[Instructions for the interviewer: Ask the respondent to name the call they
participated in. If he or she can not remember, you may read out from the list below
the calls that had a deadline sometime after the workshop series. Please note that
this list is not exhaustive. It comprises any call that might have been of interest to
our target group in recent months.]*

   a) **FP7–ICT–2007–1** (ICT Call 1), closing date 8 May 2007

      Yes ❑   No ❑

      If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

      If yes, what funding scheme was it?
- CA/IP (Collaborative projects/Large scale integrating project) ❑
- CA/STREP (Collaborative projects/Small or medium–scale focused research actions) ❑
- NoE (Networks of Excellence) ❑
- CSA/CA (Coordination and support action/Coordination or networking actions) ❑
- CSA/SA (Coordination and support action/Specific support actions) ❑

  b) **FP7–REGPOT–2007–1** (Research Potential: Unlocking and developing
    the research potential in the EU´s convergence regions and
    outermost regions), closing date 24 April 2007
    Yes ❑   No ❑

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

  c) **FP7–REGPOT–2007–3** (Research Potential: International Co-
    operation), closing date 24 April 2007
    Yes ❑   No ❑

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

  d) **ERC–2007–StG** (Call for proposals for ERC Starting Independent
    Researcher Grant – Ideas Programme), closing date 25 April 2007
    Yes ❑   No ❑

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

  e) **FP7–PEOPLE–2007–5–2–AWARDS** (Marie Curie Awards – People
    Programme), closing date 26 April 2007
    Yes ❑   No ❑

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

> f) **FP7–PEOPLE–2007–1–1–ITN** (Marie Curie Initial Training Networks –
> People Programme) – closing date 7 May 2007
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

> g) **FP7–PEOPLE–2007–5–1–1–NIGHT** (Researchers' night – People
> Programme) – closing date 3 April 2007
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Calls from other Themes of Cooperation Programme of FP7

Energy
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Environment (including Climate Change)
> Yes ❐   No❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and Biotechnology
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Health
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials & new Production
Technologies
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Transport (including Aeronautics)
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Socio–economic sciences and Humanities
> Yes ❐   No ❐

If yes, what was the acronym of the proposal? _____

Other, please specify (Programme, deadline,acronym)_____

2. In which way were you introduced into the forming consortium?

[Instructions for the interviewer: Ask the respondent to answer the above question in an open form and tick the appropriate box without reading out the options. If you can not decide which of the options is applicable, you may go through the list one by one.]

a) Expression of interest/reply to partner search (Ideal-IST etc.) ☐
b) Initiated own partner search (Ideal-IST or private)   ☐
c) Recommendation of IS2WEB EU partners   ☐
d) Recommendation of IS2WEB local partner   ☐
e) Actively contacted own contacts   ☐
f) Contacted by own contacts and invited to participate   ☐
g) Contacted by previously unknown coordinator or other consortium
members   ☐

If yes, do you have an idea why you where contacted (listed in IS2WEB directory, company website etc.)? _____

h) Other, please specify
_____

3. What were your experiences with regard to the involvement in the proposal preparation phase?

[Instructions for the interviewer: Ask the respondent to answer the above question in an open form and tick the appropriate box without reading out the options. Please note down any comments that might be useful in this respect.]

a) Co-ordinator did everything on his own, we just had to prepare the
necessary administrative information (A2 form etc.)   ☐
b) We were expected to give feedback on the proposal text written by
others.   ☐
b) We were asked to contribute text to the proposal with regard to the
tasks assigned to us.   ☐
c) We were substantially involved in writing the proposal (virtual
collaboration).   ☐
d) We had a proposal preparation meeting.   ☐

Comments:_____

4. What support from the IS2WEB partners did you require?

[Instructions for the interviewer: Ask the respondent to answer the above question in an open form and tick the appropriate box without reading out the options. Please note down any comments that might be useful in this respect.]

a) Help with filling-in A2 forms   ☐
b) Help with calculation of costs   ☐
c) Help with preparation of company profile   ☐
d) Other, please specify _____
e) None   ☐

Comments:_____

5. What support from the IS2WEB consortium did you find useful?

[Instructions for the interviewer: Ask the respondent to answer the above question in an open form and tick the appropriate box without reading out the options. Please note down any comments that might be useful in this respect.]

a) 1st Thematic Workshop information & material   ☐
b) Information received from IS2WeB consortium via e-mail ☐
c) Partner searches (IDEAL-IST and others) disseminated by IS2WeB☐
d) Answers on request for information   ☐
e) Matchmaking support   ☐
f) Other, please specify   _____

Comments:_____

6. Please rank the overall IS2WEB support on a scale from 1 – 5.

1 – very helpful   ☐
2 – somewhat helpful   ☐
3 – undecided   ☐
4 – not very helpful   ☐
5 – useless   ☐

7. What additional support from the IS2WEB consortium would you have liked?

_____

Annex 2 – Partners Questionnaire

Name of responding organization: _____

In which proposals that were submitted to the 6th IST call did you participate?

a. Acronym _____

    Strategic Objective _____

    Instrument _____

    Result
        Below threshold   ☐
        Positively evaluated but not funded due to low budget ☐
        Reserve list   ☐
        Retained   ☐

    Way of involvement in the consortium
        – Expression of interest / reply to partner search (Ideal-
        IST etc.)   ☐
        – Initiated own partner search (Ideal-IST or private) ☐
        – Recommendation of IS2WEB EU partners   ☐
        – Recommendation of other IS2WEB partner   ☐
        Name _____
        – Actively contacted own contacts   ☐
        – Was contacted by own contacts and invited to participate
                                                                ☐
        – Contacted by previously unknown organization and invited
                                                                ☐
        – Other, please specify _____

b. Acronym _____

    Strategic Objective _____

    Instrument _____

    Result
        Below threshold   ☐
        Positively evaluated but not funded due to low budget ☐
        Reserve list   ☐
        Retained   ☐

    Way of involvement in the consortium
        – Expression of interest / reply to partner search (Ideal-
        IST etc.)   ☐

- Initiated own partner search (Ideal-IST or private) ☐
- Recommendation of IS2WEB EU partners ☐
- Recommendation of other IS2WEB partner ☐
Name _____
- Actively contacted own contacts ☐
- Was contacted by own contacts and invited to participate
  ☐
- Contacted by previously unknown organization and invited
  ☐
- Other, please specify _____

c. Acronym _____

  Strategic Objective _____

  Instrument _____

  Result
       Below threshold ☐
       Positively evaluated but not funded due to low budget ☐
       Reserve list ☐
       Retained ☐

  Way of involvement in the consortium
       - Expression of interest / reply to partner search (Ideal-
       IST etc.) ☐
       - Initiated own partner search (Ideal-IST or private) ☐
       - Recommendation of IS2WEB EU partners ☐
       - Recommendation of other IS2WEB partner ☐
       Name _____
       - Actively contacted own contacts ☐
       - Was contacted by own contacts and invited to participate
         ☐
       - Contacted by previously unknown organization and invited
         ☐
       - Other, please specify _____

Annex 3 – Support Letter

To whom it may concern

Subject: End user opinion on IS2WEB project impact

On the behalf of Faculty of Mechanical Engineering Kraljevo, I had the pleasure to participate in workshops organized within FP6 project IS2Web and use in practice the project outcomes. Information and contacts provided through project activities were of ultimate importance for inclusion of the Faculty in FP6 and FP7 programmes. During FP6 programme, IS2Web was the main and most useful resource of information about FP6 in Serbia.
I would like to stress the following points that lead to high quality of service offered by IS2Web project to researchers in Serbia:

- IS2Web workshops were the first relevant and useful source of information on FP6 programme activities after Serbian research institution became eligible for participation in FP6 calls;

- invited speakers had high level of knowledge and experience in FP6 projects, providing comprehensive and applicable information on all topics considered and questions raised by participants;

- the information provided on FP concepts and calls were complete being that they were considering:
    o all stages of project preparation, submission, evaluation and implementation processes, with speakers that had extensive personal experience in those procedures providing useful examples of good and bad practice;
    o all common FP6 and FP7 research calls that were of interest to Serbian researchers;
    o all available resources on information on FP calls (CORDIS, IDEAL-IST, NCPs…).

- unlike other sources, the information on FP6 calls were always provided in timely manner, providing researchers real opportunity to prepare its proposals,

- IS2Web activities included researchers from whole Serbia in an appropriate manner, taking care of their travel and accommodation needs by early announcing, proper timing and careful choice of places where activities were held.

For those reasons, IS2Web project activities became model according to which later activities on other FP6 projects and even certain activities of Ministry of Science were organized.
It is of no less importance that IS2Web project promoted important concepts of FP projects that are beyond research activities: development of ERA, research networking, relevance of research work to community, importance of dissemination and sustainability of research results. Project proposals made later were designed to consider those

project aspects (which were neglected in our former practice), and it
eventual success may be largely attributed to influence of IS2Web
project.
For all previously mentioned, it may be concluded that IS2Web project
was the first and, at least by our part, the most important source of
information, knowledge and consulting on FP6 projects and strongly
contributed to promotion of FP concepts and ideas and re-integration
of our researchers into international scientific and research
activities.

Kraljevo, September 28, 2007   Doc. Dr Zlatan Šoškić,
                                                Railway Vehicles Center
                                                   Faculty of Mechanical
                                                             Engineering
                                                 Dositejeva 19, Kraljevo

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Zentrum für Soziale Innovation
Linke Wienzeile 246
A – 1150 Wien
Tel. +43-1-4950442　　Fax. +43-1-4050442-40　　e-mail: institut@zsi.at　　http://www.zsi.at

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Persönliche Kontaktinformation

Carmen Siller ist wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin des ZSI mit den Arbeits- und Forschungsschwerpunkten Südosteuropa (insbesondere der Westliche Balkan) sowie Informations- & Kommunikationstechnologie im EU Rahmenprogramm

e-mail: siller@zsi.at

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