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European Researchers' Night 2021 Press Release

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The *European Researchers' Night* is a Europe-wide public event that brings researchers closer to the public. Together with a series of pre-events, the event provides researchers with an opportunity to showcase the diversity of science and its impact on citizens' daily lives, and to stimulate interest in research careers – especially among young people. The *European Researchers' Night* highlights the contribution of researchers to the progress of our society by displaying their work in an interactive and engaging form. With a series of diverse activities in virtually all fields of science which are part of the pre-events or the main event, it showcases their work, the role they play in tackling societal challenges and also the role of the EU, which, by means of various funding initiatives and programmes, looks after its researchers, their working conditions, infrastructure, the beginning and development of attractive research careers, the researchers' research-based innovative work and, last but not least, promotes information and involvement of citizens in various ways, such as informing them about current scientific breakthroughs, with the transfer of knowledge in educational establishments as well as into economic practice, with Open Science, etc. The date of the *European Researchers' Night's* main event remains the last Friday of September, which means 24 September 2021.

The annual *European Researchers' Night* takes place at the initiative of the European Commission, which provides funding for it. Thus, it is also in 2021 that the financing is offered under the framework programme for research and technological development (Horizon 2020), the Marie Skłodowska-Curie programme. A total of 43 projects were granted the funding under the public call. Among these, two are prepared by Slovenian consortia, namely a consortium coordinated by the University of Maribor, with the project ***Science for All (ZATE)*** and a consortium coordinated by the House of Experiments, with the project ***Night Has its Power (NOČMOČ)***.

The latter will take place in 27 Slovenian towns and in Gorizia (Italia), involving 49 third-party institutions (primary and secondary schools, national parks, museums, faculties, a retirement residence, libraries and two institutions from abroad (IT and TR). The project is supported by the participating municipalities, the Slovenian Research Agency, the European Science Engagement Association (EUSEA), media sponsors, Ljubljana Public Transport and Post of Slovenia.

The main activities include researchers' visits to schools, science festivals in four cities, workshops, lectures, science espressos, demonstrations, scientific institutes' open days, science shows, school lectures, researchers' night in libraries, retirement residence, exhibitions, guided tours ...

The project also includes a project for citizens in the course of which we will empower the citizens as to the scientific observation and determining the level of safety of the bathing in nature outside the official bathing areas. All interested citizens will receive a workbook and a set of instruments to perform screening



European Researchers' Night 2021 – Science for All (ZATE)

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measurements of certain physical, chemical and biological parameters to define the quality of water. The information with which the citizens involved in the project will provide us will help to improve the transparency of unofficial bathing sites and draw attention to the need of additional measurements by the competent professional services.

The project ***Night Has its Power*** is co-designed by the consortium of partners comprising the House of Experiments, Jožef Stefan Institute, National Institute of Biology, Technical Museum of Slovenia and Geological Survey of Slovenia.

More information about the project *Night Has its Power* can be found at www.nocmoc.eu. Additionally, you can address your questions to info@nocmoc.eu.

The ***Science for All (ZATE)*** project is prepared by a consortium of three universities: University of Maribor (UM), University of Nova Gorica (UNG) and University of Primorska (UP), together with the following stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Slovenian Research Agency, Slovenian Business and Research Association (Brussels), Friends of Youth Association Maribor, EU House Ljubljana, Europe Direct information points in Maribor, Izola, Koper and Nova Gorica. The following institutions also contribute to the programme: Morigenos – Slovenian Marine Mammal Society, Little Creators, and Astronomical Society Orion. Within the project which boasts the participation of **151 researchers, a total of 25 faculties of consortia universities** (UM: Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Transportation Engineering and Architecture, Faculty of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Organizational Sciences, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Tourism, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, Faculty of Energy Technology, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; UP: Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Management, Faculty of Tourism studies - Turistica, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Science and Information Technologies, Faculty of Health Care; UNG: The Arts Academy, School for Viticulture and Enology, School of Science, School of Environmental Sciences, School of Humanities, Graduate School), we plan the implementation of 16 pre-events and 75 programme activities under the main event.

Pre-events will take place between May and September in **Maribor, Krško, Koper** and **Nova Gorica**. From among the pre-events, we highlight the *Jean Monnet Chair of Energy Law and Policy and the European Green Deal and Some Open Issues* online workshop, which takes place today from 11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and is accessible through the following link [here](#).

75 programme activities under the main ZATE event, which will take place on the last Friday in September, namely 24 September 2021 (the performance of which will be held live unless the epidemiological circumstances dictate otherwise, in which case the event will move to the web), will take place at various venues in **Maribor, Koper, Izola** and **Nova Gorica**: in Maribor, in the shopping centre Europark and in the Vetrinje Mansion; in Koper, in the Rectorate of the University of Primorska, at the Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Information Technologies, at the Faculty of Humanities; in Rodik, in the Mythic Park; in Izola, in the San Simon Archaeological Park, at the Faculty of Health Care, at the University Campus Livade; in Nova Gorica at the Bevk Square.

The project also includes synergies with a range of national, regional and EU initiatives and projects: Week of the Mediterranean Coast and Macro-Regional Strategies, [Jean Monnet Chair of Energy Law and Policy project](#),

[Water Crimes](#), [Photo-Emulsion](#), [Improdova](#), [Geofood](#), [Smart SME's](#), [Best Med](#), [Athena](#), selected best research and innovation projects under the [Mladi za napredek Maribora](#) movement (in Eng., Youth for the Progress of Maribor).

From among the range of diverse activities, such as science slam, quizzes, science show, experiments, interviews with researchers, open days, guided tours, performances of musical ensembles composed of researchers, we highlight a prize-winning national competition for kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools, which will encourage the youth to think about the role of researchers and science in relation to the competition theme linked to the European Year of Rail and the European Green Deal. The call is expected to be open from June to September 2021. The selected authors of papers will receive awards at the main event of the *European Researchers' Night*, at a venue which is closest to their hometown (Maribor, Koper, Izola or Nova Gorica).

Some remote schools (Murska Sobota, Lendava, Ljutomer, Ormož, as well as those in Sečovelje, Piran, Koper, Ajdovščina and Tolmin) will be offered free bus services from the school to the location of the nearest main event.

The key message of the *European Researchers' Night 2021* project **Science for All (ZATE)** is that everyone can become a researcher. The project raises awareness of the social importance of the role of researchers, who successfully tackle the challenges of modern society, e.g., in health and environmental protection. It reminds us of the importance of investing in research and innovation activities, as they are directly linked to the economic progress, competitiveness, social well-being and, last but not least, it reminds us of the fact that researchers are people with a highly responsible and attractive profession in our society who like to socialize and share their findings and professional experience, especially at events such as the *European Researchers' Night*. The main objectives of the project are to bring researchers closer to the general public, to encourage young people to choose a career in research and to increase awareness regarding the profession of researchers, regarding the opportunities to start and develop career paths in academic and non-academic institutions, understanding of the EU, which, by means of various funding initiatives and programmes, looks after its researchers, their working conditions, as well as to increase awareness regarding the important role of researchers in society and the substantial and important contribution of their scientific work to our everyday lives.

Further information on the **Science for All (ZATE) project** is available on the [UM website](#) and will soon be available also on the updated [website of the ERN project](#).

Prof. dr. Zoran Ren, Vice Rector for Science and Research at the University of Maribor, emphasized:

“With a series of activities, the *European Researchers' Night* raises awareness of the socially important role of researchers, science and its impact on all areas of human activity. Through the numerous project activities, we wish to demonstrate that research can be an attractive profession, offering careers in both academic and non-academic environments. The youth and their families as well as primary- and secondary-school teachers are given the opportunity to discuss with professional scientists in a relaxed, informal environment the issues related to the pursuit of this attractive profession. A range of diverse activities in a wide variety of scientific fields raises awareness of the enormous importance of science, without which there would be no social progress and also no other findings and knowledge, which are today taken for granted, such as those that

enable us to work from the comfort of home and those that enable the ever-lengthening of life expectancy. Scientists are, after all, a reliable social partner in finding solutions to the ever-emerging challenges of humanity, such as those which the recent pandemic has faced us with.

Dr. Miha Kos, director of the House of Experiments, the institution coordinating the project *Night Has Its Power*, stated:

“I am pleased that the partners of the project *Night Has Its Power* have been able to combine our knowledge and competences for the fourth time and create a wonderful project consisting of activities relating to science, science promotion, education as well as scientific art. The project would have no chance of success without all of the participating third-party institutions, scientists and supporters from many places in Slovenia and beyond. Additionally, the project would not have the character of the *European Researchers' Night* projects if it did not attract and bring together the key players, i.e., active and critically-thinking citizens who will, through the citizens' project, add their contribution to a healthier society and relationships therein.

I am sure that both of this year's Slovenian projects under the *European Researchers' Night*, *NOČMOČ* and *ZATE*, will prove that we are all researchers: in the kitchen, when we cook, in the garden, when we grow vegetables, spices and fruit and in life in general, when we have an idea and then try to confirm its validity or refute it with an experiment. It is important not to fear mistakes but see them as a step forward, as an experience enabling even better research. I am convinced that the interests of visitors to this year's *European Researchers' Night* will also influence some of them to find a path to profession directly related to science (or research).

Mag. Darija Valančič, the national contact persons' coordinator for Horizon Europe actions, under which the European Researchers' Night project is counted, pointed out:

The *European Researchers' Night* is a Europe-wide event of the European Commission and EU Member States which highlights the importance of scientific research and innovation for the quality of our daily lives. At the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, we are very proud of our researchers for having gained again this year two projects aimed at spreading scientific knowledge and ideas among the general public, especially among the young people. With the *European Researchers' Night*, science is opening up to people across Europe to display its research successes and their ambitions grounded in them for a different, better world.

If we are ever aware of the importance of science in our lives, then it is precisely now, when we are combating a very insidious virus, namely COVID-19. Therefore, we look to the research laboratories with hope that we can, with their help, protect our lives and preserve the achieved culture of the coexistence and socializing.

We also face other major global challenges, and I do not mean the everyday issues of economic and technological development, but above all those that will enable a nature-friendly, sustainable development of our societies and a suitable culture of life for this planet. Without science, we can no longer imagine such improvement, as today all the key challenges are based on science and its technologies, from healthcare to ecology and digitalisation.

At the Ministry, we strive to provide the best possible conditions for research and transfer of knowledge into everyday life in Slovenia. It is very important to improve the position of researchers in Slovenia, especially the early-stage ones, who are at the beginning of their scientific career.

We are convinced that both Slovenian ERN projects will strengthen the confidence in the power of science, encourage young people to choose research careers and show the public the outstanding aptitude, creativity and innovation of Slovenian researchers. Under the *European Researchers' Night*, Slovenia will be able to hear science and get submerged in its secrets. You are cordially invited to attend the event.

Highlights from the past *European Researchers' Night* events:



Partners of the ZATE consortium:



Partners of the NOČMOČ consortium:



The contents and views relating to the Science for All project under the *European researchers' Night 2021* that are presented on websites, in news, publications, social networks, pre-events, in other communication forms and through other communication channels are the sole responsibility of their authors and do not reflect the views of the EU or the Research Executive Agency.