

This document is part of a Series of Abstracts of Documents regarding ICT Policy in the Western Balkans and has been developed in the framework of the ICT/FP7 funded project:



## ABSTRACT

Policy Paper - "Report on supporting and hindering factors in EU-funded ICT research collaboration with regard to WBC

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<b>Abstract</b>	This deliverable deals essentially with the main barriers in the Western Balkan countries' research organisations and their priorities for research and development in the ICT field in the context of the Seventh Framework Programme. For the purpose of defining barriers and priorities a consultation process was conducted. This report presents the key findings of that consultation process and it recommends certain measures to be taken by the Western Balkan countries.
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## TAKE AWAYS

*It is very common that Research institutions in the Western Balkan countries face various obstacles and challenges while trying to increase their participation in international projects, especially in the Seventh Framework Programme*

- ✓ Western Balkan researchers still face problems to participate in FP7
- ✓ main obstacles are **administrative regulation at national level, insufficient infrastructure and lack of managerial experience**
- ✓ previously, as below indicated, the main hindering factor was government regulation but since then, several policies in all Western Balkan countries were put in place to redress the problem
- ✓ researchers agree that a researcher's community of the Western Balkans is a suitable framework for the development of the ICT in the region.

## APPROACH

Among the **WINS-ICT** objectives is the consolidation of Western Balkan countries' regional cooperation priorities and improvement of research capabilities in ICT, both with respect to the context of the FP7. In order to fulfil this objective, a consultation process about barriers and priorities for better WBC participation in FP7, was conducted in 2010.

Re-evaluation and verification of results and conclusions, previously derived in the framework of the **SCORE** project, was the chief objective of this consultation process which consisted of **three phases**:

- **phase one** during which an online survey was conducted, responding 90 researchers from Western Balkan countries;
- **phase two** throughout which 6 workshops in Western Balkan countries were held in 2010, *Skopje April 21<sup>st</sup>, Belgrade May 13<sup>th</sup>, Podgorica May 18<sup>th</sup>, Tirana May 20<sup>th</sup>, Zagreb May 31<sup>st</sup>, Banja Luka June 1<sup>st</sup>*;
- **the last phase** which was dedicated to the evaluation process based on the findings of phases 1 and 2.

## KEY FINDINGS

### *Serbian*

#### *government has*

The overall appraisal of the quality of the science system in the Western Balkan countries shows that insufficient infrastructure capacities hamper improvements in the ICT field.

#### *adopted the*

#### *Strategy of*

The majority of the barriers identified during the SCORE project remained the same, even though a slightly improvement can be noticed.

#### *Scientific and*

#### *Technological*

#### *Development of*

Indeed, after two years of relatively successful participation of the Western Balkan researchers in the FP7, lack of knowledge about FP7 procedures and programmes is still one of the hampering factors.

#### *the Republic of*

#### *Serbia 2010-*

#### *2015 which*

Governments of Western Balkan countries have already recognized ICT field as a very promising one and they have already formulated few policies regarding the research and innovation in this field.

#### *emphasises the*

#### *importance of*

Regarding the ICT R&D priorities, remain the same as to the main priorities that were established in the context of the SCORE project:

#### *supporting the*

#### *EU integrative*

- 
- *ICTs for Enterprises and e-Business,*
  - *ICTs for Learning and e-Learning,*
  - *ICTs for Government and e-Government*

#### *processes*

#### *related with*

Those priorities were broadly accepted as representing the actual needs of all Western Balkan countries and therefore, considered as the common priorities for the whole region

#### *science and*

#### *technology*

In addition, two 'new' priorities identified only:

#### *system*

- *Digital Libraries and Content*

and

- *Knowledge Technologies.*

## BARRIERS

1. Administrative and bureaucratic procedures
2. Lack of experts in the field of project management
3. Lack of knowledge of project management,
4. Lack of information on funding sources,
5. Lack of clear guidelines about the FP regulation and about the preparation of the project proposal.
6. Lack of national funding programs

*National legislation and procedures for money transfer are not accomodating properly payments to and from other countries*

*Regulation regarding visas is required for foreign researchers*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Simplification of EC and national procedures ,i.e.as the under discussion lump sum funding of research in FP8
2. The academic sector must cultivate intellectual capital and attitude towards innovation in the field of ICT and education for ICT. Academic sector employees need to continue developing their professional skills through various innovative programs and courses.
3. Put capacity building in key position. To establish Project management staff category at each research organisation. Hold training for Project management staffs.
4. Development of the regional web-portal which is the central repository for all the information about funding sources, procedures, and guidelines.
5. The same as described above, regional web-portal that can be used as a repository for all guidelines and tips for successful participation in the Seventh Framework Programme
6. The academic sector must undertake research programmes jointly with industry. Public-private partnerships can solve the problems related to lack of funding programs