

## Statistics of Management Committee Members from Serbia in COST Actions

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### Abstract

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) provides researchers and innovators access to the top scientific and technology networks in Europe and beyond. In order to increase Europe's capacity to solve scientific, technical, and social concerns it connects academics and innovators by providing funding for excellence-driven and multidisciplinary pan-European networks (COST Actions). Each Action is managed by a Management Committee composed of COST Member representatives. In this paper the basic analysis of Serbian representatives in active COST Actions is presented.

### Introduction

COST Actions are open, bottom-up networks of researchers and innovators that facilitate pan-European collaboration in a range of scientific and technological domains (Marinković, 2019). COST Action proposals are evaluated on the basis of excellence and can be submitted via an open call procedure. Participants at various stages of their careers collaborate in a field of science and technology of mutual interest to at least seven COST Full Members. The number of countries per Action has increased by 27% in the last seven years, mostly as a result of more Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs) joining COST Actions.

COST Action is managed by a Management Committee (Action MC) composed of Action MC Members (COST documents guideline, 2021). The COST National Coordinators (CNCs) is the national contact point in the COST Member responsible for the nomination in the Action MC. The selection of maxima two MC members per Action representing the COST Member state is based on national rules and procedures. Following the good practice, the consultation from Action Main Proposer/Chair prior nomination of MC is required to ensure that the profile of the proposed Action MC Member matches the aims and objectives of the COST Action and, where possible, brings diversity and interdisciplinarity in the Action MC.

An Action starts officially on the date of the first Action MC meeting (MC1) that should take place not earlier than 4 months and not later than 9 months after COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO - main decision body of COST Association) approval.

Before the start of the Action, nominated persons will automatically become Action MC Members, but after the Action MC1 meeting, new Action MC Members must be validated by the Action MC. Validation occurs implicitly, that is, without any action on the part of the Action MC. An Action MC decision, on the other hand, might clearly approve or reject the nomination. The refusal must be supported by a formal reason submitted within four weeks of the nomination. If no express rejection decision is made within four weeks following nomination, the nomination is confirmed (Annotated Rules for COST actions, 2021).

The Action MC Members should actively participate to the work of at least one Working Group (WG) and represent their COST Member community in order to coordinate the input to the Action and disseminate opportunities arising within the Action at national level. The basic information and data related to the Serbian representatives in active Actions are presented below.

### Statistics of MC members from Serbia

The official data obtained by COST Association in May 2022 provide the information on nomination and MC member's statistics for all COST Members (COST statistics, 2022). Fig 1. depicts the average days needed for MC member nomination (for Action secondary proposers) after the official CSO approval. Serbia, with 61 days needed for nomination, is in the middle range with respect to all other countries.

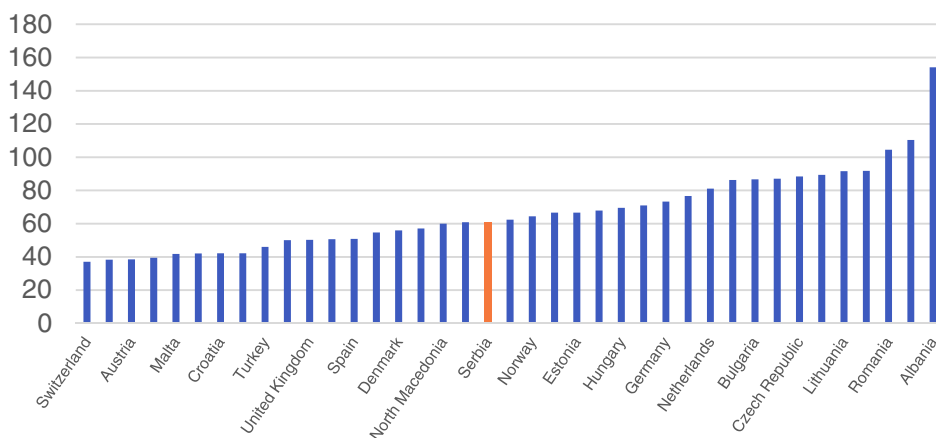


Fig. 1. Days between CSO approval and MC delegate nomination for Actions proposers.

On the other hand 123 days in average is needed for nominations of non-secondary proposers (Fig 2.) indicating the necessity to improve the information sharing on new Actions approval and promotion of benefits for non-secondary proposers to join COST Actions.

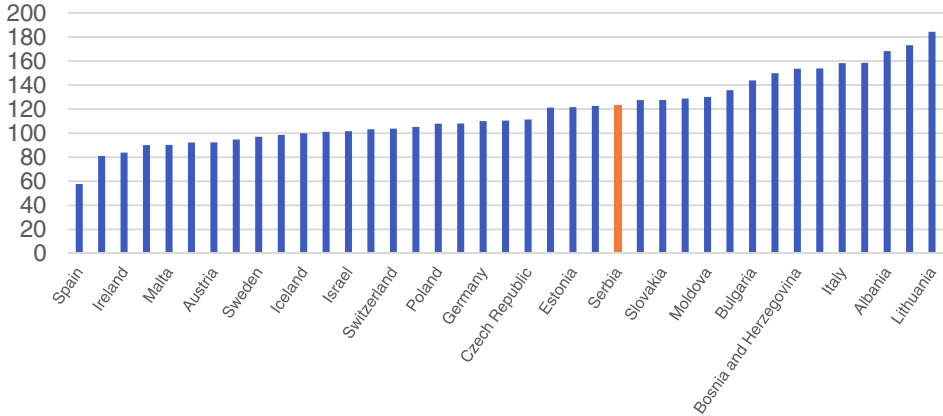


Fig. 2. Days between CSO approval and MC delegate nomination for Actions non-proposers.

The percentage of the nominated MC members at least 1 month before the MC1 meeting is 88.2% for secondary proposers (Fig. 3) and 52.6% for non-proposers (Fig. 4).

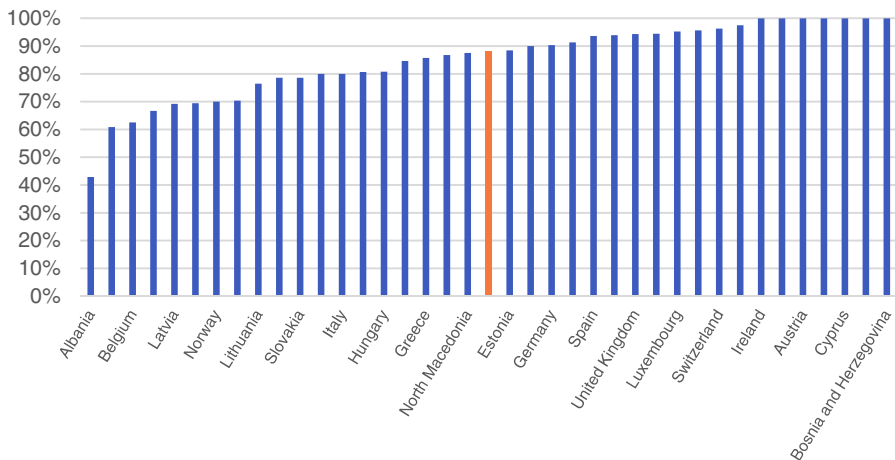


Fig. 3. Percentage of proposers nominated at least 1 month before the first Management Committee meeting.

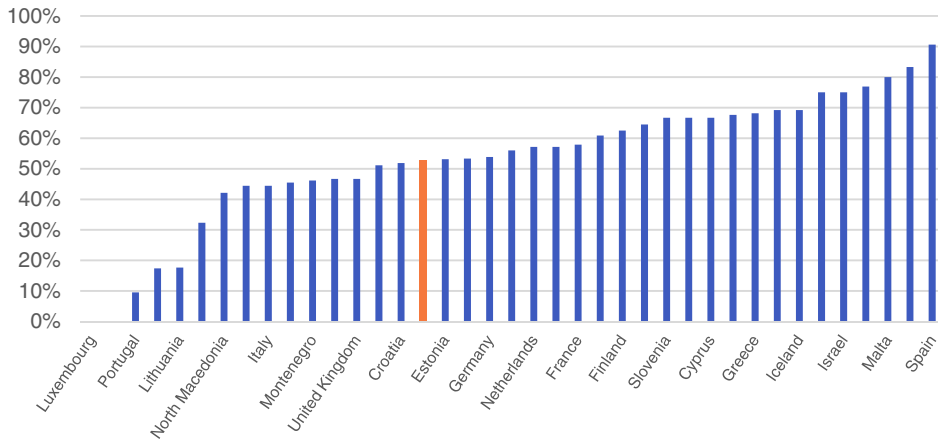


Fig. 4. Percentage of non-proposers nominated at least 1 month before the first Management Committee meeting.

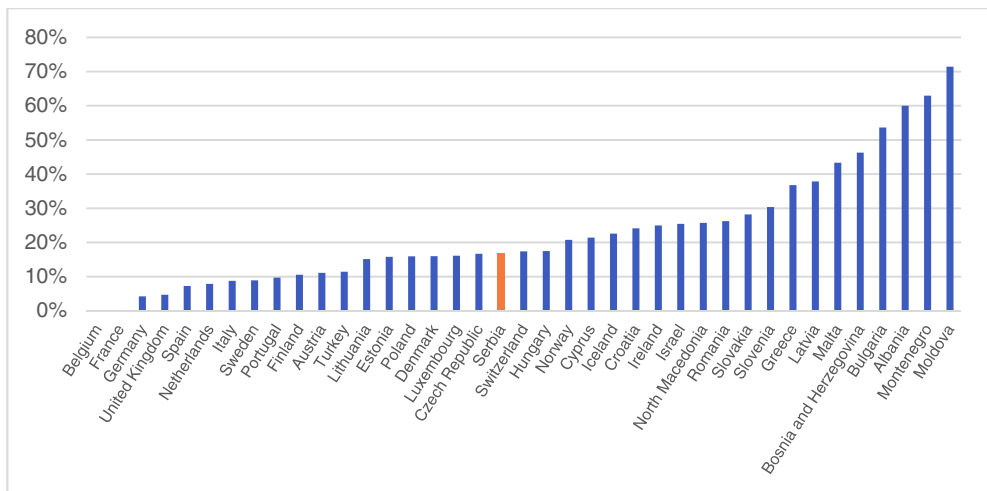


Fig. 5. Percentage of nominated MC Members already active in another Action.

According to the national rule one researcher can participate as MC Member in two active Actions. Such restriction aims to stimulate researcher, especially younger researchers coming from wider scientific community, for joining COST activities by taking one of the leading positions. As a result 16.9% of nominated MC Members are already active in another Action (Fig. 5) allowing pretty high opportunity for other researcher to take an active role. Equal access to leadership

positions, notably with regard to empowerment of young researchers and innovators (researcher or innovator under the age of 40) is one of the key component of The Openness and Inclusiveness COST Principle (The COST Mission, 2021). Serbia, with 46.5% relative mobilization of younger researchers is the leading country in this domain.

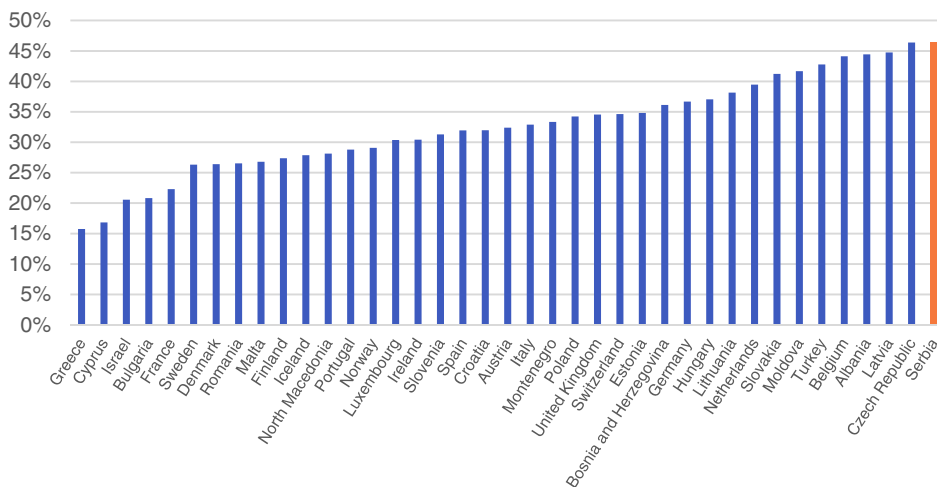


Fig. 6. Relative mobilization of younger researchers.

In addition, gender balance is regarded as an important component of COST's aim to being open and accessible to all categories of researchers. It is consistently emphasized as an essential aspect for COST Actions while organizing their activities. 54.9% of MC members from Serbia are females showing that Serbia reaches pretty fair gender balance (Fig. 7).

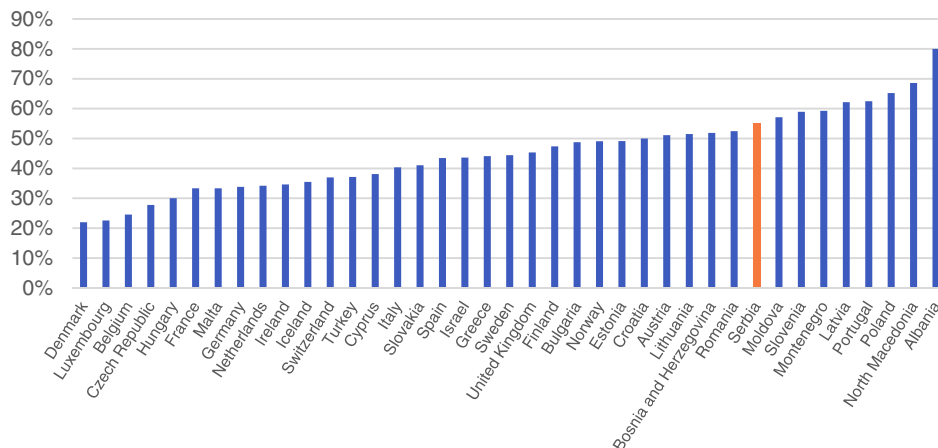


Fig. 7. Percentage of female MC Members.

## Conclusions

COST Association provides nomination and MC statistics annually for each country participating in active Actions. Since the nomination procedure and collaborative potential for joining COST Actions are specific for each country there are no common target values which should be achieved, but rather recommendations. The obtained parameters should be useful for national COST office and CNC as indicators what kind of the procedures could be improved in order to attract more participants assuring effective networking activities. Although MC members from Serbia have already significant involvement in COST Actions, national COST office constantly works on improvement of the national nomination procedures. Dedicated national web site and online application form (Serbian COST office, 2022) is expected to further accelerate and facilitate the MC nomination procedure.

## Acknowledgments

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