

Republic of Serbia

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.)

- The new national funding 4-year programme cycle in three different directions (applied research, basic research and interdisciplinary research) was launched on January 1, 2011.
- the European Commission's Questionnaire on Serbia's candidacy for membership in the European Union has been prepared in extremely short period of time. Answers to 2,483 questions, divided into six annexes and 33 chapters, were prepared in a record-breaking time of 45 days and they were classified into more than 37 volumes. The Questionnaire, which covers all elements of future negotiation between Serbia and the EU concerning EU accession, was handed over to Serbia by the European Commission on 24 November 2010, and the answers were handed over to the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Stefan Fule on 31 January 2011 by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Mirko Cvetković. The chapter 25 is covering the research and innovation issues.
- Serbia together with Turkey initiated the joint position of EU enlargement countries associated to FP7 towards the next Framework Programme and actively participated in the creation of the joint statement. Also, Serbia actively participated in the definition of joint position of the same group of countries on EU Green Paper "From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding". In addition to that Serbia has organized national public debate on the EU Green Paper and submitted the national position by May 20.
- The Government of the Republic of Serbia passed the Decision on the establishment of a company „PIU Research and Development Ltd.“ , as a single member limited liability company. The company is established on temporary basis until the finalization of the Research and Development in the Public Sector Project. It manages state-owned assets. Within the scope of its activities, the Company generates financial means from the revenue of its own activities, financial loans, donations and grant assistance and from the Budget of the Republic of Serbia, in accordance with the applicable laws. PIU conducts its business

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

affairs in line with regulations governing the position of business associations in the Republic of Serbia by providing consulting, managerial and monitoring activities in relation to Project management.

Its mission, PIU realizes through:

- preparation, evaluation and call for tenders;
 - coordination of activities and provision of administrative services to Project Teams in relation to Project implementation;
 - managing the payment process;
 - architectural and technical activities and provision of technical consulting including construction supervision;
 - reporting to the relevant institutions on the execution of the Project;
 - establishment of cooperation with international organizations and competent authorities of other countries in cooperation with competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia.
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- The Government of the Republic of Serbia passed the Decisions on the establishment of a company „Fund for innovation activity“, for financing innovative companies and Center for the promotion of science as well.
 - The Serbian Government was restructured on Monday 14 March 2011 with the aim to reduce the number of ministries and the size of the Prime Minister cabinet. After the changes, the Prime Minister cabinet has 17 instead of 24 portfolios and 21 instead of 27 members. These changes affected previous Ministry of Science and Technological Development, which has been merged with Ministry of Education. The new name of the ministry is Ministry of Education and Science. New Minister for Education and Science is Prof. Dr. Žarko Obradović. In addition to that the new Government doesn't have separate ministries for trade, mining and energy, telecommunications, human and minority rights, religion and the national investment plan.

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

Law on innovation activities - 7 Bylaw acts on innovation activities were adopted and published in Official Gazette RS, no. 16/2011 in March 2011.

3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

- International architectural competition for the future building of the Serbian Centre for the Promotion of Science (CPS), was announced on 15 September 2010. A total of 232 designs from 47 countries competed at the international competition for architectonic solution for the Centre and the winner is Austrian architect Wolfgang Tschapeller. Jury comprises of deputy prime minister Bozidar Djelic and international experts Roberto Simon from Brazil, Dorte Mandrup from Denmark, Gunter Katherl from Austria and Ourania Kloutsinioti from Greece, as well as Serbian representatives - Belgrade city architect Dejan Vasovic and President of the

Association of Serbian Architects Jovan Mitrovic. The construction of the building of the Centre for promotion of science is planned to start in 2011, whilst the official opening is scheduled for 2012.

-THE BEST TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION COMPETITION 2010 had final competition on Serbian Radio-Television (RTS) 23th December 2010 by which occasion the prizes were awarded to the best technological innovation in 2010. At this year's competition participated 1014 contestants, who reported 284 innovations in three categories: Implemented innovations, innovative ideas and high school teams. The total prize money this year amounted to 12,000,000 RSD.

- **NCPs** organised several individual meetings with several different stakeholders on FP7 opportunities. Major focus was to attract SMEs, young researchers, as well as military research institutions to take a part in the coming calls.

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.)

The S&T Cooperation Agreement between Republic of Serbia and Montenegro was signed on 21st of March 2011. in Podgorica. During the same week Serbia signed the Cooperation Agreement with Russian Federation in Belgrade.

Several bilateral Calls for submitting joint project proposals were launched in last several months: with DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst), Slovenia, Slovakia, France, Portugal, Belarus.

- In December 2011, The Council of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) announced that Serbia can begin formal discussions for membership in this organization. Director General of this organisation announced that Serbia together with Slovenia, Turkey and Israel can start negotiations for membership. The membership negotiations should last approximately one year, after which Serbia will get the status of associate member and within two to five years, should become a full member of CERN.

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

- National research project cycle 2011-2014:
- 780 out of 878 projects were accepted for financing (89%);
- There is a total of 11,615 researchers on the accepted projects (increase of 30%);
- 1,714 young researchers (under 30) will for the first time participate in projects;
- 1,024 researchers from abroad will be partners on projects;
- 47% of the researchers are women which represents one of the best gender balances in the world.
- Serbia doubled its public investment in R&D in 2011, reaching 0,65% of GDP (highest relative increase in R&D expenditures in the world in 2011)
- A third of the nation's scientific capacity will for the first time be engaged in large interdisciplinary projects (interdisciplinary projects 28%, technological development 28%, basic research 44%)
- The best young researchers will for the first time have the opportunity to lead their own projects (25 young researchers applied, and 24 got the financial support from the Ministry in

the next four years - this model of support is used by the European Research council (**ERC**) and these young researchers are a starting base for receiving ERC funding in the future

- Within the public call for projects, researchers asked for a total of 136 million EUR worth of equipment (a total of 5,558 requests). A database of the requested equipment was prepared and researchers were given a chance to correct their requests. An expert committee examined the database and rationalized the purchasing of equipment based on the following criteria: the team score within the public call, the project total ranking, the size of the team, the defense of the request in front of the committee, rational usage of equipment for the entire scientific community.
- In addition to that, in 2010 Serbian researchers published over 3,500 scientific papers in relevant international journals.
- Serbia was declared the global “rising science star” by Thomson Reuters since February 2010 as the country with the highest growth in citations in 11 out of 22 scientific disciplines

- Innovation projects activities supported by the Law on innovation activities and financed through the national budget in the amount of 119.792.351 RSD - submitted 61 reports of financed innovation projects whose implementation was completed in April 2011. New Public Call for the implementation of innovative activities is expected in June 2011.

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

(Optional personal opinion)

Serbia initiated the meeting between the Commissioner for research and innovation Maire Geoghegan-Quinn and WBCs ministers responsible for science. It will be organized on September 15, 2011, in Brussels.

The collaboration agreement between Ministry of education and science and Ministry of infrastructure energy from Serbian side JRC IE will be signed soon.

At the moment, Serbia is negotiating with the partner countries the participation in two ERICs.

The next call of bilateral cooperation between Serbia and Spain should be launched in the coming days.

During the Serbian presidency of CEI (2011) several important scientific events will be organized: Expert's and Ministerial conference on energy issues in Belgrade, Experts conference on next generation of biofuels in Debrecin, Hungary at the beginning of October 2011, and Meeting of CEI ministers for science and technology in Trieste in October 2011.

During the Serbian presidency over the South East European Co-operation Process (SEECP) (2011-2012) the regional Ministerial conference with the working title “Strengthening Research Capacities in South East Europe – Launching the Regional Strategy for Research and Development for Innovation for the Western Balkans –“ is foreseen for November 2011 to be held in Belgrade.

Appendix: additional data

(Delete if not applicable.)

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