

Interdisciplinary research in the European Cooperation in Science and Technology – advantage or disadvantage?

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Collaboration is at the heart of modern science while interdisciplinary research plays a very important role in addressing some of the most important and complex problems. The European Cooperation in Science and Technology – COST is the oldest intergovernmental funding organization in Europe with the aim to establish the research networks among scientists and innovators. Two years ago, COST celebrated 50 years of the existence and successful networking activities. During that period COST has become one of the best mechanisms to promote science cooperation in the world. For establishing a collaboration proximity is particularly important, but once a collaboration is in place scientists manage to continue a collaboration despite a large distance. COST Actions support a variety of networking tools enabling spatial and social proximity thus increasing the level of scientific production.

In this paper review of available data on the effects of participating in a COST Action on the level of scientific production i.e., scientific co-publications between active members of an Action is given (Seeber et al., 2022a). In addition, the interdisciplinary nature of co-publications and involvement of researchers from inclusive target countries as well as young researcher is discussed. Since researcher from Serbia are involved in almost 96% of active Actions (Mijić and Marinković, 2022) it is particularly important to assess whether these effects persist after the life time of the Action.

Regarding the multidisciplinary of the new Actions approved in 2023, 54% of them cover at least two fields of science and technology, while 11% cover at least three fields. Natural sciences are represented in 49% of the Actions leading the way as the most represented field of science. Therefore, additional discussion will be given for better understanding whether Actions proposals' degree of interdisciplinarity and the relative proportion of different scientific fields, may be disadvantage or not in the project evaluation procedure in the COST research framework (Seeber et al., 2022b).

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