

Health research sector & research priorities of SERBIA

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Presentation Plan

- *Serbian Health Research sector*
 - *Major performers*
 - *Funding*
 - *PEOPLE*
 - *Infrastructure*
 - *SWOT analysis*

- *Research priorities*



Serbian Health Research Sector

MAJOR PERFORMERS

21 institutions at 5 universities, of which

- **11 schools:**
 - 5 medical
 - 1 each of dentistry, pharmaceuticals and veterinary medicine
 - 2 schools of biology
 - 1 of sports and physical education
- **10 research institutes**
 - All public
 - As opposed to the **private HES** – no private **research** university
 - Commercial enterprises – pharmaceutical cos Ø ?



Serbian Health Research Sector

FUNDING

- **Single funding institution**
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT (MSTD)
- **MSTD Budget for 2007 for health research**
> 3.500.000 €
- **Selection: upon published open calls for tenders, competitive**
- **Thematically: bottom-up approach**
- **104 ongoing national projects**
of which 36 “large” (budget >100.000 €)
- **Ministry of Health – no funding for pure health research**



Serbian Health Research Sector

PEOPLE

- **Researchers: \approx 2300** (registered by MSTD)
- **Slightly increasing** as of 2000
- **Slight annual increase in number of new PhDs**
(from 83 in 2002 to >100 in 2008)
- **Research output: significant \nearrow in quality & quantity:**
ISI listed publications:

2000	465
2003	636
2006	1278
2007	1524
2008	1720
- **Niches of scientific excellence** (internationally competitive top quality research)



Serbian Health Research Sector

PEOPLE - Involvement of Serbia health research in FP

FP7 Health:

- **BECAN** - Balkan Epidemiological Study on Child Abuse and Neglect, *Faculty for Special Education and Rehabilitation, Belgrade University*
- **PsychCNVs** - Copy number variations conferring risk of psychiatric disorders in children, *Institute of mental health, Belgrade*

FP6-INCO:

- **HISERBS** - Health improvement in Serbia through reinforcement of biomedical science and technology, *Institute for Medical Research, Belgrade University*
- **SERBPARTOON** - Reinforcement of the Serbian Centre for Parasitic Zoonoses, *Institute for Medical Research, Belgrade University*

FP6-Food Quality and Safety - NoEs

- **EUROFIR** - European Food Information Resource Network, *Institute of Medical Research, Belgrade University*
- **EURRECA** - Harmonizing nutrient recommendations across Europe with special focus on vulnerable groups and consumer understanding, *Institute of Medical Research, Belgrade University*



Serbian Health Research Sector

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Devastated in the nineties**
 - **Largely improving since 2000**
 - **Contribution to research infrastructure:**
 - **National: Ministry of Science, Ministry of Health**
 - **International: FP 6/7, EBRD, EAR...**
 - **Several niches of advanced infrastructure**
- Q: Sustainability & growth ?** continuous influx of money req –
- 2009 budget already cut

Serbian Health Research Sector

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Health recognized **among national priorities**
- **Institutional support** for RTD in health by the MSTD
- **Policy of R&D funding growth**
- **No. of public institutions** participating in health research
- **No. of well-trained highly-motivated individuals**
- **Increasing performance of researchers** as measured by number of publications in ISI / SCI journals
- **Presence in EU research programmes**



Serbian Health Research Sector

SWOT Analysis

Weaknesses

- **Lack of specific (predefined) priorities** (themes)
- **Little / no joint research** between research institutions & industry
- **Lack of wide-based info** on EU-funded research programmes
- **Lack of skills** for preparation of proposals for EU-funded research programmes
- **Lack of project management skills**
- **Insufficient support** for young researchers
- **Uneven research infrastructure** among and within research institutions



Serbian Health Research Sector **SWOT Analysis**

Opportunities

- *National strategy for science and technological development* to be in place in the coming months
- Health research among priorities
- Presence in EU research programmes
- EU accession process in perspective



Serbian Health Research Sector **SWOT Analysis**

Threats

- **Economic crisis** – endangered national RTD funding
- **Unstable economic situation**
- **Research infrastructure** - continuous need for institutional support for acquisition of latest technologies; large equipment requires new facilities
- **Brain drain.** Loss of health researchers to both foreign research institutions and to the private health sector



Serbian Health Research Sector

Research priorities

MSTD Strategy

General objectives:

- **to heighten cooperation with industry**
- **to include all existing research capacities and human resources in both basic and clinical research**



Serbian Health Research Sector

Research priorities

Specific objectives (strategic priorities):

- **to heighten cooperation with industry:**
 - pharmacogenetics and pharmacogenomics
 - nutrigenomics and nutrigenetics
- **to include all existing research capacities and human resources:**
 - molecular basis on monogenic, poligenic and multifactorial diseases
 - enhancement of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures in clinical practice



Serbian Health Research Sector

Research priorities

Specific objectives (strategic priorities):



No themes (much less topics)

as specific objectives !

**In the absence of state-formulated priorities,
are we left with our individual choices ?**

Including at level of WBC-INCO.NET

