

EURASIAPAC project¹ – Fernando Kraus Sanchez



Speaker: Fernando Kraus Sanchez, Director of the Foreign Affairs Sector within the Research and Innovation division of AToS in Spain. Fernando has over fifteen years of experience in participating in the implementation of ICT projects including the EURASIAPAC project. He has wide experience in the field of exploitation and marketing activities as a senior consultant both in the private and public sectors of different countries (Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cameroun, Dominican Republic, Egypt, ..). Additionally, he has been highly involved in the management of European and National R&D projects (Cockpit, ImmigrationPolicy2.0...) as well as in managing multi-people teams.

1. *How does your project contribute to International cooperation and trust and security?*

Eurasiapac focuses on ICT research cooperation between the EC and the Asia-Pacific region, mainly Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.. Eurasiapac has provided a global picture of themes of interest in ICT, priorities, tendencies, difficulties in cooperation, reasons why to search cooperation, sources of information used in each country.

a. European and Asian-Pacific institutions declared strong interest in pursuing cooperation/collaborative research with each other and share the main motive to seek cooperation and research: “*knowledge (technology) exchange*”. A high number of EU respondent organizations recognize searching cooperation as a mean to market penetration and development in the AP region, reason which is not so relevant for AP respondents.

b. No clear thematic focus for cooperation was cited by EU respondents while Future and Emerging Technologies is a dominant focus for AP countries. EU respondents expressed interest in Future and Emerging Technologies at similar level to “ICT for Mobility, Environmental Substantiality and Energy Efficiency”, “ICT for health and wellbeing” and “ICT for learning and access to cultural resources”. Other thematic priorities for AP respondents are ‘ICT for mobility, environmental substantiality and energy efficiency’, “Cognitive Systems, Interaction, Robotics” and ‘ICT for health and wellbeing’.

c. By countries, EU respondents has cooperated mainly with Japan and Korea and, to a slightly lesser extent, with Singapore, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand, by this ranking. The EU countries to cooperate with for AP respondents are the UK, Germany, France, Netherland and Sweden. Over half of respondents are interested in cooperating with Spain.

Eurasiapac has enabled the creation of links between ICT researchers between the mentioned countries through workshops carried out in each countries and constant cooperation during the last 2 years.

Trust and Security has been identified as one of the priorities among the topic of interest in ICT research in the countries participating in the project.

¹ <http://eurasiapac-fp7.eu/>

2. What are the benefits and expected impact of your project brought on by international cooperation?

Through the surveys carried out among the researchers community, we have identified joint common topics of interest in ICT research between EC and Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

The contacts and the fact that some main stakeholders in ICT research have been directly involved in the project – consortium partners are CSIRO in Australia, KIAT in Korea, Fraunhofer Japan, University of Canterbury in New Zealand , and Fraunhofer, Atos and Sigma in the EC - has raised interest in launching joint call with some of the countries. Joint calls with Japan and Australia are under preparation and are expected to be launched in 2012 or 2013.

3. International cooperation is not an easy task and required a lot of patience and time. What are the issues encountered and how did you address them?

Although the Eurasiapac project focuses on ICT cooperation between EC and the Asia-Pacific region, it's difficult to deal it as a homogeneous region because each participating AP country (Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand) has different characteristics, institutions and approach to ICT research, i.e. they are not homogeneous. In Europe, the EC FP7 creates a common approach to research, but it doesn't exist a similar common institutions in the Eurasiapac targeted countries. Each country needs to be dealt in a different way

On a day-to-day cooperation, the fact that there are 10-12 hours of time differences between the countries difficult the usual working cooperation process. A call conference among all partners always causes a "sacrifice" for one or another partner, as it can't be held at a standard working daily time for all partners.

IPR is always an issue in international ICT research cooperation and needs to be dealt at a very early stage of the research process.

4. In the opening session, it was mentioned by the Commission that INCO projects should go further than just identifying stakeholders and who the counterparts are in the countries and topics of cooperation. What are your projects plans to take this approach for a longer term strategy and is there anything that BIC can do to help you with this strategy.

This is an issue that was highlighted and attempted by EURASIAPAC also but it was found to be incredibly difficult as even though the project's overall goal was to consider the cooperation between the EU and the entire ASIAPAC region as a whole, in actual fact, there are considerable differences between the countries involved and these always need to be factored into the discussions and cooperation models. Therefore, a bi-lateral approach is absolutely necessary even if there are some common cooperation issues across the regions.

5. What are your recommendations for improving effectiveness?

Joint calls are already being prepared with Australia and Japan. A Japan – EU S&T Cooperation agreement has entered into force on 29 March 2011, aiming at promoting a structured S&T policy dialogue between Japan and the EU. We need to create more agile processes to define, launch and approve ICT cooperation initiatives. Many of the Asia-Pacific institutions involved in the projects, mentioned that the period of time to create, prepare and launch a cooperation initiative should be shorter as the view is that EC processes take too long. Understanding legal and administrative EC funding processes are not always easy for non EC institutions; simplified methods may enhance international participation.