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PRESS RELEASE

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Western Balkans countries, Moldova sign up to Horizon 2020

Five Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia), and the Republic of Moldova today secured full access to the European Union's new seven year research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. The six countries signed association agreements in Brussels together with Robert-Jan Smits, Director-General for Research and Innovation at the European Commission. All six countries have experience of cooperation on research and innovation with the EU through the seventh framework programme (FP7), and are seeking to build on this under Horizon 2020.

European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: *"The agreements signed today are good for these countries and good for the European Union. Increased cooperation in research and innovation will create new opportunities for growth, competitiveness and jobs in all our economies. Association to Horizon 2020 will facilitate the mobility of excellent scientists, strengthen national research systems, and help the countries integrate into the European Research Area."*

Researchers, businesses and other research partners from the six countries are already well embedded in EU research projects and networks. The fact that all the countries are associating at the same time will also increase the opportunities for regional cooperation. To get the most out of Horizon 2020, all six countries need to build upon their experience of FP7 and strengthen national research and innovation capacities. Although participation of SMEs is still limited, the number of small enterprises engaging in research and innovation is increasing, which is another good step towards successful participation in Horizon 2020 given the programme's greater focus on the entire innovation chain, from the lab to the market.

The association agreements, which will apply retroactively as from 1 January 2014, will allow research and innovation entities from all five Western Balkan Countries and Moldova to take advantage of the funding opportunities offered under Horizon 2020 right from the start. Horizon 2020 runs from 2014 to 2020. Following today's signatures, 10 countries are now associated to Horizon 2020.

Background

The agreements were signed by the following representatives from the six countries:

Albania: Lindita NIKOLLA, Minister of Education and Culture and Sports

Bosnia and Herzegovina: H.E. Igor DAVIDOVIC, Ambassador and Head of Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Mr Abdilaqim ADEMI, Minister for Education and Science

Montenegro: Prof. Sanja VLAHOVIC, Minister of Science

Serbia: Dr Srdjan VERBIC, Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development

Moldova: Gheorghe DUCA, President of the National Academy of Sciences of Moldova

Under the seventh framework programme for research, FP7, the six countries participated as follows:

	Number of projects participated in	EU contribution received (in million euro)
Albania	35	2.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	45	3.1
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	105	11.5
Montenegro	52	4.2
Serbia	307	53.9
Moldova	55	3.9

More information

[Horizon 2020](#)
[Participant Portal](#)

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