

COST:PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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COoperation in Science and Technology

**It was the first and it is one of the widest
intergovernmental European Networks for
coordination of nationally funded scientific
and technical research**

WHAT IS COST ?



**The best definition
of COST**

COST IS



- a fast, efficient, effective, flexible framework
- to get brilliant scientists together
- and to let them work out their ideas
- under light strategic guidance

THE PAST



1971

**Conference of the Ministers of Research of
19 European countries convened in
Brussels in November**

THE PAST



opened the possibility of cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical research for :

- the 6 countries of the European Community**

(Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands)

- 13 countries not belonging at that time to the European Community**

(Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Yugoslavia, Spain, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom)

THE PAST



Conclusion of an intense preparatory work carried out in the late 60's

European response to the international challenging situation (Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber “Le defi Americain”)

Strategy adopted by the 6 countries :

- **to recuperate the delays of Europe in many areas of scientific and technical research**
- **to open the COST cooperation to other 13 European countries**

COST INSTRUMENT



COST ACTIONS

**Networks of Researchers built around a research project
with clear objectives**

COST SUPPORT

**Economic support only for the networking (meetings,
workshops, short term scientific missions, etc.)**

THE PRESENT

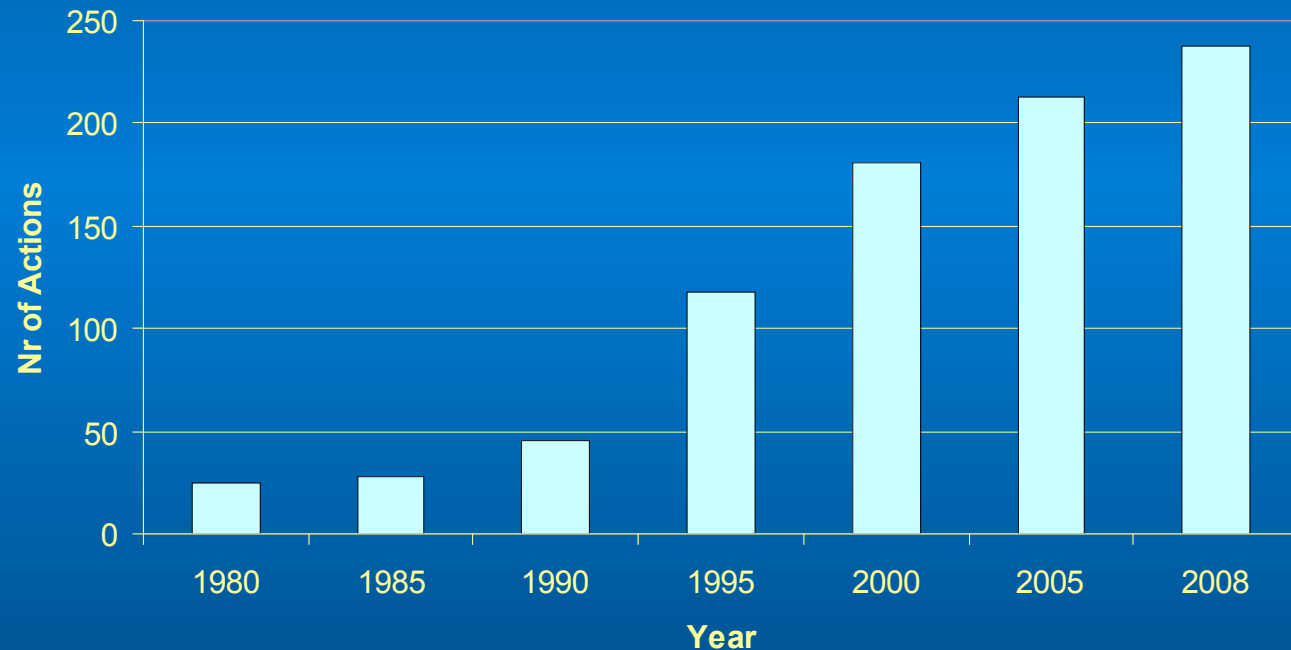


- **In 1971 COST Actions are the only form of cooperation in Europe**
- **In 1974 the European Science Foundation, in 1983 the First Framework Programme and in 1985 EUREKA**
- **The existence of these initiatives notwithstanding, the interest of the European scientific community in COST constantly increased**

THE PRESENT



From 7 Actions in 1971 ...



... to > 200 running Actions today.

THE PRESENT



From 19 countries in 1971 ...



... to 36 countries today.

36 COST COUNTRIES



35 COST MEMBER STATES

27 EU European countries

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

8 European countries

Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey.

1 COST COOPERATING STATE

Israel

COST OBJECTIVE



“COST contributes to avoid fragmentation of national research efforts in the ERA”

COST CHARACTERISTICS



- **Concerted Actions.** Coordination of research funded through national funds. Duplications and gaps are avoided. Consequent synergy and work sharing allows a more efficient use of national resources.
- **Multiplier effect.** The funds provided by COST are less than 1% of the total value of the Actions: in FP6 with only about 20 million € per year, more than 30.000 European scientists are involved in research whose total value exceeds 2 billion € per year.

COST CHARACTERISTICS



- **Bottom- up approach.** The initiative of launching a COST Action comes from the scientists and technical experts themselves.
- **“A la carte” participation.** Only the countries interested in the Action sign the relevant “Memorandum of Understanding”. A minimum number of 5 signatures is needed.
- **Equality of access.** Participation is open also to the scientific communities of countries not belonging to the European Union . COST has therefore the ability to anticipate the evolving European political situation: a “bridge” to the scientific communities of countries of the whole Europe and of the world.

COST CHARACTERISTICS



- **Flexibility.** Easy implementation and agile management of research Actions through a simple structure.
- **The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)** highest decision-making body made of representatives of all COST member countries.
- **The Domain Committees (DC)** each responsible for a particular research domain formed by representatives of the COST countries.
- **The Management Committees (MC)** (one for each Action) formed by national experts of the countries participating in the Action.

SECRETARIAT



- The **Secretariat** to CSO provided by the EU Council
- The **Secretariat** to Technical Committees and to Actions provided by the European Science Foundation (ESF) through a COST Office located in Brussels. ESF acts as implementing Agent and receives from the European Commission the funds allocated to COST.

COST LEGAL STATUS



- COST does not have a legal status
- Hence the need of an implementing agent (ESF) in FP6 and FP7
- After FP7 ESF will cease to be the COST implementing agent
- In July 2010 the “COST Office Association” (COA) has been established as a non - profit international association under the Belgian law
- COA can be appointed COST implementing agent if and when the COST CSO will deem this appropriate

SCIENTIFIC QUALITY CONTROL



By the COST DC's assisted by the COST Office

Assessment of proposals for new Actions. Peer review by an Assessment Panel

Monitoring of the Actions in progress . Annual“Progress Report” presented by the MC Chairs in the yearly meeting with the relevant DC.

Evaluation of completed Actions. Peer review by an Evaluation Panel

COST SCIENTIFIC DOMAINS



Biomedicine and Molecular Bioscience

Food and Agriculture

Forests their Products and Services

Materials, Physical and Nanosciences

Chemistry and Molecular Sciences & Technologies

Earth Systems Science & Environmental Management

Information & Communication Technologies

Transport & Urban Development

Individuals, Society, Culture & Health

COST RESULTS



- **Scientific importance.** Thousands of papers. Ph Doctors. Recognition of COST scientific community outside Europe.
- **Contribution to European competitiveness.** Contributions to normative and standardization bodies. SME's originating from COST Actions. Transfer of results to European Industry.
- **Societal importance.** Delicate issues arising from pressing societal needs.
- **Contribution to the ERA.** COST precursor of research projects in the FP' s. Networks of Excellence from COST Actions.

RESULT OF A SURVEY



**“ If COST did not exist
it would be necessary
to invent it “**

COST OBJECTIVE



" COST contributes to increase the cooperation on a world basis"

COST AND THE WORLD



One of the key features of COST is its openness towards the rest of the world.

Institutions from non-COST countries can join an Action on a case by case basis once the mutual benefit has been ascertained, without the need for any formal arrangements at government or agency level

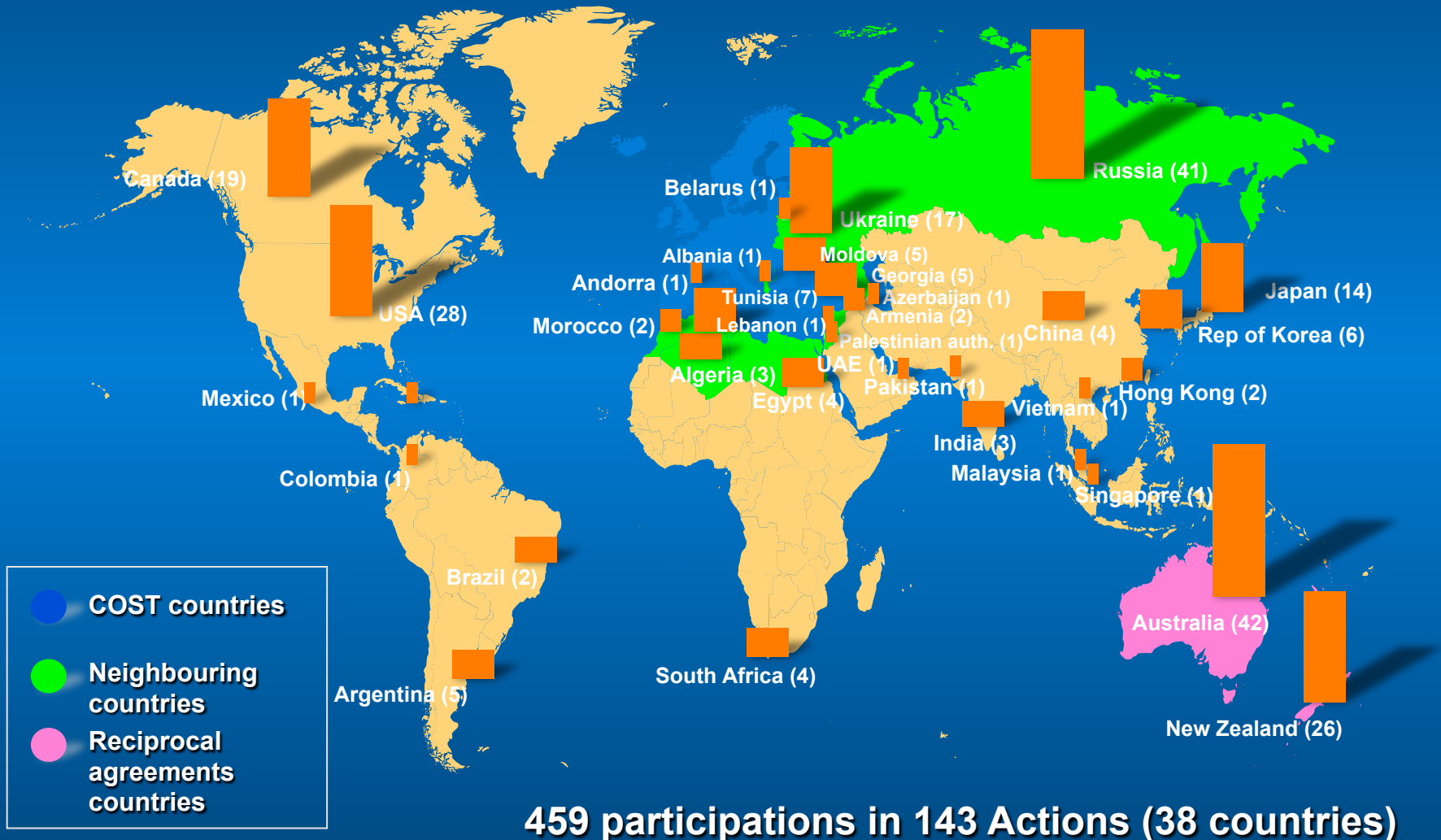
COST AND THE WORLD



With such easy accessibility and light and fast procedures, COST is a “bridge” for the scientific communities:

- on a world basis
- and in particular for the European neighbouring countries

COST Actions: global participation



COST SUPPORT



In general researchers from Institutions of non-COST countries do not receive economic support from COST

There are however some notable exceptions

NEAR-NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES



For the near-neighbouring countries

Balkan and Eastern countries (*Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine*)

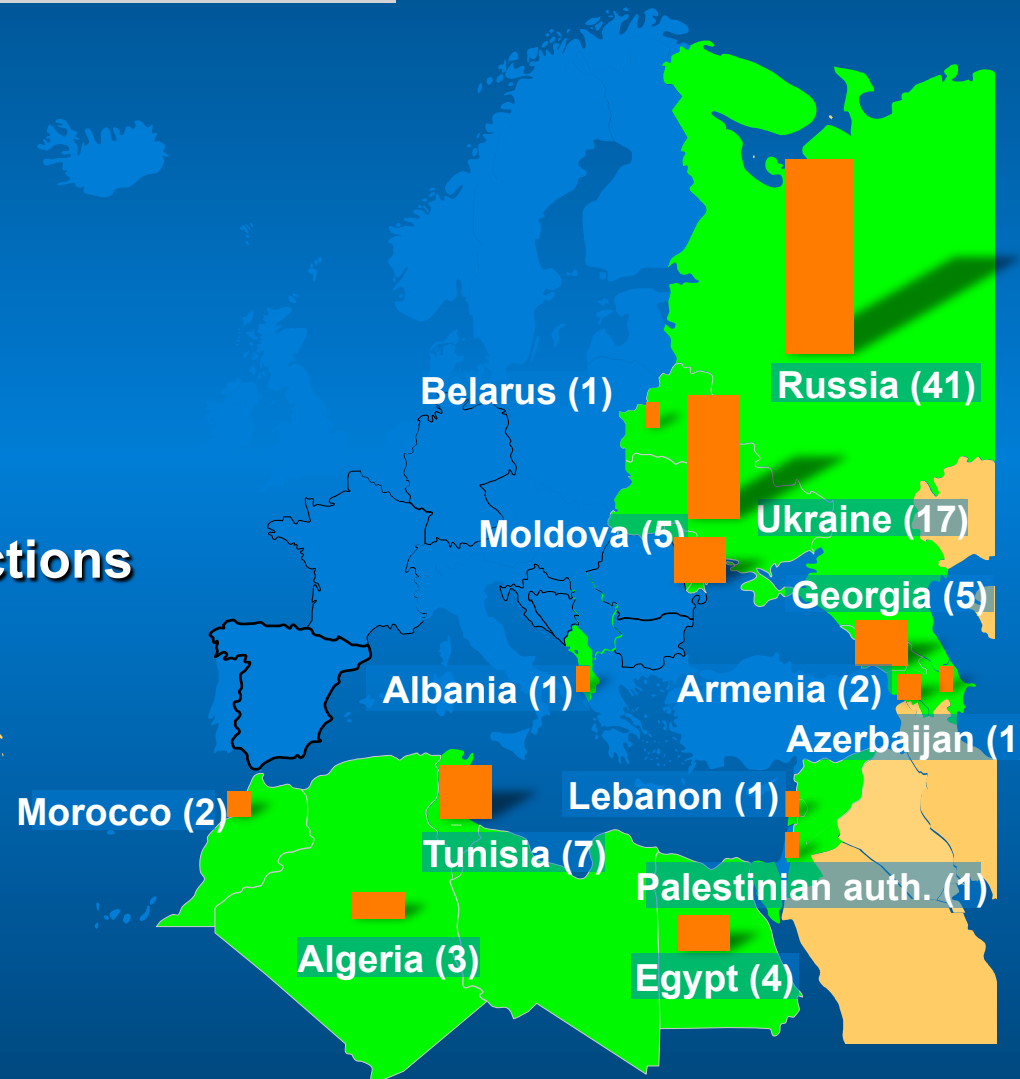
Mediterranean and north-African countries (*Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority*)

Researchers from these countries may be reimbursed by COST for their participation in the Action.

COST and the Neighbouring Countries

- COST countries
- COST neighbouring countries

In 2009: 95 participations in 55 Actions



WHY IS COST HERE TODAY ?



COST is a supporter of the GRAPHITA Conference through an agreement with the Organizing Committee

COST interest derived from the COST Action MP0901 on graphene
“Designing Novel Materials for Nanodevices”

A COST representative will participate in the poster evaluation for poster prizes and a poster prize will be awarded by COST

COST supported the Nobel prize winner 2010 in Physics Dr. Konstantin Novoselov to attend the Conference

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COST



THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT IN FP7

OF 250 MILLION EURO IN 7 YEARS

IS

**A SUCCESS FOR COST OF PARAMOUNT
IMPORTANCE**

A BRILLIANT FUTURE FOR COST



**The latest COST Ministerial Conference in 2010
convened by the Spanish EU Presidency
decided to continue to support COST
as an important opportunity
for the European scientific community
and for opening the ERA to the world**