



The Future of the COST Initiative

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What is COST?

Cooperation for Science and Technology, COST is a unique means for European researchers to jointly develop their own ideas and new initiatives across all scientific disciplines through trans-European networking of nationally funded research activities.

Based on a **pan-European intergovernmental framework** for cooperation in science and technology, COST has contributed since its creation 40 years ago to closing the gap between science, policy makers and society throughout Europe and beyond.



COST Mission

Updated Mission Statement (23 May 2011):

“COST enables break-through scientific developments leading to new concepts and products and thereby contributes to strengthen Europe’s research and innovation capacities.”

COST Action

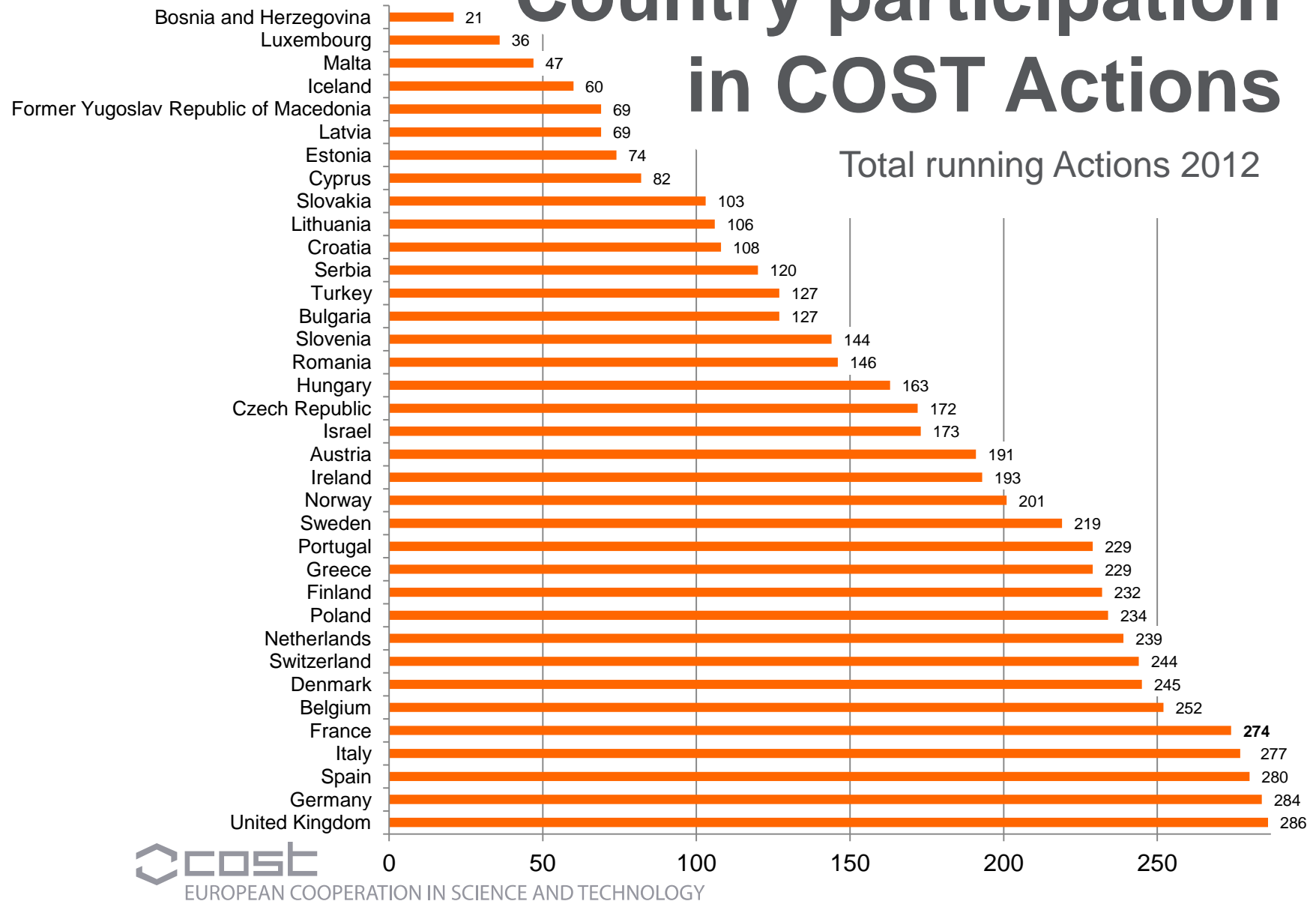
A distinctive networking instrument:

- At least 5 countries
- Expanding networks
- Average 20 countries
- Across 9 Domains or interdisciplinary
- Funds networking of nationally funded S&T, R&D activities



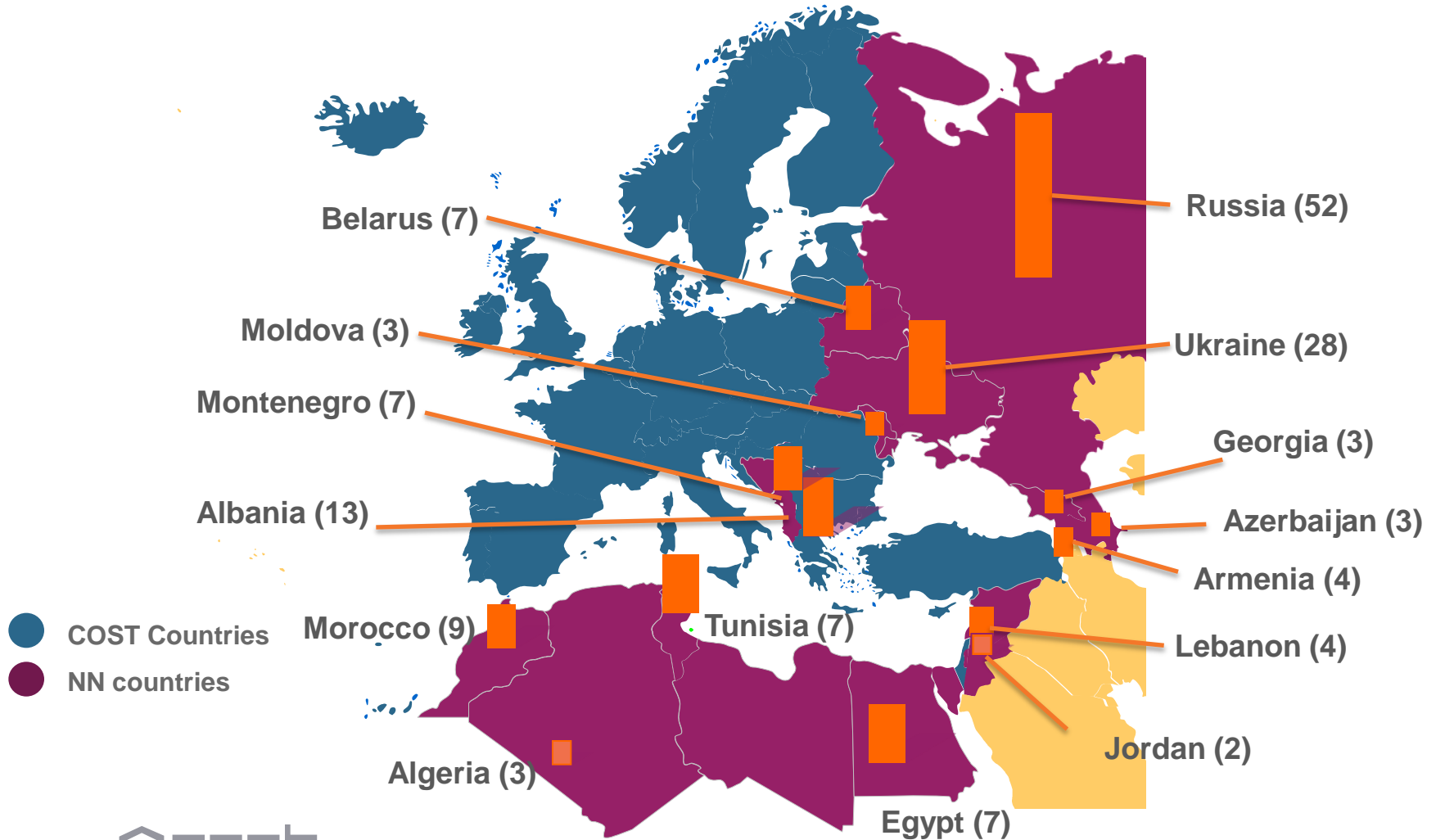
Country participation in COST Actions

Total running Actions 2012



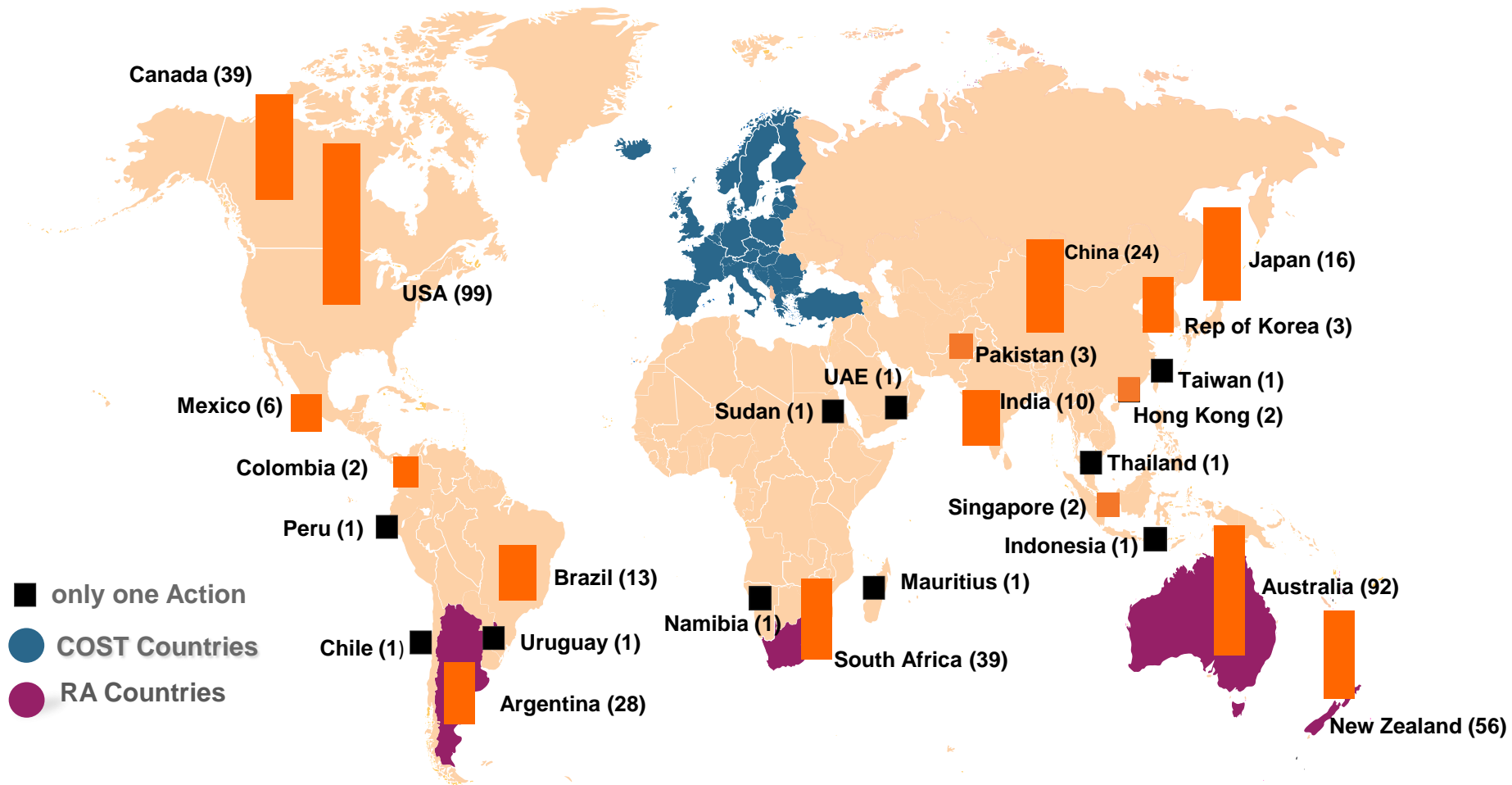
Near Neighbour countries participation

152 Participations in running Actions (15 countries) – September 2012



Non-COST Countries Participation

229 Participations (22 countries) and 215 RA Participations (4 countries) in running Actions - September 2012





COST – CSO Decisions

- COST Mission Statement update – May 2011
- COST Green Paper position – June 2011
- COST Strategic Paper “Shaping COST for the future” – June 2011
- COST H2020 Position Paper “COST - A Cornerstone of ERA” – March 2012
- COST Action Plan “Inclusiveness & Excellence” – June 2012
- COST Rules Revision – March 2013 (tbc)



How does COST prepare for the future?

COST Strategic Paper: “COST STRATEGY renewing our strengths ... shaping our future” (29 June 2011)

- **Strengthening** its key features:
 - Building capacity by connecting high-quality scientific communities throughout Europe and worldwide
 - Providing networking opportunities for early career investigators
 - Increasing the impact of research on policy makers, regulatory bodies and the private sector
- **Concentrating** on four strategic goals:
 - Best performance in its implementation
 - Stronger orientation to output in COST Actions
 - Improving cooperation within COST countries and beyond
 - Ensuring good governance



How does COST contribute to ERA ?

COST Position Paper: “The COST Framework – A cornerstone of the ERA” (19 March 2012)

COST is inclusive and completely open to:

- All fields of S&T (including interdisciplinary, new and emerging fields)
- Any novel and original idea (innovative)
- All partners (public and private, big and small)
- All career stages (young and senior investigators)
- All countries (small and big, leader and follower countries), and to non-COST countries (fostering international cooperation)



How does COST link inclusiveness with excellence ?

Action Plan: “Increase inclusiveness in COST activities while fostering scientific excellence throughout Europe” (21 June 2012)

- 5 engagements:
 - Information sharing for best management and practices
 - Capacity building
 - Preparing the future: young talents / next generation leaders
 - Connecting research infrastructures to all potential users
 - Dedicated Targeted Actions



How does COST take up new challenges?

COST will adapt to new context and challenges through concrete initiatives:

- COST Grant System Assessment
- Reinforced Strategic Activities
- Trans-Domain Pilot Evaluation Procedure
- Open Call Observers
- Evidence-based Outcomes and Impact Analysis
- COST Vademecum Revision



How do COST Rules respond to the best interest of S&T communities?

The Rules should reflect the following basic principles:

- Stability of the rules
- Clearly defined and self-explanatory
- Consistency and coherence of rules within all documents
- Appropriate adaptability in the implementation of COST rules
- Build trust between COST and researchers

What New Implementing Structure for COST?

- ESF implementing agent for COST until the end of the FP7 Grant Agreement
- A new legal entity is envisaged to be dedicated to COST
- It shall provide COST with administrative autonomy in order to preserve COST specificities and qualities
- Any solution envisaged should utilize COST's long lasting experience and core activities and its light administration and adaptability



“fit to the purpose” [Horvat Report 2010]



What future budget for COST?

- To enhance its impact capacity COST shall be allowed to **increase the number of COST Actions under H2020**
- A preliminary estimate shows that by **adding an average of 110 Actions to the current 60 new Actions each year**, COST could run up to around 790 yearly Actions at the end of the H2020
- This assumes an **average annual budget of EUR 80 million** (total EUR 560 Million for seven years=0.7% of overall H2020 proposed budget)
 - Subject to the budgetary envelope available for COST in H2020
 - Guarantee that administrative needs would not increase proportionally, but attain most advantageous efficiency



What can COST achieve in the future?

COST would further contribute to:

- Fostering scientific excellence
- Developing S&T for innovation
- Addressing societal challenges
- Widening pan-European participation
- Providing networking opportunities for early career investigators

In particular, COST can offer its networking instrument (the COST Action) and trust-building capability, its know-how and its facilities (such as administration) to connect “pockets of excellence” throughout Europe and contribute to making them visible to others.



COST

Merci !

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