

**European Commission
Joint Research Center**

PROGRESS REPORT¹

**on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC
(1st half 2011 or November 2010 / Becici - May 2011 / Ohrid)**

1 Policy actions

(e.g. essential changes in the political authorities, administrative bodies, agencies, institutions, personnel, development/launch of new national funding programmes, etc.)

None

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

NA

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

As a follow-up to the signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the JRC and Serbia in 2010, a Serbian high level delegation visited the JRC site in Petten on 8-10 December to consider enhanced cooperation.

On 18 January 2011 a group of experts from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia visited the JRC Ispra site as a follow-up of a JRC Information exchange event that took place in Skopje on 19 October 2010. This visit was an opportunity to identify concrete ideas on building specific new partnerships in view of strengthening collaboration with Candidate Countries and the support provided to them by the JRC with respect to EU accession.

¹ The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage (www.wbc-inco.net) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to office@wbc-inco.net until Monday, May 16, 2011.

The new JRC Enlargement and Integration Action (E&IA) 2011 was published on the JRC website in mid March. It offers both training and mobility possibilities in order to increase the participation of the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries in the relevant JRC activities. During the previous years only Seconded National Experts' (SNEs) positions were available, but given the heavy procedure to engage SNEs, from last year on, calls are open also for Grantholders, with the aim to increase the success and participation rate of the E&IA calls in the E&IA target countries (Albania, Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Israel, Serbia and Turkey). For 2011, 46 Workshops and Training Courses on Advanced Methods and Techniques were published along with 40 open positions for SNEs and Grantholders from the target countries.

A delegation from Koc University (Turkey) visited the JRC (Brussels) on 9 November 2010 aiming at identifying common areas of interest for collaboration. As a follow-up, a delegation from Koc University visited the JRC Ispra site on 23-24 March 2011 focusing on NanoBiotechnology, ICT and Materials Sciences. A visit of JRC scientists to Koc University will take place on 6-7 June 2011.

The Grantholders Programme between TUBITAK and the JRC has been carried for 4 years within the context of a Memorandum of Understanding between TUBITAK and the JRC. Up to now, three calls (2008 - 2010) were published and 20 Turkish researchers were awarded grants, financed by TUBITAK, to do their research activities within JRC institutes. The 4th call was launched by TUBITAK in January 2011 and the final evaluation is still ongoing within TUBITAK on 44 applications. The final results are expected within the last week of May and maximum 20 Turkish researchers are likely to start their studies by September 2011 and onwards.

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

(e.g. new bilateral/international agreements, memberships, support structures, important international projects, programmes, etc.)

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5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

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

(Optional personal opinion)

- A visit of JRC scientists to Koc University (Istanbul) will take place on 6-7 June 2011.
- The annual meeting of the JRC National Contact Points will take place at the JRC Ispra site on 23-24 November 2011.