

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH UPDATE

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INFORMATION FLASH ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTORATE

POLICY

Broad Support for the New International Cooperation Strategy at Inter-institutional Debate, and in European Commission DGs

Following its adoption by the Commission on 14 September 2012, the Communication on a new international cooperation strategy for research and innovation (COM (2012) 497) has been well received by other Institutions. European Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn gave a presentation to the European Parliament's ITRE committee on 9 October 2012, where the strategy was met with broad support.

The Competitiveness Council held an orientation debate on 11 December. As a follow up, the Irish Presidency is now preparing the draft Council conclusions. Both the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee have also prepared opinions which support the main thrust of this strategy. A further discussion on the role of Member States in implementing this strategy was held on 25 January with the European Research Area Committee.

At the European Commission, the implementation of the strategy has already started. Thematic services responsible for the different challenges and industrial technologies in Horizon 2020 are currently reflecting on how to translate the new policy into concrete actions in multi-annual plans for international cooperation as well as in the first Work Programmes of Horizon 2020. The Strategic International Research and Innovation Cooperation (SIRIC) group is responsible for horizontally harmonising the work. The debate on what is expected and on related information needs took place at the last two meetings of SIRIC (3 December and 22 January). The next meeting will take place in mid-March and focus on the instruments available for implementation within the Work Programmes.

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EU and Russian Leaders Agree on the EU-Russian Year of Science, Technology and Innovation 2014

At the EU-Russia Summit held in Brussels on 21 December 2012, EU and Russian Leaders formally endorsed the "EU-Russian Year of Science, Technology and Innovation 2014"



EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso announces the EU-Russian Year of Science Technology and Innovation, at the joint press conference with Council President Herman Van Rompuy and Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin

In his [statement](#) at the Summit press conference, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso noted: "*Beyond our traditional areas of cooperation, our ties are growing in breadth and depth. Let me give you a very concrete example I am very attached to: we agreed to make 2014 the "EU-Russian Year of Science, Technology and Innovation". This year-long series of events, to be jointly organised across the EU and Russia, will celebrate the vibrant and multifaceted science and technology cooperation between the EU, our Member States and the Russian Federation. Involving scientists, research organisations, innovators and the wider public, the EU-Russian Year of Science will directly build on Russia's strong involvement in the current EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development*".

Preparation for this comprehensive programme of activities (which will include scientific conferences, workshops, exhibitions, as well as science events for the wider public) will start in the next few weeks. It will benefit from the support of a high level Advisory Committee comprising EU and Russian officials, representatives of EU Member States, scientists, industry representatives, and science communication and media experts. Member States, many of which have organised successful bilateral years with Russia, will be fully involved. Information about a possible launch event in Russia, and closing ceremony in the EU will be provided at a later stage.

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EU-Israel Science and Technology Joint Committee Meeting

The 7th EU-Israel Joint Science and Technology Committee meeting took place on 17 December 2012 in Brussels. The meeting was co-chaired by Isi Saragossi, Director for International Cooperation at DG RTD, and Avi Hasson, Chief Scientist of the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labour. The Israeli delegation also included representatives of the Ministry of Science and Technology and of the Israel-Europe R&D Directorate. The meeting reviewed Israel's participation statistics in the specific programmes of FP7. Participants acknowledged that EU-Israel S&T cooperation has been active and diversified, and has resulted in establishing excellent working relationships between researchers and research entities in Israel and the EU. Statistics also indicated that Israel has been most active in the Ideas Programme, Marie-Curie actions and thematic areas including ICT, Health and NMP (Nanosciences, Nanotechnologies, Materials and New Production Technologies.)

During the meeting participants discussed various aspects of Israel's participation in Horizon 2020 as well as issues related to the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation and the most recent regional initiatives in this area. Both sides reiterated their willingness to pursue the dialogue on the future participation of Israel in Horizon 2020 and to address further the financial and legal dimensions of such participation.

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16th Meeting of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC)

The 16th meeting of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) took place on 18 December 2012. On this occasion SFIC welcomed the participation of the European External Action Service, which presented its policy priorities and their link to research and innovation, and looked forward to a more regular exchange of information with EEAS. The SFIC work programme 2013-14 is expected to be adopted in early 2013.

Regarding the China initiative, the European Commission reported on the Innovation Week in China and the urbanisation workshop planned for May 2013. On the USA initiative, there was a report on the 'Destination Europe' event in San Francisco. On the India initiative: the proposed governance structure for the Indo-European partnership has been agreed and the first GSO meeting is foreseen for 2013. On the Brazil initiative, information gathering about on-going activities has started and a workshop is planned for June 2013. The results of a study on the development of a monitoring system for international R&I cooperation by Member States were also presented.

For further information, please visit the [website](#) or contact Sofie Norager, DG RTD, Directorate D

'ASEAN-EU Year of Science 2012' Closing Event

The closing event of the 'ASEAN-EU Year of Science 2012' took place on Wednesday 12 December 2012 in Brussels. The event, attended by over 140 participants, was organised with the support of the INCO-NET project 'SEA-EU-NET'.

The event brought together members of the ASEAN Committee of Science and Technology, EU Member States officials, experts and Marie Curie researchers who exchanged views of cooperation experience and prospects for developing further collaboration.



Highlights of EU-ASEAN Research and Innovation Cooperation



The 'ASEAN-EU Year of Science 2012' offered a rich programme of over 50 events in thirteen different countries, involving 40 institutions from both regions. It contributed to highlight the diversity and vibrancy of EU STI cooperation with ASEAN, and actively promoted networking between the two regions at bilateral and bi regional levels. It also helped strengthen and focus cooperation on selected areas of mutual interest (i.e. food security, green technologies).

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Nuclear Cooperation: a New Dimension in EU-Switzerland relations

The new international agreement associating Switzerland to the Euratom Framework Programme (2012-2013) entered into force on 12 December 2012 after 18 months of complex discussions. This was made possible by the adoption of a Council decision and an exchange of diplomatic notes. With this new agreement, Switzerland continues its long-standing association to the Euratom FP as a valuable partner in scientific, technological and financial terms. Switzerland is currently the only third country associated to the Euratom FP.

The association means a vital financial support for the EU fusion accompanying programme, and for the continued operation of the Joint European Torus (JET). The purpose of this unique European research Infrastructure is to open the way for future nuclear fusion experimental tokamak reactors such as ITER and DEMO. The association will also enable a valuable scientific contribution to on-going procurement operations for ITER. It also allows a key contribution to the objectives of Horizon 2020, the Innovation Union flagship initiative, and the implementation of important international projects towards the fusion power generation.

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Preparing Western Balkan Countries for Horizon 2020: a Full Agenda at the Steering Platform Meeting in Belgrade

With the support of the WBC.INCO.NET, discussions took place on 6 December 2012 in Belgrade with all Western Balkan Countries (WBCs) on how, and in which areas, to step up efforts to facilitate their integration into the ERA and contribute to the Innovation Union objectives. The recent experience with accession negotiations on Research and Innovation (Chapter 25) with Montenegro served as a good case study on what is expected from pre-accession countries.

The Cyprus Presidency briefed the meeting on the General Partial Approach reached at the Competitiveness Council on 10 October 2012. Poland informed participants about the discussion on widening participation. On this issue, WBCs expressed the wish that pilot actions, and other actions still to be decided, would also apply to their research entities. The

Commission briefly outlined the procedure on association to Horizon 2020. It was agreed to discuss this issue in greater detail at a later stage. In preparation of Horizon 2020, the European Commission also recommended that WBC attend, as much as possible, all FP7 management Committees, the meetings of the ERA Advisory bodies and the Ad Hoc preparatory meetings (on NCPs, for example) to which they are invited as observers. Participation in such meetings is an effective way to become familiar with EU actions and best practices.

The importance of a reinforced engagement at regional level was stressed, as well as the need to start, in a timely manner, programming to use the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA II) for research and innovation. The European Commission recommended using the Smart Specialisation Strategy to identify actions and projects, both at national and regional level, to be funded under IPA II. It was also encouraging to hear that the other stakeholders (e.g. EUREKA and UNESCO) reaffirmed their commitment towards countries from this region.

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Montenegro: Accession Negotiations on R&I Opened, and Provisionally Closed.

At the Accession Conference held in Brussels on 18 December 2012, the EU's common position on Montenegro on Research and Innovation was adopted by unanimity. This means that Montenegro fully accepts the EU *acquis* on Research and Innovation and is ready to implement it by the date of its accession. Opening and closing this Chapter in less than 4 months represented a challenging task. As EU Commissioner Füle noted, efforts required in the area of research and innovation are not to be underestimated, as this is not an easy chapter. From now on, progress expected (as identified in the common position) will be monitored on a regular basis by DG ELARG in close cooperation with DG Research and Innovation.

Montenegro's Chief Negotiator publicly thanked all Colleagues from DG RTD for their contribution to achieving this major milestone on Montenegro's path towards joining the European Union

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EVENTS

Destination Europe Event Highlights Opportunities for International Researchers to Work in Europe

The second *Destination Europe* event took place in San Francisco on 6 and 7 December. Ten Member States, three Associated States, three European Agencies (ERC, EIT, REA) and Euraxess presented the opportunities available to researchers from anywhere in the world to pursue their research careers in Europe.

The event was attended by over 200 US and international researchers. Participants discovered the richness and variety of the research and innovation landscape in Europe in plenary sessions, where speakers shared their experiences of moving to or within Europe, and in dedicated break-out sessions. The next *Destination Europe* event will take place on 22 February 2013 in Cambridge Massachusetts, back-to-back with the European Career Fair at MIT.

For further information, please see the [website](#) or contact Mary Kavanagh, DG RTD, Directorate D

EU Israel Technology Transfer Seminar

On 25-26 November, the EU Delegation to Israel together with the embassies of the Czech Republic, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia, hosted the second annual EU-Israel Innovation Seminar. This year's event focused on technology transfer, with an emphasis on clean technologies. Over 60 Israeli and European researchers, policymakers, investors and industry representatives came together for two days of discussions, exchanges of experience, as well as intense networking - allowing participants to lay the groundwork for a number of concrete collaborations in the future.

The seminar opened with a keynote address from Professor Ruth Arnon, President of the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities and inventor of the Copaxone drug for multiple sclerosis. Workshop sessions were divided into presentations from Israeli and European participants, followed by lively roundtable discussions. Key topics included: Israel's system of technology transfer offices, Europe's science parks, applied research centres and clusters, the various EU and Israeli government programmes to foster academia-industry cooperation, and the best ways for small countries to access global markets.

For further information, please contact Alexandra Meir, EU Delegation in Tel-Aviv

New Study Launched on Long Term Career Prospects for Marie Curie Researchers

A twelve-month comparative study looking at "*Marie Curie researchers and their long-term career development*" has just been launched. Its main objective is to collect and analyse information related to the career development of Marie Curie researchers coming from all over the world, and to present a comprehensive picture of the long-term career paths after their fellowship.

The study will compare the career development of Marie Curie researchers with that of other researchers. It will also look into the specific career paths of male and female researchers, providing a basis for addressing the topic of possible obstacles to female researchers' mobility and career progression.

The target group consists of researchers of any nationality who have completed their Marie Curie Fellowship five or more years ago, i.e., those researchers funded under FP4, FP5 and FP6. The results will help the Commission fine-tune future Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions in Horizon 2020, make them even more attractive for female researchers, continue encouraging high-quality research training programmes, and support attractive employment and working conditions for researchers in Europe.

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First Information Day of the EU-Japan Opening of LIMMS (EUJO-LIMMS) Project

The first Information Day of the EUJO-LIMMS project took place on 12 December 2012 at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in Switzerland. This FP7-INCOLAB project aims at opening the activities of the joint Laboratory for Integrated Micro Mechatronic Systems (LIMMS) between CNRS (France) and the Institute of Industrial Science of the University of Tokyo (Japan) to three European partners: Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL, Switzerland), University of Freiburg (Germany), and the Technical Research Centre (VTT, Finland).



The conference reviewed all projects pursued in the European laboratory in Japan. It also identified areas for potential cooperation with UT-IIS in view of a call for a 4th partner to be launched in 2013. Speakers from other EU research institutions in the same research areas were also invited to start a dialogue. A follow-up workshop will be organized in Freiburg (Germany) in the end of 2013 to meet with potential future partners.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (February-April 2013)

Joint Committee Meetings

12 February	USA	Washington
6 March	CANADA	Brussels
March (TBC)	CHILE	Chile
18 or 19 April (TBC)	ARGENTINA	Brussels
April (TBC)	ALGERIA	TBD

Regional Dialogues

16-17 April	EU-LAC SOM	Brussels
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International Summits

25 February	EU-Ukraine Summit	Brussels
24-25 March	EU-Japan Summit	Brussels
April (TBC)	EU-India Summit	Brussels

International Events

14-18 February	AAAS Annual Meeting	Boston
22-23 March	MIT European Career Fair	Boston
15-19 April	Latin America Week	Brussels

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