



Synergy with similar projects/initiatives in WBC countries

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Abstract	List and short description of ongoing projects and initiatives in WBC countries that target similar goals, with brief description how WBCInno can correspond with these projects/initiatives.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To be added later....

1. Synergy with similar projects/initiatives in Serbia

1.1. Export Promotion for Innovative Products

Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties Belgrade BITF is implementing a three year project *Export Promotion for Innovative Products*, supported by the Swiss Government (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs), with the goal to increase export of high-tech products and services from Serbia, especially in the fields of IT, MedTech and BioTech.

The implementation of the Project shall be performed through three components aimed at:

1. Developing instruments for the promotion of exports of high-tech and innovative products / services from Serbia in the fields of information technology, medical technology and biotechnology
2. Strengthening specific structures, organizations and innovation support networks in Serbia in accordance with the recommended instruments.
3. Implementing recommended network platforms for the promotion of exports in the fields of information technology, medical technology and biotechnology.

The Project is implemented in the period from September 30, 2011 until September 30, 2014.

One of the activities implemented within this project is establishment of Serbian Technology Incubators and Parks Network **STIPNet**. Currently STIPNet is gathering 5 incubators in Serbia (BITF Belgrade, BI Novi Sad, BI Zrenjanin, BI Subotica, STP Čačak) with the primary goal to increase visibility of incubators and especially to raise awareness about the importance of supporting the development of technology/innovation incubators. The cooperation of STIPNet with WBCInno Project can contribute to strengthening connections of business incubators with universities in the area of innovation development and knowledge and technology transfer, through supporting incubators to shift their operations towards technology and innovation.

More information: <http://bitf.rs/cms/item/export/en.html>

1.2. Serbian Innovation Fund SIF

The Serbian Innovation Fund was established by the Serbia Innovation Law in order to provide funding for innovation, primarily through cooperation with international financial institutions, organizations, donors and the private sector. The objective of the SIF is to contribute to the overall development of innovation through various financial instruments, particularly by fostering the establishment of new and strengthening existing companies, by positioning them to access venture capital markets, and by promoting linkages between research, technology development and economy.

So far SIF implemented Innovation Serbia Project which is financed through a EUR 8.4 million donation from EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) and administered by the World Bank. Two grant schemes for businesses have launched through this Project: 1) Mini Grants - the Program of early development (aimed to startup companies, approx. 80.000 EUR per project with 15% participation) and 2) Matching grant (aimed to companies in developing process, approx. 300.000 EUR per project with 50% participation). So far over 50 projects have been funded, all innovative projects with commercialization potential. Over 40% Mini Grant and 33% Matching Grant applications involve academic collaboration. Also, SIF pays special attention to intellectual property rights and protection, which is a topic that is highly important for innovative and development companies, but also underdeveloped in the WB countries. The Mini grants programme is especially significant because it provides small innovative companies with seed funding for development of products and services and support startups in the stage when businesses are most vulnerable.

2. Synergy with similar projects/initiatives in Serbia and Montenegro

2.1. Regional ICT Foresight exercise for Southeast European countries (FORSEE)

FORSEE – Regional ICT Foresight exercise for Southeast European countries' Project targets an ICT Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) policy reform in the South-East European (SEE) region. It proposes focused efforts on introducing a foresight culture in order to create a common regional methodology through which ICT sector stakeholders (policy makers, industry players and research community) will be able to voice aspirations, meet challenges and help develop a vision for the region in this field.

The Project's main objectives are:

- to embed a foresight culture in the policy making process in the SEE countries, which will lead to an acceleration of their economic growth and will enhance their preparedness to the challenges of the globalized economy,
- to open a dialogue between all relevant stakeholders from participating countries, synthesize views and create a sense of regional ownership of proposed policy recommendations,
- to initiate transnational collaboration in developing strategic plans for the ICT related socioeconomic growth through significant savings in resources, improved efficiency and increased capacity to compete in the global market,
- to make a careful selection of priorities in ICT RDI policies in each participating country which will allow already limited available resources to be channeled into activities with realistic potential for important achievements,
- to create a framework under which these areas of priorities will be re-evaluated as pillars of a Regional Plan for development in each of the participating countries,
- to produce a set of tools and a methodological platform for performing regional Foresight exercises which will remain as legacy to the SEE region for future use and reference.

The project duration is from January 2011 - December 2013.

One of the main results of the project is development of the National ICT Innovation systems study and national PESTLE &SWOT analysis for all project member countries, specifically for [Serbia](#) and [Montenegro](#). These documents are made to explain the national innovation system by identifying the policy framework,

institutional structure and operational organization, main policies and implications for RTDI policy, main actors, sectors and industries which are key factors for the innovation performance. The PESTLE and SWOT analyses serve as a basis for an analysis of the internal and external environment that might affect the foresight implementation.

Partners on the project include Institute Mihajlo Pupin and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in Serbia; University of Montenegro in Montenegro.

More information: www.forsee.eu

3. Synergy with similar projects/initiatives in Serbia, Bosnia&Herzegovina and Montenegro

3.1. Co-ordination of Research Policies with the Western Balkan Countries – WBC INCO-NET

The initiative is supported by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development.

The issue of enlargement in the direction of the so-called Western Balkan countries is high on the political agenda of the European Union. The Western Balkan countries INCO-NET assists in developing the relationship between the EU and the WBCs in the area of science and technology (S&T). Throughout its total duration of six years (2008 to 2013), the project supports the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan countries in the facilitation of interaction between the Western Balkan countries, the EU Member States, states associated to the Framework Programmes for RTD and the European Commission. It is a strategic body designed to deal with European, multilateral and regional issues of science and technology policies in and with the WBCs. The Platform facilitates the interaction between the Western Balkan Countries, the EU member states, the candidate and potential candidate countries and other states associated to the Framework Programmes for RTD and the European Commission. Its main objective is to support the enhanced integration of the WBCs in the European Research Area. It is a strategic body to deal with European, multilateral and regional issues of Science and Technology policies in and with the WBCs.

It acts as an information exchange centre, clearing house for joint ideas and activities, and coordination forum for needs, suggestions and proposals of the WBCs to the European Commission, the EU27, candidate and potential candidate countries and the countries associated to FP7 (AC) and vice versa. In this spirit, the Platform continues and intensifies the progress achieved under the EU-Balkan Countries Action Plan on Science and Technology.

The coordinator of the initiative is ZSI, which is also a partner in the WBCInno project. The platform is an excellent tool for dissemination tool for projects related to

science, research and innovation in cooperation with and in the Western Balkan countries.

More information: www.wbc-inco.net

3.2. Venture Initiative in the Balkan Europe – VIBE

The VIBE project addresses the challenge of developing the innovation and entrepreneurship system across the SEE by enabling private investment into innovative entrepreneurial companies in partnership with smart public initiatives and investment. VIBE offers a transnational integrated approach by avoiding unnecessary duplication, mobilizing a critical mass of the regional investment, innovation agencies and providing efficient support to investors, policy makers and agencies with the aim to encourage high-growth of entrepreneurs across the Regions.

VIBE is an EU co-funded project in the framework of the ‘SEE Transnational Cooperation Programme’ with the primary objective to support facilitation of innovation and entrepreneurship in the region of South-East Europe. VIBE (www.vibeproject.eu) aims at fostering the creation and growth of innovative SMEs and start-up companies through a large array of actions, such as:

- 1) Mapping existing actors, activities and needs for coaching, financing and supporting innovative companies;
- 2) Coaching companies throughout the SEE region to fast-track investment and growth readiness of selected showcase companies in various industry sectors through a combination of peer group seminars/webinars, assignments and expert and peer group feedback;
- 3) Fostering financing networks by involving business angels, regional funds, corporate investors, banks and venture fund investors
- 4) Discussing, defining and testing pragmatic new potential investment incentives support actions by public support agencies especially at the cross-border (co-) investment level
- 5) Joining forces with the organizers of the highly successful bi-annual Balkan Venture Forum (BkVF). The BkVF (<http://www.balkanventureforum.org>) is the largest

venture capital, private equity and investment forum in the region. It rotates through the SEE region to bring together the relevant key actors of the region, Europe and beyond, and to enable successful match-making between innovative business ideas with investors, support agencies and policy makers.

The project duration is from January 2013 to December 2014.

Partners on the project include Faculty of Organizational Sciences from University of Belgrade FON, Belgrade Chamber of Commerce, Serbian Innovation Fund SIF in Serbia; Republic Agency for the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises RARS from BIH and Institute for Strategic Studies and Prognoses ISSP from Montenegro.

More information: www.vibeproject.eu

3.3. Mechanism for fostering innovation in South East Europe FINNO

Aim of the project is to contribute to better productivity, achieve more comparable level of innovativeness between countries in [South East Europe \(SEE\) region](#) by diminishing development differences in the field of innovation and provide a harmonised regulatory environment across the region. General objective is to create a communication platform for decision-makers supported by sustainable mechanism for fostering innovation in SEE area, and thus jointly contribute to the SEE region innovation performance.

Specific objectives are:

- to ensure sustainability of the developed mechanism by establishing FINNO Committee for Sustainable Cooperation and Fostering Innovation in SEE Region and assuring its functioning after project conclusion
- to contribute to more effective implementation of innovation supporting instruments in participating countries
- to prepare common recommendations for policy action and preparation of new or improved tailored innovation supporting instruments on the SEE level and in each participating country
- to increase capacity of key innovation actors (project partners and stakeholders) in SEE countries by implementing targeted workshops

- to monitor and compare innovation performance in SEE by developing a common methodology and analysing the results of the Technology Innovation Assessment Scoreboard (TIAS) in the region as a whole and in each participating country
- to raise visibility of the developed mechanism and assure dissemination of project results to different stakeholders.

By enhancing cooperation of key players in innovation support area the project contributes to the competitiveness, cohesion and stability in the region. By establishing a mechanism for fostering innovation the project contributes to common EU and SEE programme area goals of economic growth, development and job creation, positively affecting economic and taking into consideration all other aspects of sustainable development.

Partners on the project include National Agency for Regional Development NARR in Serbia, Ministry of Economic Affairs of Herzegbosnian Canton in Livno, BIH and Ministry of Science in Montenegro.

More information: www.finnoeurope.eu

REFERENCES

[1] WBC-INCO Net, list of current projects, www.wbc-inco.net

[2]

http://www.europa.rs/en/projects/projektne_aktivnosti/2663/Innovation+Fund+Approved+over+EUR+4.7+Million+in+Financing+through+the+Innovation+Serbia+Project.html#sthash.VQP08IW B.dpuf