

# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH *January 2015*

## HORIZON 2020

In December, Commissioner Moedas travelled to South Africa on the occasion of the World AIDS Day. Back in Brussels, the Commissioner gave a press conference following the publication of the 2014 EU Industrial R&D [Investment Scoreboard](#).



« *Horizon 2020 is already engaging more businesses than ever before, but now we're ready to step up our game.* »

Carlos Moedas

For full press release please visit: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-14-2342\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-2342_en.htm)

*Dear Reader,*

We are pleased to report that twelve countries are now associated to Horizon 2020. The Faroe Islands and Switzerland both signed in December an association agreement to the H2020 programme.

ABC Australia recently invited Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation at DG Research and Innovation to present the benefits of research collaboration and the opportunities Horizon 2020 can offer to the world. You can watch the video of the interview [here](#).

We take the opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year!

Best regards,

The Editors

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## Commissioner Moedas' visit to South Africa

Commissioner Moedas' first visit outside the European Union since he took office as the EU Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation was to South Africa (SA) (30 November - 1 December 2014). The Commissioner attended several events such as a breakfast meeting on EU-South Africa cooperation in marine research, the ERAfrica showcase, a dinner with South African women working in science, and had bilateral meetings with several African Ministers and other global health stakeholders. The thirteenth meeting of the EU-SA Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee also took place during the visit and was co-chaired by Robert-Jan Smits, Director-General DG RTD and Phil Mjwara, Director-General of the Department of Science and Technology (DST). Building on the success of the first programme, EDCTP2 (the second European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership Programme) was launched in Cape Town on 2 December 2014 and will work with a budget of approximately €2 billion over the next ten years to which the EU will contribute €683 million from Horizon 2020. The EDCTP Association now includes 13 European countries and 11 African countries. Mali, Burkina Faso, Sweden and Switzerland are about to join as well. The Commissioner visited one of the EDCTP-funded tuberculosis clinical trial sites in the township of Khayelitsha and together with the South African Minister for Science and Technology Ms Pandor, he addressed a group of adolescents on the occasion



Photo: Commissioner Moedas and SA Minister for Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor

of World AIDS Day at the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation Centre in the township of Masiphumulele, a centre supported by EDCTP. At the bilateral meeting with Minister Pandor, the progress made was welcomed and joint commitment was expressed to taking the partnership to the next level. The opening of the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance to the Southern Atlantic, energy research, and regional cooperation with the African Union (AU) were discussed. The recently concluded EU-Africa Summit 2014 endorsed the conclusions of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue. This endorsement suggests advancement towards a possible long-term, jointly-funded research and innovation partnership which will focus first on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture. At a breakfast meeting on EU-South Africa cooperation in marine research, the Commissioner heard presentations on three existing cooperation initiatives: FP7-funded projects PREFACE and PHARMASEA and the twinning initiative between France and SA, ICEMASA. The Commissioner

also visited SA's research vessel, the Algulhas II. The Commissioner and Minister were presented with the outcomes of the ERAfrica initiative. The concept and mechanisms for ERAfrica were developed jointly by the European and African ministries and research councils involved including: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, South Africa. The EC supported the initiative through an FP7-funded ERANET, but the funding for the research projects came from the contributions of the 15 European and African partner countries totalling almost €11 million.

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### Did you know that...



In this era of virtual communication, the Commission is very active on social media. Both Commissioner Moedas and Innovation Union have dedicated Facebook pages and Twitter accounts where you can follow the latest news and events. Get connected to Research and Innovation!

Facebook: [Carlos Moedas - Innovation Union](https://www.facebook.com/CarlosMoedas)

Twitter: [@moedas](https://twitter.com/moedas) [@innovationunion](https://twitter.com/innovationunion) [@eu\\_h2020](https://twitter.com/eu_h2020)



Photo: Commissioner Moedas at the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation Centre

## The Faroe Islands associated to Horizon 2020

On 17 December 2014, the agreement associating the Faroe Islands to Horizon 2020 was co-signed on the EU side by Mr Marco Peronaci, Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy to the EU, and Mr Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for research, science and innovation, and on behalf of the Faroe Islands, by Mr Kaj Leo Holm Johannesen, the Prime Minister. The association means that researchers and research organisations from the Faroe Islands can participate on an equal footing with research entities from the EU Member States in Horizon 2020 projects.

The Faroe Islands have been associated to the previous framework programme for research and innovation – FP7 – since 1 January 2010. The participation of the Faroe Islands has been very successful despite having only become associated half way through the Programme. During this period, the Faroe Islands have gained access to large international research networks, and the European research community has benefited from the excellent input of Faroese researchers. The areas where participation has been most noticeable include food, agriculture and fisheries, biotechnology and environment, in particular marine environment, aquaculture and climate change. As a Northern neighbour to the Union, the Faroe Islands are strategically located in the gateway between the Norwegian Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean. Their association will allow research entities and researchers from the Faroes to get access to the biggest public research and innovation programme in the world. By combining forces, we will be able to more efficiently address societal challenges that affect us all, not least in the field of climate change and the sustainable utilisation of marine resources.



Photo: (l-r) Mr Kaj Leo Johannesen, Prime Minister of the Faroes; Mr Marco Peronaci, Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy to the EU; and Mr Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation.

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## Switzerland renewed its association to Horizon 2020, Euratom and ITER

On 5 December 2014, an agreement associating Switzerland to parts of Horizon 2020, Euratom and ITER was signed by Ms Stefania Giannini, Minister for Education and Research, Italy, on behalf of the EU, by Mr Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, European Commission, on behalf of Euratom and by Mr Johann N. Schneider-Ammann, Federal Councillor, Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of Switzerland, on behalf of the Swiss Confederation. Commenting on the signature of the agreement, Commissioner Carlos Moedas said: «This agreement is of paramount importance for our scientific communities. EU researchers benefit from access to excellent Swiss research facilities and institutions. At the same time, access to schemes for researcher mobility like Marie Skłodowska-Curie or to excellent research in programmes like ERC and Future and Emerging Technologies is vital for the Swiss. Furthermore, with this agreement Switzerland renews its commitment towards our long standing and fruitful collaboration.» Subject to the conclusion of this Agreement in 2015, Swiss legal entities participate, from 15 September 2014, with an associated country status, in actions under the «Excellent Science» pillar of Horizon 2020 (i.e. European Research Council, Future and Emerging Technologies, Research Infrastructures and Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions) and actions under the specific objective “Spreading excellence and widening participation”. In all other parts of Horizon 2020, Switzerland will be considered as an international partner country whose entities are not automatically eligible for funding. The participation of Switzerland in the above-mentioned parts of Horizon 2020 and in the Euratom Programme and ITER as an associated country will remain valid until 31 December 2016. Beyond 2016, association to these programmes will depend on Swiss measures to ensure the non-discrimination of Croatian citizens and researchers. If Switzerland resolves the issue of the free movement of persons by February 2017, the association will de facto expand to the whole of Horizon 2020, including the parts not yet covered. Otherwise, the whole agreement will be automatically terminated.



Photo: (l-r) Johann Schneider-Ammann, Stefania Giannini and Carlos Moedas

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Photo: Participants to the EU-Australia Innovation Dialogue

## EU-Australia Science and Technology Agreement 20 years old

On 1 December 2014 a reception was held at the Old Parliament House in Canberra to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EU-Australia S&T Agreement. This is the first such agreement to be signed with a non-European country and so it was an important occasion in the history of EU-Australian relations. HE Sem Fabrizi, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Australia, made a range of observations putting the importance of the research and innovation relationship within the broader political perspective. Professor Ian Chubb AC, Australia's Chief Scientist, underlined the central part the EU plays in Australia's international research engagement, being Australia's leading research partner. Finally, Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation in DG RTD, highlighted the importance of the research relationship to the EU and the opportunities that Horizon 2020 presents for the future. The formalities ended with a toast to ongoing and ever deepening science and technology collaboration between Australia and the EU.

Australia is a major research partner for the EU with real research excellence capabilities. For example under FP7 there were some 169 signed grant agreements involving 194 participants from Australia and 2,924 participants in total with the projects benefiting from over €900 million in EU funding. Overall, Australia is ranked 9<sup>th</sup> by the number of participations by third countries in FP7 and 3<sup>rd</sup> for high income

countries, which normally have to fund their own researchers in collaborative projects. In addition, the European Research Council has provided grants to 23 Australian principal investigators and under the Marie Curie mobility scheme support was provided for 189 Marie Curie fellows and 71 International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES) projects involving Australia.

This celebration was followed by the thirteenth EU-Australia Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC) meeting. The JSTCC is the management committee of the Agreement and was a productive meeting. In addition to specific actions in the areas of health, infrastructure, energy and bioeconomy research, other important outcomes of the JSTCC were agreement to update the bilateral cooperative agenda in the first half of 2015 and to possibly hold a joint high level conference on research and innovation in Australia in the second half of 2015.

An innovation dialogue was also held with the theme of enhanced EU-Australia research-business collaboration and impact. This dialogue provided an opportunity for Australia and Europe to build on the previous two JSTCC innovation policy discussions held in 2010 and 2012. The dialogue covered policies and flagship initiatives to promote a business-led innovation culture, including enterprise networks and cluster models for driving connections between the business and research communities. Australia and the EU shared their knowledge and experience in implementing cross-jurisdictional

initiatives for enhancing innovation capacity. The discussion also covered best practices for measuring and presenting the impact of industry-research collaboration. With both the new Commission led by President Juncker and the Australian Government having a renewed commitment to research and innovation and drivers of jobs and growth a wide-range of shared policy interests were identified during the dialogue.



Photo: (l-r): Dr Rob Porteous, Head of Division, Science Policy and Governance Division, Department of Industry; Professor Ian Chubb AC, Australia's Chief Scientist; Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, Brussels; and HE Sem Fabrizi, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to Australia

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## Horizon 2020 Information Event at the University of Melbourne

On 4 December 2014, the University of Melbourne EU Centre on Shared Complex Challenges hosted the session with a focus on medical research to which around 120 researchers and research administrators attended. In addition to hearing from Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, and Armand Beuf, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Desk from DG RTD, on the opportunities to participate in Horizon 2020, Dr Leonie Walsh, Lead Scientist of Victoria spoke about the importance of international collaboration to the state of Victoria and the programmes the Victorian state government has to support research and innovation. Dr Nicholas Johnson from the National Health and Medical Research Council provided details on the \$A4 million (€2.7 million) per annum NHMRC-EU Collaboration Research Grants Scheme to fund medical research collaboration under H2020 in selected topics under the Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing Societal Challenge calls, with Dr Adrian Collins, International Research Coordinator at the University of Melbourne highlighting other sources of Australian support for H2020. These were supported by the examples of previous collaborative experience and its research impact. Professor Richard Sinnott, Director eResearch at the University of Melbourne spoke about the ENSAT-CANCER project, where he provided key support for the development of the ENS@T databases and their unified, security-driven portal. While Dr Stuart Ralph from the Bio 21 Molecular Science and Biotechnology Institute shared his positive experience with MEPHITIS (Targeting Protein Synthesis in the Apicoplast and Cytoplasm of Plasmodium) project which is looking at potential new target for antimalarial drugs and with the Australian participants benefiting from a NHMRC grant. The event concluded with a lively Q&A session.



Photo: Cristina Russo presenting in Melbourne at the EU Centre on Shared Complex Challenges

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## H2020 presented in Sydney

On 5 December 2014, the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer hosted a session in Sydney with close to 200 attendees. Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, and Armand Beuf, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Desk from DG RTD, were joined by HE Sem Fabrizi, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Australia who provided a broader political perspective. Mr Mark Paterson, Secretary of the NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services spoke about the importance of international engagement to the state of New South Wales, while Mr Cameron Slayter from the federal Department of Industry explained the federal government's initiatives in research and innovation and the importance of research collaboration with the EU. Again the audience benefited from some very interesting case studies presented by their peers involved in FP7 projects. These included Associate Professor Matthias Klugmann from the Translational Neuroscience Facility at the University of New South Wales, who spoke about his experience with the LEUKOTREAT (Therapeutic challenge in Leukodystrophies: Translational and ethical research towards clinical trials) project; Associate Professor Daniela Traini from the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research at the University of Sydney, who was involved in the INFORM (Integrating Nanomaterials in Formulations) coordinating action; and finally Dr Tracey Hanley, Deputy Head, Life Sciences, Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) who was a participant in the ACSEPT (Actinide reCycling by SEparation and Transmutation) collaborative project. These were followed a very good Q&A session. While in Australia, Cristina Russo was interviewed on the national broadcaster's (ABC) breakfast programme where she clearly articulated that Horizon 2020 is open to all, including Australian researchers, and the importance of linking research and innovation.



Photo: Keynote speakers at the Horizon 2020 information event in Sydney (l-r) HE Sem Fabrizi, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, Delegation of the European Union to Australia; Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, Brussels; and Mark Paterson, Secretary of the NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services

## Fourth EU-New Zealand Joint Committee

The 4<sup>th</sup> European Union-New Zealand Joint Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) in Wellington on 8-9 December 2014. The meeting was co-chaired by Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, DG Research & Innovation and Dr Prue Williams, General Manager, Science Investments (MBIE). The meeting also included officials from the European Commission, MBIE, the New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries, and Callaghan Innovation, as well as representatives from the New Zealand research sector, the Royal Society of New Zealand and several European Joint Programming Initiatives. The EU and New Zealand regard research and innovation as a core area of cooperation within the broader EU-New Zealand relationship which was highlighted through the tripartite declaration made by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission and the Prime Minister of New Zealand in The Hague in March 2014. A key pillar of the European Union's current seven-year research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, addresses the "Societal Challenges" which face Europe. These priorities correspond closely with the National Science Challenges being implemented by the New Zealand Government. Against this background both parties agreed on the need to focus cooperation on key strategic areas of mutual benefit. During the 9 December Plenary Meeting, the framework conditions for cooperation in research and innovation were discussed. Both parties noted the general openness of their respective programmes, and the absence of any significant barriers to co-operation. They also welcomed the action-oriented approach taken by the New Zealand funders and research communities towards financially supporting New Zealand researchers' participation in Horizon 2020.



Photo: Group picture of participants to the 4<sup>th</sup> EU-New Zealand Committee

In their joint communiqué, the two Parties decided to pursue their bi lateral collaboration in health, research infrastructures, resilient cities, bio economy and building innovation linkages as well as to focus on 'key strategic areas of mutual benefit'. The EU reiterated its invitation to New Zealand in the field of health to join GloPID-R (Global Research Collaboration on Infectious

Diseases preparedness) and GACD (Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases) and raised the possibility of cooperation in the field of sustainable energy, in particular on renewable/geothermal energy. The two Parties also agreed that greater efforts should be made to support the involvement of New Zealand and European industry partners in bilateral research projects, building on Callaghan Innovation's recent successful application to join the Enterprise Europe Network, and the MBIE counterpart fund for New Zealand participation in the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Staff Exchange scheme. The JSTCC plenary meeting was preceded on 8<sup>th</sup> December by a wider discussion on Grand Challenges Cooperation and the Horizon 2020 Programme at the headquarters of the Royal Society of New Zealand and a dinner offered by the MBIE where Director Russo promoted Horizon 2020, underlined its worldwide openness and its international cooperation strategy. Other high level meetings actively prepared and supported by Michalis Rokas and John Leslie, respectively Chargé d'Affaires and Counsellor at the EU Delegation in Wellington and by MBIE gave Director Russo the opportunity to meet with Sir Peter Gluckman, Chief Science Advisor to Prime Minister John Key, and other CEOs to discuss further perspectives of the EU-NZ bilateral collaboration. She was also interviewed by the well-known journalist Colin James and highlighted the profile of EU-NZ research and innovation collaboration and promoted the Horizon 2020 programme.

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## EU accession negotiations with Serbia

On 1 December 2014 Serbia presented its legislation, actions and measures taken on research and innovation policy at national level. Serbia demonstrated good capacity in participation to the EU FP7 research programme and is well prepared for Horizon 2020. On R&I policy, Serbia has taken many actions in line with the European Research Area and Innovation Union. We stressed the importance of further efforts, notably on the ERA's key priority 1 on funding of research at national level and the private sector's increased level of investment in R&I. Step 2 is the preparation of the screening report to be presented to the Council in the course of 2015.



Photo: Accession team on Chapter 25: Serbia delegation, DG NEAR and DG RTD in Brussels on 1 December 2014

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## EU Delegation to Russia presents Horizon 2020 at a series of events on international cooperation in research and innovation

In the course of December 2014, the EU Delegation to Russia has used several occasions to advertise and explain Horizon 2020.

### Smart cities: Russia tour by French companies

On 1 December 2014, the EU Delegation to Russia participated in the programme of the first day of a weeklong tour of several French companies dedicated to developing cooperation with Russian counterparts in areas related to the 'smart cities' concept. At a special briefing session hosted by the French Embassy in Moscow, the EU Delegation to Russia informed the participants about cooperation opportunities offered by the Horizon 2020 programme and more generally about EU-Russia cooperation.

### Information seminar by the German House of Research and Innovation

On 4 December 2014, the German House of Research and Innovation (DWIH) in Moscow held an information seminar for the heads of international cooperation departments of Russia's leading universities. Over 20 participants from seven Russian regions attended the event. Representatives of the German Embassy to Russia and German research and research funding organisations informed the participants on the existing opportunities to further enhance cooperation between Russia and Germany in the areas of research and higher education. The EU Delegation to Russia widened the geographical scope of the seminar by presenting Horizon 2020 and the opportunities it provides for research cooperation with the whole of Europe and beyond.

### Seminar on the development of international cooperation in the areas of education, science and innovation

On 10-12 December 2014, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Russian Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation held a seminar on international cooperation in education, science and innovation in the premises of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. The programme of the seminar included plenary reports on the implementation of Russia's international cooperation with subsequent detailed discussion of success stories. The three-day event was attended by over 700 participants. The EU Delegation to Russia participated in two round-tables and delivered a presentation about the Horizon 2020 programme.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION (ALL PAGE)

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## EU-Russia Year of Science 2014 Twelve months of EU-Russia cooperation in science, higher education and innovation - Closing conference

On 25 November 2014, a scientific conference in Brussels closed the bilateral [EU-Russia Year of Science](#), exactly one year after its launch in Moscow on 25 November 2013. The purpose of the Year of Science was to showcase the multifaceted nature of cooperation between Europe and Russia in science, technology, higher education and innovation, to accentuate past achievements and to point towards possible collaboration opportunities for mutual benefit. With more than 150 joint European-Russian events having taken place all over Europe and Russia throughout the year, the Year of Science put into focus the diversity of links in research, innovation and higher education between the EU, its Member States and the Russian Federation. These events provided an opportunity for individual researchers, enterprises, laboratories, research and higher education institutions to present their scientific achievements as well as to submit their ideas for future projects to a broader public. As a result, many partnerships between European and Russian researchers have been continued or established. The conference participants noted that the Year of Science coincided with the parallel start of the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020 and the new Russian Federal Targeted Programme "Research & Development in Priority Areas of Development of the Russian Scientific & Technological Complex 2014-2020". Both programmes share the goal of increasing economic competitiveness by supporting forward-looking exploratory science and innovative market-oriented research, and offer numerous opportunities for reciprocal collaboration. The events organised as part of the EU-Russia Year of Science served as a timely reminder that science and innovation are essential ingredients of any approach that seeks to address today's global societal challenges and demonstrated the important contribution international collaborative research and innovation can make towards solving them.



Photo: Group picture at the closing conference of the EU-Russia Year of Science

## 48 hours to Save the World!

The European Commission, together with funders from France, Spain, Canada, the U.S., Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Thailand and Korea, has founded the 'Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness'



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(GloPID-R). The objective of this network of funders is to ensure that there is a coordinated research response within 48 hours of a significant new/re-emerging epidemic outbreak. The current Ebola crisis has demonstrated that collaboration between global funders is essential to fight epidemics. Severe epidemics threaten the population of the entire planet and it is important to invest in research before a health crisis occurs. Unlike the public health response coordinated by the WHO, there is no forum for the coordination of an international research response. However, the development of diagnostics, epidemiological studies and clinical trials requires a rapid international response. GloPID-R ensures that joint work during 'peacetime' on regulatory, financial and administrative bottlenecks will prepare the ground for constructive collaboration when an outbreak occurs. GloPID-R will not coordinate a public health response and it is not a new funding organisation. It aims to make the work of its members more effective through collaboration.

Specific objectives are:

- to address scientific, legal, ethical and financial challenges;
- to implement a 'One Health' approach with close cooperation between human and animal health researchers;
- to establish a Strategic Agenda for research responses;
- to connect infectious disease research networks;
- to actively involve developing countries.

Since the initiative was launched in February 2013 it has progressed to a point where it will engage its full potential from January 2015. At this time the secretariat of the group, selected from an open call for proposals under H2020, will be in place. An agreement on governance was reached at the last meeting in September 2014 in Montreal and membership requires neither a legal nor a financial commitment. Currently the members are engaged in close collaboration on Ebola research with regular updates on activities as well as coordination meetings. In the coming months the scientists will continue to develop the Strategic Agenda and the next meeting will take place in 2015 in South Africa. GloPID-R welcomes funding organisations interested in joining this effort!

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## Helix Nebula Initiative & PICSE: Enabling a Dynamic Cloud Ecosystem in Europe

Over 50 managers, cloud providers, policy makers, procurers and researchers dealing with the adoption of cloud computing met recently at the European Space Agency, ESA ESRI, in the workshop organized by the Helix Nebula Initiative - HNI and the newly-launched project, Procurement Innovation for Cloud Services in Europe - PICSE. Bob Jones, CERN, co/coordinator of HNI and PICSE, opened the event stressing that the HNI consortium's motivation has facilitated the shift from a 'cloud active' to 'a cloud productive' phase. The partnership continues its commitment to offer an open, secure and trusted Cloud Computing Infrastructure for European science, business and society, and to become a leader in a highly competitive global market. He also highlighted that the HNI future priorities are to open up the marketplace to a wider number of suppliers and to achieve the transparency that a marketplace needs to guarantee (through the identification of uptake criteria and of an independent broker).

With the PICSE project holding its launch event, a topic on everyone's lips was the procurement of cloud services. PICSE has come about thanks to the HNI experience which demonstrated that cloud services are suitable for many scientific workloads performed by public research organizations that are now ready to consider procuring commercial cloud services on a significant scale. PICSE will set up a European Procurers' Platform to advance the understanding of the issues surrounding procurement of cloud services and aim to become the central point for the public sector Pre Commercial Procurement (PCP) and Public Procurement of Innovation (PPI) community. During the event, the Cloud for Europe initiative also explained how PCP simplifies the adoption of cloud computing by the public sector.

The event concluded with a panel discussion and resulted in a set of recommendations:

- In approaching the procurement of cloud services, a good practice for organizations new to this procedure is to start with a pilot scheme that could be a pre-commercial procurement action or a procurement of a representative amount of cloud services.
- Administrative barriers to procurement of cloud services still remain, with a very fragmented legal framework existing.
- Procurers, and all involved stakeholders, need to be educated on procurement best practice and on the different opportunities available to start procuring cloud services.

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## High Tech initiatives in the North of Israel

The Tel Aviv Delegation's RDI section organised a visit on 15 December 2014 for the EU Member State Trade and Science Counsellors to learn more about Israeli hi tech initiatives in the north of the country. The counsellors first visited the [TerraLab Ventures](#) incubator in [Yokneam](#) where they met with four innovative start-ups supported by TerraLab, a venture capital fund, which focuses on «cleantech» and the development of innovative technologies with a positive environmental impact. The counsellors then continued to the [Nazareth Industrial Park](#) where they met with representatives from [Tsofen](#), an Arab-Jewish organization promoting the integration of Israel's Arab citizens into its hi-tech industry, and with the Nazareth-based [Alpha Omega](#) neuroscience technology company. Through the [Partnership for Peace Programme](#), the EU is supporting a Tsofen project to promote cooperation between key Arab and Jewish stakeholders - municipal, business, government and academic - to build effective engagement between the Arab communities of the [Triangle region](#) and Israel's technology industry sector. The goal is to create a model for economic sustainability, a more dignified quality of life for Arab communities nation-wide, and a more even playing field for Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.



Photo: EU Science and Trade Counsellors at the TerraLab Incubator

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## Mapping the Atlantic Seabed

An accurate map of the Atlantic is needed to underpin ocean observation, predictive modelling and forecasting, which will enable sustainable resources and improved risk management. As the oceans are effectively our planet's metabolism, it is crucial that we map them to make the world a more meaningful, navigable, transformable, and manageable place in which to live. This was the subject of discussions at an event held in Dublin Castle on 2 December 2014 co-organised by DG Research & Innovation at the European Commission and the Irish Marine Institute. The European Union - Canada - United States "Atlantic Seabed Mapping Workshop" was part of the activities foreseen to implement the [Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation](#), signed by the European Union, Canada and the United States in May 2013. The event was attended by high level scientists and government officials from Europe, Canada and the United States, and also from Brazil. A key result of the workshop is the immediate launch of a Canada-EU-US Working Group to advance the work of mapping the Atlantic seabed.



Photo: Atlantic Seabed Mapping Workshop, Dublin Castle, 2 December with high level speakers L-R: John Bell, European Commission, Ricardo Serrao Santos MEP, Stephen Locke Geological Survey of Canada, Craig McLean National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Peter Heffernan Marine Institute of Ireland and Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food & the Marine

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## HORIZON 2020 - publication

**A global actor in search of a strategy** - Between multilateralism and bilateralism

This publication draws on the key findings of 8 projects conducted in the area of Social Sciences and Humanities to discuss the advances in EU bilateral and multilateral activities beyond the Union's immediate neighbourhood and discussing the EU's role as a global actor.

It is available for download [here](#)

## 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting under the Euratom-Ukraine Cooperation Agreement on Nuclear Safety

The first meeting of the Ukraine-Euratom Coordinating Committee (CC-1) under the Cooperation Agreement in the field of Nuclear Safety took place in Kyiv on 13 November 2014. The Ukrainian delegation was headed by Mr Grigoriy Mulyar, Director at the Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine, and the Euratom delegation was headed by Mr Alejandro Zurita, head of Sector on International Agreements of Euratom. A visit was also paid to the Chernobyl reactor and the construction of its new sarcophagus. The CC discussed the nuclear priorities established in the Ukrainian «Energy Strategy to 2030»: Increase of the nuclear capacity with 3 further nuclear reactors planned for 2030; Safe lifetime extension of operating reactors; Preparation of reactors' decommissioning; Management of spent fuel and radioactive waste and Diversification of nuclear fuel supply. The latter is very relevant in view of the present dependence on Russian nuclear fuel of Ukrainian VVER reactors, and fits with the topic of the current Call NFRP16 'Supporting the licensing of Western nuclear fuel for reactors of VVER design operating in the EU'. The CC confirmed the Ukrainian interest to become associated to the Euratom Programme (2014-2018). Ukraine has a good track record with 12 participations of 8 entities in 10 European consortia (mainly in safety and radiological areas) during the period 2007-2013, making it the second non-EU State in terms of both participation and EC contribution. The CC endorsed the Ukraine-Euratom Fission Work Programme, composed of three pillars: Programmatic cooperation; Completion of mapping of collaborative activities between Ukrainian and European entities; and Association process of Ukraine to the Euratom Programme.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## EU Ambassador to China met Chinese Minister for Science and Technology

On 5 December, Hans-Dietmar Schweisgut, Ambassador of the European Union to China, met Wan Gang, Chinese Minister for Science and Technology, in a courtesy call at the Ministry of Science and Technology. The meeting took place in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. Both sides appreciated the importance of science, technology and innovation cooperation as an important element for strengthening the EU-China strategic partnership and expressed satisfaction with the achievements so far. Minister Wan and Ambassador Schweisgut expressed their hope for the successful continuation of this good cooperation and reaffirmed their commitment to the EU-China Innovation Cooperation Dialogue (ICD) with the second ICD meeting to be held back to back with the 17<sup>th</sup> EU-China Summit. They also exchanged their ideas on working together towards new mechanisms for collaboration including possible instruments to strengthen EU-China innovation

cooperation. Finally, the meeting encouraged both sides to find solutions to harmonize timelines and budgetary cycles which would then allow future joint funding of research and innovation projects in areas of common interest and of joint priorities.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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EU Delegation to China

## CONCERT-Japan successfully concluded

On 1-2 December 2014, the FP7 funded ERA-NET project **CONCERT-Japan** was concluded by a final conference, organised by TÜBİTAK in İzmir, Turkey. The conference was attended by 40 participants from the R&D funding organisations involved in the project. The funding organisations from Europe and Japan came together in the first day of the Final Conference, which was followed by a Steering Committee meeting of the project and a Kick-off Meeting of the European Interest Group for Japan on the second day. CONCERT-Japan «Connecting and Coordinating European Science and Technology Development with Japan», is an ERA-NET project funded under the International Cooperation area of the Capacities Programme of EU 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research and Technology Development (FP7). The main objective of the project has been to promote effective and coordinated science and technology cooperation between European countries and Japan with a view to further expanding and harmonising already existing cooperation between them. The CONCERT-Japan project started on 01/01/2011 and had a duration of 4 years and a budget of €2 Million. The project consortium included 13 ministries and research funding organisations from Japan, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey. The Coordinator of the project was the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK). Through CONCERT-Japan, 2 Europe-Japan joint calls have been launched. In 2012, a **pilot joint call** was launched in the thematic fields of efficient energy storage and distribution, and resilience against disasters. 9 research projects involving 41 research teams/partners from Europe and Japan were selected for funding. In February 2014, a **second joint call** was launched in the field of photonic manufacturing, resulting in 4 collaborative research projects with 15 research teams/partners.



Photo: Participants at the final conference of CONCERT-Japan, İzmir, Turkey

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## Upcoming events

### 'Destination Europe' Conferences

12 February 2015

San José - California

Click [here](#) to access this event

20 February 2015

Boston - Massachusetts

Click [here](#) to access this event

### MedSpring - Euro-Mediterranean Brokerage and Venturing Event on Research and Innovation

24-25 February 2015

Berlin - Germany

More [information](#) - [Registration](#)

### ASEAN EU Science, Technology and Innovation Days

15-19 March 2015

Paris - France

Click [here](#)

## H2020 Calls update

### Sustainable Food Security

Topic: Biological contamination of crops and the food chain

Call: H2020-SFS-2015-2

Closing date: 03-02-2015 - 17:00

(Brussels local time)

For more information on this call and other calls click [here](#)

## Dedicated information events on Horizon 2020 in Russia

On 3 December 2014, the Russian National Contact Points for Health, Bio-technologies and for Environment held a joint information day devoted to opportunities for international cooperation in the area of life sciences, in particular through the Horizon 2020 programme. The event took place in the premises of the Medical Sciences Centre of Moscow State University and attracted over 100 participants representing Russian universities, research institutes and private companies. On 12 December 2014, the Russian National Contact Point for Research Infrastructures organised an information seminar «Basic research in European and Russian programmes of support for research and innovation». The event was hosted by the Moscow Institute for Steel and Alloys (MISiS), one of Russia's leading national research universities, and was primarily devoted to opening opportunities under the Excellent Science pillar of the Horizon 2020 programme. Around 70 participants attended the seminar, which was broadcast live online. The Delegation of the European Union to the Russian Federation opened both events with general overview presentations of Horizon 2020, which were followed by more detailed and thematically focused presentations by Russian National Contact Points covering different aspects related to the participation of Russian researchers in the programme.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## EURAXESS Links China celebrates 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Researchers' Nights

EURAXESS Links China celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Researchers' Nights in Beijing and Shanghai. The latest edition of the "Researchers' Nights", regularly organised by EURAXESS Links China, took place in Beijing and Shanghai on 4 and 9 December. In the latter, the networking event for European, Chinese and international researchers also presented an opportunity to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the network. The Researchers' Night in Beijing, co-organized for the fourth time with two research communication organisations, ThinkIN China and Understanding Science, took place at the Steps Bar in Beijing's famous university area of Wudaokou. Once again, the event was met with much enthusiasm by researchers in all fields and of all nationalities based in Beijing. They all gathered to enjoy an evening of presentations and friendly exchanges about Sino-European cooperation and research in China.



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*This page provides a regular update on recent Research and Innovation (R&I) policy news from our network of R&I Counsellors in the EU delegations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Russia, the United States (US) and the African Union (AU).*

*With a particular focus on international cooperation, different policy related themes are highlighted in relation to a number of countries to illustrate trends, similarities and different approaches. This issue covers policy news from Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Israel, Japan and Korea.*

### Policy News from the Delegations

The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and the Ministry of Scientific Research in **Egypt** have agreed to establish a [Technological Innovation and Electronic Industries Complex](#) in the Technology Zone in Cairo. The Innovation Complex will aim to provide the climate and the scientific, research, marketing, and investment tools necessary to support innovation and entrepreneurship in the fields of nanotechnology and electronics. It will promote cooperation between industry, universities and research centres.

In **Israel**, plans to create an Israeli National Authority for Research, Development and Technological Innovation moved forward when the draft 2015 budget and accompanying Omnibus Arrangements Law, which included the Authority, passed first reading in the Parliament. Less than one month later, however, the Parliament dissolved itself. This is expected to result in delays in the establishment of the Authority.

In **Korea**, the published government report "National R&D Performance Analysis Report 2013" shows both a quantitative and qualitative improvement in the performance of national research and development (R&D) programmes over the period 2009-2013, notably a 27% increase in patent registrations and 47.2% increase in citation counts. Separately, among the outcomes of the recently concluded [2014 International Telecommunication Union Plenipotentiary Conference](#) in Buzan, with

150 countries having signed its Final Acts, the new resolution - [Connect 2020](#) - was adopted to set out a clear vision and common objectives for the future of ICT.

**Japan** ranks first on Thomas Reuters' list of the [2014 Top 100 Global Innovators](#). All organisations with 100 or more innovation patents from the most recent five years were included in the analysis, and among the top 100, 39 are based in Japan. Separately, a new research building of the International Research Institute of Disaster Science ([IRIDeS](#)) has been completed. Based on the lessons from the 2011 Great East Japan (Tohoku) earthquake and tsunami disaster, IRIDeS aims to become a world centre for the study of disasters and disaster mitigation. The new building is equipped with the latest resources such as systems to help visualise flood inundation in 3D. It also has equipment that will simulate the situation immediately after an earthquake using special goggles.

**Canada's** global competitiveness ranking is falling. Canada was outpaced in the latest [World Economic Forum's \(WEF\) competitiveness rankings](#), falling to 15<sup>th</sup> place of 144 national economies in 2014-2015. There were a few key drivers to the latest numbers: underperformance on capacity for innovation, business sophistication and engaging in global markets. Although the government has made positive steps in terms of funding business development, Canada's private sector fails to embrace aspects of innovation that would boost its competitiveness, like stepping up spending on research and development, and taking the risk of expanding into broader markets outside Canada's borders. On the

positive side, Canada continues to show strong numbers on health, education and institutions, as well as labour market efficiency.

The cooperation between **Brazil** and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) has strengthened. In December, two events were held in Brazil related to the EU-Brazil Sector Dialogue Support Facility actions between the JRC and the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation of Brazil. The first was the Oil and Gas Offshore Safety seminar in Rio de Janeiro, aiming at the exchange of information, methods and practices and use of best safety technologies, systems and standards in the offshore exploitation of oil and gas. The second seminar was held in Brasilia, to present the results of a study on Intellectual Property related to EU-Brazil Cooperation in Science and Technology. In addition, the JRC hosted a first [visit on scientific cooperation with Latin American countries](#). The visitors had the opportunity to learn about JRC research in priority areas for the Community of the Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and to discuss ongoing bilateral cooperation and possible new joint activities.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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