

ACCELERATIng Europe's Leading Research Infrastructures

Work Package 4 - Enlargement and International Cooperation

Task 4.2 - Outreach to New Communities

D4.6 - Outreach Events Report

Project Deliverable Information Sheet

ACCELERATE Project	Project Reference No. 731112	
	Project Title: ACCELERATIng Europe's Leading Research Infrastructures	
	Project Website: www.accelerate2020.eu	
	Deliverable No:	
	Deliverable Type:	
	Dissemination Level	Contractual Delivery Date 31.05.2021
	Public	Actual Delivery Date
	EC project Officer: Christos Chatzimichail	

Document Control Sheet

Document	Title: D4.6 Outreach Event Reports
	Version:
	Available at: www.accelerate2020.eu
	Files:
Authorship	Written by: Salma Baghdadi
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	Reviewed by: Steering committee
	Approved: Steering committee

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of task 4.2 'Outreach to New Communities' is to attract potential users from the Eastern borderline of the EU, in particular from the Western Balkans, and raise awareness about the open access opportunities available within CERIC. This supports in reducing the barriers that prevent competent researchers from this target geographical area from performing excellent science.

This task incorporates two main activities supporting in the implementation of the outreach towards the research community from target countries:

- The organization of outreach events targeting early-stage and experienced researchers, informing them about CERIC, its partner facilities, the open access offer, and proposal writing.
- The organization of satellite sessions and/or schools targeting early-stage researchers. This type of events will last longer than the above mentioned one, where participants will get more acquainted with some of CERIC's instruments and their application.

This report will throughout tackle the first type of the activity, while the second type is highlighted in Deliverable 4.3 'Report on Schools'.

2. OUTREACH EVENTS – Overview

Throughout the duration of the ACCELERATE project, four outreach events had been organized:

- **CONTACT, the CERIC-CEI Open Access Training: 26 – 27 June 2017 | CERIC Headquarters in Trieste (Italy)**

The CONTACT workshop was organised in collaboration with the Central European Initiative (CEI). It was the kick-off event for this task, aiming of raising awareness among targeted research communities in the Western Balkans, and with the goal to finding partner institutions in the target countries for future events.

The workshop was held on 26th and 27th of June 2017. As the program incorporated both theoretical sessions and practical tutorials, the choice of the dates was made according to the shutdown period of Elettra Synchrotron Trieste and the availability of the scientists. The shutdown allowed to present the different beamlines without interrupting regular user experiments.

The event brought together 24 participants from 11 different countries from the Western Balkans (specifically from: Austria, Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR of Macedonia, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine) with backgrounds in chemistry, ecology, engineering, genetics, physics, mathematics. The selection of participants



was held by a scientific committee and based applicants' motivation letters, field of specialization and career stage.

On the first day of the event, participants were introduced to CERIC, its Partner Facilities, and the open access call for proposal. It was followed by an explanation on successful proposal writing, and a practical guide on the CERIC open access system.

Scientists from CERIC's Partner Facilities presented various techniques available in CERIC through the open access, which can be useful for participants' current and/or future research studies. The presentations incorporated an overview of the solutions that CERIC facilities can provide in a wide range of scientific fields, as well as the technical details on the experiment from sample preparation to data treatment, allowing a direct Q&A session between participants and the beamline scientists.

The second day was dedicated to practical tutorials and started with a guided tour through the synchrotron beamlines and free-electron-laser facility at Elettra Synchrotron Trieste, CERIC's Italian Partner Facility. It was followed by in-depth technical presentations on some of the beamlines available in the CERIC open access such as DXRL (Deep X-ray Lithography), SAXS (Small-Angle X-ray Scattering), SISSI (Synchrotron Infrared Source for Spectroscopy & Imaging), and more.

Considering the high number of applications received (190 applications from the western Balkan countries), a livestreaming of the theoretical sessions was put in place to give the opportunity to more persons, in addition to the 24 attending participants, to benefit from the knowledge shared throughout the lectures. As a result, 223 additional persons were virtually following the workshop through the livestream.

As an outcome of the event, three participants applied for CERIC call for proposals using the opportunity of the promotional open access pilot.

The program of this event is available [here](#).

- **CERIC meets the scientific community in Serbia:** 15 January 2018 | University of Belgrade (Serbia)

The second event of this task was organised on the 15th January 2018 at the University of Belgrade in Serbia. It was a one day event organised by CERIC, hosted by the university and chaired by a representative of the Serbian Ministry for Education, Science and Technological Development. The event was organized in close collaboration with the H2020 National Contact Point for Research Infrastructures and the dean of the University of Belgrade who largely supported the activity by inviting researches of the university, mainly from the faculties of Chemistry, Physics, Metallurgy, Pharmacy, and Institute of Biological Research.

An overview of CERIC's facilities, instruments, and open access procedures were presented to the 36 researchers attending the event. In addition to that, to give the audience tangible examples of



CERIC's scientific opportunities, two researchers from the University of Belgrade were invited to share their experiences with the audience: a CERIC user and a CERIC event participant.

A successful and experienced CERIC user shared with the audience her first-hand experience as a user of the Czech and Italian Partner Facilities of CERIC.

A participant of the CONTACT workshop shared with the audience how the event impacted her career and contributed in expanding her knowledge through the theoretical lectures on synchrotron, ion beam and magnetic resonance spectroscopy based techniques, and the practical tutorials on synchrotron beamlines at the Italian CERIC facility, Elettra Sincrotrone Trieste.

The presentation was also an opportunity to inform the audience about the CERIC's call for proposals which was then open, its application procedure and the free of charge access possibility to researchers who would publicly publish their research results.

The event's program is available [here](#).

- **Central European Infrastructure for Research in Materials and Life Science:**
12 December 2019 | Joint Innovation Centre of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia (Bulgaria)

Developing and maintaining strong collaborations with universities and institutions in target countries is a crucial focus point for CERIC, considering its importance to reach various research communities.

For that, to hold an outreach activity for the Bulgarian research community, CERIC collaborated with the Bulgarian distributed Research Infrastructure INFRAMAT, which is a partnership of 16 scientific institutions, The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), Sofia University, and the University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy.

The presentation brought together 39 participants from the Bulgarian research community, and took place at the premises of the Joint Innovation Centre of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The purpose of the session was to present CERIC and its Partner Facilities, and introduce the research community from different institutes and universities in Bulgaria to the scientific opportunities available for them in CERIC. The presentation included also a set of scientific cases and research studies performed by CERIC users in fields spanning from energy to health, cultural heritage, environment and more.

The event's program is available [here](#).

- **HERCULES Specialized Course 2021:** 31 May - 09 June 2021 | Online

The HERCULES Specialized Course 2021 (HSC) by CERIC-ERIC brought together more than 33 participants from 14 different countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The event was held online from 31 May to 09 June 2021, it was organized in collaboration with the Central European Initiative (CEI), CALIPSOPlus and ESUO.

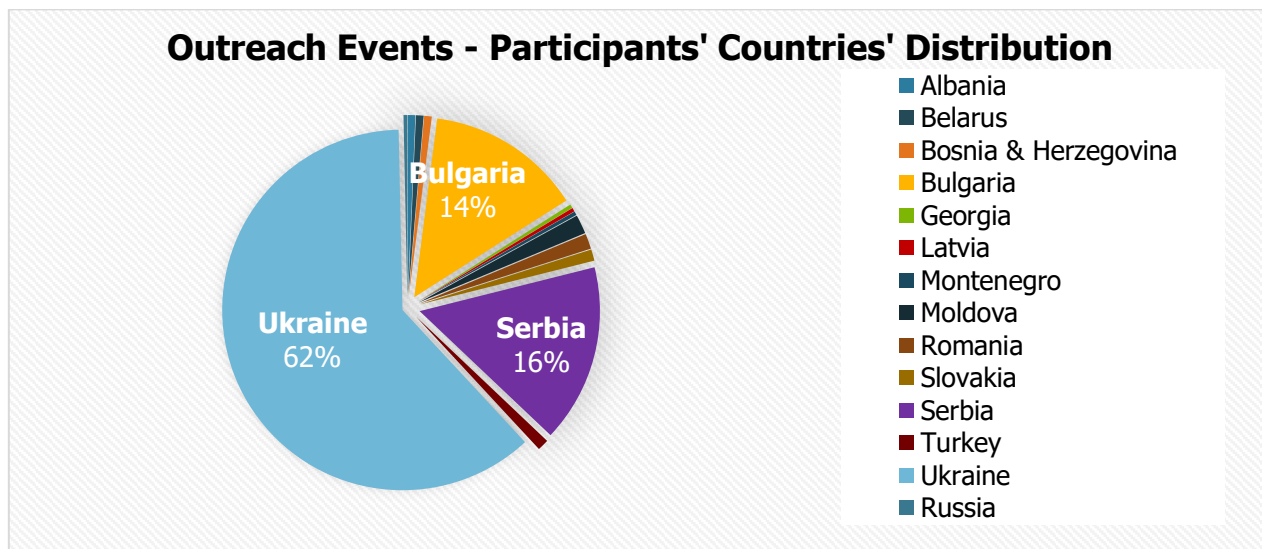
The 8 days long on-line training brought together researchers from universities/institutes from Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Moldova, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine, to introduce them to the different techniques offered by CERIC Partner Facilities along with their applications.

The program incorporated introductory sessions to each facility, practical exercises on various beamlines and instruments, and a poster session. More than 34 speakers from CERIC Partner Facilities and 2 speakers from the EOSC panorama were involved in the set-up of the program, to design an event that would provide participants with a widely rich experience and complete overview of CERIC. Among the covered topics were: electron paramagnetic resonance, electron microscopy, ion- and neutron-based techniques, nuclear magnetic resonance, and photon-based techniques in both the x-ray and the infrared range of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The event was open to researchers around the world, with a particular focus on countries from the Western Balkans. All selected participants benefited from a grant fully covering the participation fee. The selection of participants was held by a scientific committee composed of 4 researchers from CERIC Partner Facilities, based on applicants' motivation letters and CVs.

The event's program is available [here](#).

3. OUTREACH EVENTS – towards closer collaborations with institutions in the target countries



The outreach events organized in the frame of Task 4.2 were also an opportunity to enlarge CERIC's network with institutes and universities from the western Balkan countries, and explore potential collaboration for similar activities in the future.

For each outreach event, a throughout benchmark was implemented in the frame of WP6 Communication and Dissemination, to promote the event among targeted universities and faculties, based on the program of each event, and the profiles of researchers and fields of specialization that we aim to attract.

When the benchmark was finalized, in parallel with the online promotion in CERIC and partners' platforms, direct email marketing campaigns are held towards professors, deans and vice-deans of faculties of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Medicine, Pharmacy, Engineering, Technology & Metallurgy, and more. The direct email marketing campaign includes also Horizon2020 National Contact Points (NCP) for Research Infrastructures of targeted countries as well as Academies of Sciences and targeted clusters.

It is important and crucial to keep strong bonds with the universities and institutes from target countries to explore collaboration opportunities whenever possible. An example of such alliance is the outreach event organized in Belgrade in 2018, which was held in close collaboration with a NCP from the university of Belgrade that was previously contacted to promote an ACCELERATE event in 2017. Moreover, the alliance with NCPs and professors, vice-deans and deans of target universities is key for effectively reaching to research communities and potential users that are of priority for CERIC.