

HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION...*(continued from page 6)*

On the other hand, the level of Hungarian participation in the Marie Curie Host Fellowship scheme has not been satisfactory in FP5. A poor level of participation in this scheme has been characteristic not only for Hungary, but also for most CEE regions. The Marie Curie Host Fellowship scheme has been obviously dominated by the United Kingdom, France and Germany, which are traditionally popular target countries of the mobility flow.

One of the main reasons why participation fell behind expectations may be due to certain restrictions that the associated countries were faced with during FP5. Namely, researchers from associated countries were only allowed to carry out their Marie Curie Fellowships in EU Member States and, correspondingly, institutes in the associated countries could host only EU nationals, for whom candidate countries may not be as attractive as for nationals from other CEE candidate countries.

The other obstacle which affected not only our participation in the Host but also the Individual Fellowship schemes is that in FP5 Associated Countries were not defined as less-favoured regions. Therefore, some Marie Curie schemes – e.g. development host fellowships, return fellowships - were not available to Hungarian host institutes and researchers.

In the Research Training network (IHP) and the Centre of Excellence (INCO2) schemes - which can be a good preparation for participation in the network of excellence activities - Hungarian institutes were much more successful than in the Marie Curie Host Fellowship scheme, thanks to the more flexible systems inherent in these schemes.

Hungary welcomes the changes regarding the status of Associated Countries in the mobility schemes of FP6. It is an important development that in all documents related to mobility strategy and schemes, obstacles and restrictions preventing researchers from the candidate countries in participating in all schemes have now been removed. These new elements in the mobility schemes might foster our participation especially in the case of the Host Fellowship scheme. The extension of the reintegration grant system is also welcomed by Hungary as a good tool to counteract the current “brain-drain” from the candidate countries.

As a preparation for FP6, it is envisaged to set up Internet sites and compile a brochure for EU and other foreign researchers in Hungary providing reliable information on practical issues such as visa regulations, work permits, accommodation, taxation, social security, health protection, recognition of diplomas etc. A database of potential Hungarian host institutes is also planned which might give an overview for researchers intending to come to Hungary.

As part of the Hungarian preparation for FP6, a survey-based study is to be carried out on Hungarian R&D capacities. Institutions have to answer mobility-related questions as well. In connection with this study, another project is planned, in which individual researchers will be contacted directly and a report prepared concerning the mobility of individual researchers.

We fully support the initiatives of the European Commission – mobility web portal, network of mobility centres etc. - related to implementing the “Mobility strategy in the European Research Area” as a good way to overcome some of the present deficiencies and create a favourable environment for the mobility of researchers.

As part of these actions the Hungarian delegation has been invited to participate in the Steering Committee on mobility and Hungarian participants have been involved in the work of the Pilot Group of Mobility Centres.

The first steps towards the implementation of these initiatives have been made in Hungary by identifying potential mobility centres and websites providing mobility-related information.

**COME TO POLAND,
HOMELAND OF MARIE CURIE**

The Marie Curie Fellowship System raised much interest in Poland and the participation of Polish researchers during the FP5 has been growing continuously. The total number of individual fellows (excluding the unavailable results of final selection in 2002) reached 48 (of 122 who applied), while the number of fellows benefiting from the Host Fellowship scheme exceeds 100. These figures may be considered as success but, compared to the research potential of Poland, the success seems moderate. Therefore, many special promotional/information events and measures are foreseen to increase the level of mobility of Polish researchers during FP6.

Concerning “the other side of the mirror”, Poland is deeply dissatisfied with strongly unbalanced mobility and the extremely low number of scientists from Member States coming to our institutes. During 3 years, only 6 individual applications have been submitted indicating Polish host institutions and only one of them has been accepted for financing. This undoubtedly results from mental barriers and negative stereotypes still existing in the EU Member States, and has nothing in common with the real situation of research in Poland and other Associated States. A good example of the real potential of Polish institutes is shown by the results of the special call for Centres of Excellence in 2002: as many as 118 Polish institutes have been highly graded during the evaluation and received financing as Centres of Excellence.

To counteract negative “*désintéressement*”, the Polish National Contact Point has started special action to encourage researchers from abroad to come to Poland as Marie Curie Fellows under the umbrella of FP6. With more possibilities during FP6 to allow researchers from third countries to become Marie Curie Fellows, we turned our attention not only to the Member States and Associated States but also to neighbouring countries like the Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Moldova.

A webpage has been prepared especially for this purpose containing the catalogue of institutions and research groups that are interested in hosting Marie Curie Fellows. The catalogue contains more than 150 records and is continuously updated. The relevant address is:

http://www.npk.gov.pl/prog_hor_3/stypendia-MC/Katalog.htm

Moreover, a list of Polish FP5 Marie Curie Training Sites, Centres of Excellence and partners of Research Training Networks, is available at:

<http://www.npk.gov.pl/cis-a/>

A more active approach is necessary. Therefore, a series of information/promotional events is being prepared in foreign academic centres, with the kind co-operation of several Polish research institutes and the NCPs of other countries, to present the Polish research landscape abroad. The whole action is organised under the heading “COME TO POLAND - HOMELAND OF MARIE CURIE!”

Last, but not least, the FP6 mobility system of Marie Curie Fellowships and other opportunities will be presented during the FP6 international launching conference in November in Warsaw. Additionally, a special session is foreseen to discuss achievements, problems and obstacles that exist in the system and possible ways to improve the situation. The participants of the session will be Polish fellows on the one hand and the representative of the European Commission on the other.

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