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DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE DANUBE HIGHER EDUCATION AREA IN CONDITIONS OF RECOVERY DANUBE RECTORS' CONFERENCE PROGRAM Maribor, November 9 – 10, 2022

Alongside the Green Deal and Resilience, Digitalisation or Digital Transformation is among the three major European priorities of the third decade of the Bologna Process. Especially in the Danube region, the pillar of prosperity is therefore strongly focused on green digitalisation via regional and local actions while planning for a high level of resilience against potential new crises. Simultaneously, the fields of research, education and knowledge transfer as the three basic missions of a university are relevant elements of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region's action plan, and therefore, universities of the Danube region need to recognise and face their responsibility in the co-creation of an accelerated digitalisation decade in Europe.

Embracing the European programme for digitalisation, the Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC) meets to discuss the main pillars of digital transformation in light of the green deal of a unified Europe, with an emphasis on resilience and on the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Among the fields of digitalisation, the foci will be on the European initiatives in Big Data or High Performance Computing, on Open Science for the European Higher Education and Research Area as well as on Cybersecurity as the provider of trust regarding the role of science and research, both in the search for truth and in the fight against fake news.

In parallel, participants of the first DRC Initiative Fund as well as of DRC Strategic Foresight project will meet with the winners of the Danubius Young Scientist Awards 2022 and present to their universities' rectors their view on Open Science from the perspective of Danube region's doctoral students and young researchers, who are in part responsible for the future of the region.

Wednesday 9 November 2022

Venue: Main university building, Slomškov trg 15, Maribor

15:00 – 21:00 **Registration, entrance to Main University Building, follow signs**

17:00 – 19:00 **Presidency and Permanent Committee meeting, Senate Hall, second floor**

16:00 – 17:00 **DRC projects (summer school, DRC Initiative Fund, Jean Monnet, Danube Future, ...)**
Anton Trstenjak Hall, Boris Podrecca Hall
Exhibition/Poster Session

19:30 – 21:00 **Welcome Cocktail at the Rectorate**

Thursday 10 November 2022

8:00 – 12:00	Registration in front of Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča (follow signs)
9:00 – 09:30	OPENING SESSION Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča Welcome by Zdravko Kačič, President of Danube Rector' Conference Welcome by Petra Česen Catar, National Coordinator EUSDR in Slovenia Welcome by Aleksander Arsenovič, Mayor of Maribor
9:30 – 10:15	SESSION 1: BIG DATA AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY – TWO MAJOR CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE DANUBE HIGHER EDUCATION AREA 9:30 Introduction and moderation by Zdravko Kačič, president of DRC
9:35 – 10:45	Key note speeches on Challenges for Digitalisation of the European Higher Education Area in the field of Big data and Energy Efficiency Emilija Stojmenova Duh, minister for digitalisation (video message) Zoran Ren, coordinator of HPC RIVR Project Daniel Martínek, DRC Secretariat, Coordinator of DRC Strategic Foresight project
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee Break In front of conference venue
11:00 – 12:00	SESSION 2: DANUBE REGION IN CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA – OPEN SCIENCE THROUGH SMART ACCESS Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča 11:00 Introduction and moderation by Ivanka Popović, Vice-President of DRC
11:10 – 12:00	Key note speeches on Challenges for Digitalisation of the European Higher Education Area in the field of Big d Boštjan Markoli, vice-rector of University of Ljubljana Alexandra Roman, Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research and Innovation Funding, Romania Renáta Csabai, Pannon Business Network
12:00 – 13:00	SESSION 3: THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN ESTABLISHING THE TRUTH Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča 12:00 Introduction and moderation by Friedrich Faulhammer, Vice-president of DRC
12:10 – 13:00	Key note speeches Oliver Vitouch, Rector of University of Klagenfurt, Vice-President of Austrian Rectors' Conference, Universities for Enlightenment Tatjana Welzer Družovec, coordinator of Work Package Research of ATHENA, Jozsef Györkös, editor of ATHENA Research Book Lucian Ciolan, Vice-Rector Development Projects, Lifelong Learning and Educational Infrastructure, University of Bukarest
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break Anton Trstenjak Hall, 1. floor
14:00 – 15:00	SESSION 4: EUROPEAN DIGITAL INNOVATION HUBS IN THE DANUBE REGION Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča 12:00 Introduction and moderation by Muhamed Turkanović, Head of DIGI:SI
12:10 – 13:00	Key note speeches Muhamed Turkanović, DIGI:SI Dieter Hertweck, HHZ, University of Applied Sciences Reutlingen (video message) Jonathan Loeffler, Executive Director of Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum

- 15:00 – 15:30 **Summary**
- 15:30 **Report from Parallel Event**
- 16:00 **Danubius Awards Ceremony, followed by a break**
- 19:30 – 22:00 **Official dinner**
(hosted by UM)

Friday 11 November 2022

- 8:00 – 9:30 **Registration**
- 9:30 – 12:30 **DRC GENERAL ASSEMBLY**
Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča
- 12:30 – 14:00 **Results of University Wine Competition 2022 at Buffet Lunch**
Anton Trstenjak Hall
- 15:00 – 20:00 **Field Trip to Meranovo wine estate**
(cancelled due to low registrations)

PARALLEL EVENT

Thursday 10 November 2022

CAN DOCTORAL SCHOOLS IN THE DANUBE REGION RESOLVE THE CHALLENGE OF BRAIN CIRCULATION AND EXCELLENCE IN SCIENCE AND RESEARCH?

- 8:00 – 12:00 **Registration**
in front of Dvorana Vladimirja Bračiča
- 12:00 – 12:30 **OPENING SESSION**
Fran Miklošič Hall
- Welcome by (PROREKTORKA ŠTUDENTKA), Head of Doctoral School of University of Maribor
Short Introduction by Participants
- 12:30 – 14:00 **EXPERIENCES BY STUDENTS WITH DOCTORAL SCHOOLS AND INTERNATIONAL SEMESTERS/YEARS**
- 14:00 – 14:30 **Coffee Break**
in front of conference venue
- 14:30 – 15:30 **EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS AND YOUNG RESEARCHERS WITH ACCESS TO RELEVANT RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE**
Fran Miklošič Hall

PROGRAMME FOR ACCOMPANYING PERSONS

Thursday 10 November 2022

Afternoon excursion to oldest town in the region Ptuj (Poetovio)

- 12:00 Departure by bus or van
(depending on registration)
- 12:30 Guided Tour of Ptuj Castle
- 13:30 Lunch
- 15:00 Walk in the Town Centre
- 12:30 Return to Maribor

SPEAKERS

Dr. Emilija Stojmenova Duh



Dr. Emilija Stojmenova Duh was born on 25.12.1985 in North Macedonia. After an employment in industry, she worked at Faculty of Electrical Engineering of University of Ljubljana as associated professor, where she led 4PDIH. From February 2018 to October 2019, she was executive director of DIH Slovenia. Besides numerous EU projects on topics of digital transformation, she is author of many scientific and professional publications in this field and was first president of IEEE »Women in Engineering Slovenia«.

She engages in a higher inclusion of young people (especially women) in technical fields. She was the first representative from Slovenia in the Global Young Academy and member of the work group European Research Area in ALLEA – All European Academies. Member of the Management Board of Slovenian research agency and Board member of the international organisation Forum Synergies.

Prof. Dr. Zoran Ren



Dr. Zoran Ren was born on 30.6.1963 in Maribor and is full professor at University of Maribor at Faculty of mechanical Engineering of University of Maribor. He is an expert in demanding computer modelling and simulations, high performance computing, modelling of fast transitional phenomena in solid materials, construction of machine elements and development and characterisation of cell metamaterials. He is head of LACE-X laboratory and the national research programme Construction of Cell Structures. He successfully cooperates with industry especially in the field of road safety.

Since 2000, he is Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellow, recipient of 21st Century CoE Award at University of Osaka, Japan and IROAST Visiting Professor at University of Kumamoto, Japan. He was visiting researcher at University of Wales, Swansea College, Great Britain, University of Delft, The Netherlands and Friederich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany. He performed 37 guest lectures at different universities worldwide.

Prof. Dr. Gregor Majdič



Prof. Dr. Gregor Majdič is Full Professor of Physiology at the Veterinary Faculty, University of Ljubljana, and Full Professor of Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine in Maribor. He received his PhD from the School of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1996. He then worked abroad for another three years as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Texas, USA.

The main topics of his research are the differences in the brain between the sexes and the biological sex differences in other parts of the body, the long-term effects of stress on the brain and health, and the possible effects of endocrine disruptors on health. In 2011, Dr. Majdič and his colleagues received the Rector's Award for the best innovation at the University of Ljubljana and the award for the best innovation in the public sector in Slovenia. To commercialise this innovation, he founded the spin-out company Animacel.

He has published more than 90 scientific articles in peer-reviewed international journals, and his articles have been cited more than 2,000 times. He was elected full visiting professor at the University of Zagreb and has given guest lectures at numerous universities around the world, including the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), University of California San Francisco (UCSF), Yunnan University in China, and Kyoto University in Japan.

Prof. Dr. Oliver Vitouch



Prof. Dr. Oliver Vitouch was born on 4.4.1971 in Vienna and is rector of University of Klagenfurt since 2012. His field is psychology and cognitive science. He received his PhD at University of Vienna. He was research scientist at Gerd Gigerenzer's Center for Adaptive Behavior and Cognition (ABC) at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin from 2000 to 2002, and has been teaching at the Free University of Berlin and the University of St. Gallen. After his habilitation in psychology, he became associate professor at the University of Vienna in 2002 and was appointed full professor of Cognitive Psychology at the University of Klagenfurt in 2003.

He served as Member of the Board (2004–2006) and President (2008–2010) of the Austrian Psychological Association. From January 2015 to May 2016, he was in charge as President of the Alps-Adriatic Rectors' Conference (AARC). Since January 2016, he served as Vice-President and from June 2016 to December 2017 as President of Universities Austria. He is active as Vice-President again since January 2018 and has served as Acting President in the second half of 2019. Vitouch was significantly involved into the emergence of the initiative Universities for Enlightenment (U4E).

Prof. Dr. Tatjana Welzer Družovec



Prof. Dr. Tatjana Welzer Družovec is full professor at the Institute of Informatics, Database Technology Laboratory, at faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science of University of Maribor. Her fields of expertise range from database design, reuse and re-engineering, CASE tools and computer and informatics education. She has numerous publications and is partner in EU projects within Horizon and Erasmus+ programme in the field of IT and digitalisation. She is institutional coordinator of University of Maribor at the European University Initiative ATHENA and coordinator of the research work package. She strongly engages in fostering women in STEM and promotion of women in science.

Prof. Dr. Lucian Ciolan



Prof. Dr. Lucian Ciolan was born on 18.10.1974 and is professor of Educational Policy and Research at the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of University of Bucharest.

Since December 2019 he is Vice-Rector of development projects, lifelong learning and educational infrastructure at University of Bucharest.

The main areas of interest are related to public/educational policies, research methodology, training of trainers, applications of (neuro)cognitive sciences in public policies and learning processes. He covered mandates in national bodies or agencies, as ARACIS Commission for Administrative Sciences, Education and Psychology, CNATDCU, the Social Sciences Commission of CNCS. Internationally, he was Romania's representative in EERA and member in the General Assembly of IEA.

Professor Lucian Ciolan is a Senior Trainer at the International Center for Policy Advocacy based in Berlin.

Dr. Muhamed Turkanović



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhamed Turkanović is deputy head of the Information Systems Laboratory of Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science of University of Maribor. He is head of the digital innovation hub DIH:UM and the European Digital Innovation Hub DIGI:SI. His field of expertise are cryptography, big data, blockchain technology, smart contracts, security and privacy in IoT, databases.

He is project leader and partner in several EU and other projects in the fields of digitalisation

Dr. Jonathan Loeffler



Dr. Jonathan Loeffler is CEO of the Steinbeis 2i GmbH, a member of the Steinbeis-Europa-Zentrum, one of the largest technology transfer centres in Europe, where he is managing director. He initiated and coordinates the Danube Transfer Centre (DTC) network created within the European Union Strategy for the Danube region in context of priority 8 Competitiveness. Dr. Loeffler presented the DTC idea at DRC's annual conference in Cluj-Napoca in 2011 and received the doctor honoris causa by technical University of Cluj-Napoca in 2019.