

Towards 2020: New Horizons for RTD and Innovation in the Western Balkan Region

WBC-INCO.NET Final Conference & Brokerage Event

Tech Gate Vienna / Donau-City-Straße 1 / 1220 Vienna / Austria

Parallel Session 6: Knowledge and
Technology Transfer

S3 and WBC: Lessons learnt from a pilot exercise in FYR Macedonia

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Nikos Zaharis, SEERC Director

- ▶ The South East European Research Center (SEERC)
 - ▶ International, multidisciplinary, non-profit research centre established in Thessaloniki by the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, CITY College.
 - ▶ Mission: To support the development of SEE by conducting basic and applied research, in, and for the region.
 - ▶ Three research tracks:
 - ▶ Enterprise, Innovation and Regional Development
 - ▶ Information & Communication Technologies
 - ▶ Society and Human Development: Psychology, Politics, Sociology and Education
- ▶ Nikos Zaharis
 - ▶ More than 20 years experience as a consultant and manager working for industry and public sector organizations on issues ranging from management of innovation to economic and regional development in Greece and in a series of eastern European countries. Research interests: innovation policy, regional development and entrepreneurship. Currently, involved in the **EUHUB** (<http://www.euhub.eu/>) initiative and the **ICT2B** project which aims at transforming European funded ICT research into investment opportunities (FP7/ICT).



S3 for non-EU member states: why bother?

- ▶ Fact: RIS3 mandatory (ex-ante conditionality) for all EU MS and regions. Not mandatory for candidate and potential candidate countries.
- ▶ What can candidate and potential candidate countries gain?
 - ▶ Better address Chapter 25 (Science and research) of the EU Acquis; indirectly address Chapters 10 (Information Society and Media), 20 (Enterprise and industrial policy), 22 (Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments) and 26 (Education and Culture).
 - ▶ Align development strategies with the targets of EUROPE 2020, Innovation Union and HORIZON 2020
 - ▶ Benefit from synergies and multiplying effects with neighbouring EU MS.
 - ▶ Create a mechanism for continuously monitoring and updating Science, Technology and Innovation policy.
 - ▶ Enhance participation to HORIZON 2020 by better aligning national and IPA funds with HORIZON 2020
 - ▶ Recognise the fact that the problems (i.e. lack of cooperation between industry and research, brain-drain, poor policy coordination, low level of research results commercialization) are common with other EU countries.

The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: at a glance

- ▶ Performed based on the guide: “Getting started with the RIS3 Key” produced by Joanneum Research and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research.
- ▶ Timing: July – November 2013
- ▶ Performed by: The Ministry of Education and Science and SEERC
- ▶ Focus: Whole country
- ▶ Stakeholder meeting: October 21st 2013 in Skopje
- ▶ Consultation and training event: November 20-21st in Skopje.



The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: sources (1/3)

▶ **For the Enterprise sector:**

- ▶ Statistical data and sectoral distribution from the statistics office;
- ▶ Data on FDI
- ▶ WBC-INCO.NET report: “D8.48: Report on the mapping of the WBC Innovation infrastructures”;
- ▶ Reports on research, innovation and competitiveness of the country OECD, World Bank, ERAWATCH, INNOTREND, UNESCO, Cluster Observatory etc)



The FYROMacedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: sources (2/3)

- ▶ **For the Science/ knowledge and creative sector:**
 - ▶ Publication data from the Web of Science;
 - ▶ Data on FP7 participation;
 - ▶ Statistics on researchers per discipline and sector and statistics on research expenditures;
 - ▶ Data on brain drain and on scientists of the Diaspora;
 - ▶ National funding programs for R&D participation by discipline.
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The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: sources (3/3)

▶ **For the Government sector:**

- ▶ National Strategies on Research, Innovation, Competitiveness, Industrial policy, Education policy, etc;
- ▶ Relevant legislation (i.e. on IPR, innovation funding, technology transfer etc);
- ▶ Expenditure for innovation, research and education;
- ▶ impact assessment reports for past national and EU (IPA) funding programs.



The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: selected conclusions and recommendations

▶ Main points

- ▶ Four key national industries: (i) ICT, (ii) agribusiness & food processing, (iii) apparel, and (iv) automotive components plus the production of generic pharmaceuticals.
- ▶ Clustering and collaboration between firms is limited;
- ▶ A small number of innovative companies, operate in a technological discontinuum with the rest of the country's economy
- ▶ Small and fragmented research base. Unbalanced distribution of researchers by sector, age and ethnic origin;
- ▶ Continuously underfunded research infrastructures;
- ▶ Weak linkages between academia/research and enterprises;
- ▶ STI & HEI governance system does not reward scientific merit, excellence and achievement.



The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: selected conclusions and recommendations

▶ Key Challenges:

- ▶ Reversal of the country's extraordinary high rate of brain drain;
- ▶ Increase investment in R&D in the enterprise sector;
- ▶ Internationalize the economy so that it can increase its high tech export capacity
- ▶ Create a high quality academic, research and innovation environment
- ▶ Promote participation of the country's researchers to the ERA



The FYR Macedonia RIS3 self assessment case study: selected conclusions and recommendations

▶ Recommendations:

- ▶ A quality assurance system for higher education, based on international standards and methods,
 - ▶ Use the Diaspora as an opportunity of expanding the country's knowledge base (inbound mobility programmes).
 - ▶ Emphasise coordination of initiatives and programs and clearly define responsibilities among ministries, committees and agencies.
 - ▶ Establish a dialogue on an institutional level, on future programs and initiatives.
 - ▶ Establish a monitoring and evaluation system for current and future programs.
 - ▶ Create a more rigorous procedure for the evaluation of proposals submitted to national funding programs (use the EU's FP experience).
 - ▶ Use public procurement as an instrument to support innovation.
 - ▶ Encourage cross-border cooperation with neighbouring countries and especially the WBC including academia – enterprise cooperation across borders and the establishment of WBC-wide
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Creating synergies between IPA funds, national funds and HORIZON 2020

- ▶ National and IPA funds: aiming at Cohesion
- ▶ HORIZON 2020 funds: aiming at Excellence
 - ▶ However a wise distribution of National and IPA funds based on a solid, bottom-up Smart Specialization Strategy can create the conditions for enhancing HORIZON 2020 participation and creating multiplying effects
- ▶ WBC should engage in their own S3 exercises to define their specializations and use National and IPA funds to promote excellence in R&I within the defined specializations.
- ▶ Four principles should guide all interventions:
 1. Leverage private investment
 2. Embed an impact assessment element within the program/ initiative
 3. Ensure long-term sustainability of results
 4. Simplify procedures



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Thank You For Your Attention!

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