



EURAXESS COUNTRY IN FOCUS: CROATIA

EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion is an initiative of the European Research Area (ERA) that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance their career development. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 40 countries, of which we will profile one in our quarterly EURAXESS ASEAN e-newsletter. Here we focus on Croatia.

Croatia is situated in South East Europe, at the crossroads of Central Europe and the Mediterranean, neighbouring five countries on land border: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Hungary, Serbia, and Montenegro. The Croatian Adriatic coastline is one of the most indented coastlines in Europe, next to the Norwegian fjords.

The International Monetary Fund classified Croatia as an open and developing economy and the World Bank defined it as a high-income economy.

CROATIAN S&T FUNDING AGENCIES

Scientific research in Croatia is monitored and conducted in six fields of science: natural sciences, technical, biomedical, biotechnical and social sciences, and humanities. The entire system of science and technology is financed through direct project financing with a mechanism of annual monitoring of results, through financing of junior researchers on concrete



projects, with multi-year monitoring of their progress and financing of equipment.

The main funding bodies, in addition to the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE), are the Croatian Science Foundation (CSF) and the Croatian Agency for SMEs, Innovations and Investments (HAMAG-BICRO). Through the Regional Competitiveness Operational Programme and Operational Programme Human Resources Development, Croatia is combining European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) for funding development of science and research.

Croatian Science Foundation (CSF)

Croatian Science Foundation was established by the Croatian Parliament in December 2001 under the name The National Foundation for Science, Higher Education and Technological Development of the Republic of Croatia. Its mission is to promote science, higher education and technological development in Croatia in order to ensure the economic development and to support employment. The Foundation provides support to scientific, higher education and technological programmes and projects, fosters international cooperation, and supports the realization of scientific programmes of special interest in the field of fundamental, applied and developmental research.

Croatian Agency for SMEs, Innovations and Investments (HAMAG-BICRO)

HAMAG-BICRO is the Croatian Agency for SMEs, Innovation and Investments established by the Government of the Republic of Croatia with the purpose of enhancing SME development and promoting investment and innovation. The Agency is an independent institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts.



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CROATIAN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION INSTITUTIONS

The Croatian research and innovation system

The Croatian research and innovation system has evolved over the last decade into a complex system of various institutions and measures directed to build innovation-driven growth. The basic principles and guidelines of science and higher education policy are determined by the Croatian Parliament. **The Ministry of Science and Education (MSE)** is the main administrative body responsible for planning, funding and monitoring of the entire science and education system while the highest advisory body for the scientific research system is **The National Council of Science, Higher Education and Technological Development** with the aim to harmonize the overall development of the R&D and innovation system. **The Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts** complements the national innovation policy related to innovation-based entrepreneurship and business infrastructure. The role of the **Ministry of Regional Development and European Funds** has increased upon the Croatian accession to EU. Scientific activity in Croatia is performed at the universities, public research institutes, research institutes, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and other legal persons duly registered in the Register of Scientific Organisations.

Investment in R&D and employment in Science and Technology

The Croatian science and technology sector employed 38,2 % of the active population (aged 25-64) in 2016 according to the Eurostat report which is close to the EU-28 average (46%). The public R&D sector, with universities playing a leading role, is the largely dominant sector research manpower (56,5% of total researchers HEI in 2016). As reported by Eurostat in 2016, the business sector employs a modest 21% of total researchers and invests 0,44 percent of GDP in R&D. On the other hand, the business enterprises sector is leading in R&D performing activities (49,4%), followed by the higher education sector (31%). Furthermore, the total investment into R&D was 0,85% of the GDP in 2016 and has been fluctuating around 1% in the past 10 years, marking Croatia as one of the most advanced R&D performers in the region, but not at the EU level. However, according to ERAWATCH, Economic Programme of Croatia envisaged increasing the investment in research and development to achieve a share of GERD of 1,4% of the GDP by 2020 in order to overcome the gap in science funding between Croatia and the EU countries (0,85% of GDP vs. 2,03 % of GDP in 2016).

Ruđer Bošković Institute

The Ruđer Bošković Institute is regarded as Croatia's leading scientific institute in the natural and biomedical sciences as well as marine and



*Institut
Ruđer
Bošković*



environmental research, owing to its size, scientific productivity, international reputation in research, and the quality of its scientific personnel and research facilities. The Institute is the leading and internationally most competitive Croatian institute by virtue of its participation in international research projects.

Croatian Academy of Science and Arts

The Academy promotes and organizes scientific research and encourages the application of the findings of this research, develops artistic and cultural activities, and is concerned with Croatian cultural heritage and its affirmation throughout the world. It publishes the results of scientific research and artistic creation and makes proposals and gives its

opinion on the promotion of sciences and arts in the fields which are of special importance to the Republic of Croatia.



Study in Croatia

The portal “Study in Croatia” (www.studyincroatia.hr) is owned and managed by the Croatian Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes. It contains information about higher education in Croatia aimed at prospective international students. You can find an overview of the Croatian higher education system, practical information about application procedures, student life, visas and accommodation and scholarships. Furthermore, the portal provides information on learning Croatian as a foreign language, as well as general information about Croatia. More information can be found at: <http://www.studyincroatia.hr/>



Studyⁱⁿ
Croatia



Important information for incoming researchers: EURAXESS Croatia

The Agency for Mobility and European Union Programmes is coordinator (Bridgehead Organization) of the EURAXESS programme in Croatia as well as a EURAXESS Service Centre. The EURAXESS Service Centre (ESC) assists researchers and their families during their period of mobility, in all matters relating to their professional and daily lives, helping them to reach adequate services for their needs, as well as assists the core contact points in research institutions and informs a wider group of contact points about matters of interest to mobility. For all required information, incoming researchers should contact Croatian EURAXESS Service Centre, or check our website (<https://www.euraxess.hr/>).

**Interview with [Dr Jiangyang You](#) (China)****Research Associate, Laboratory of Magnetic Resonance, Division of Physical Chemistry, Institute Ruđer Bošković, Zagreb, Croatia****How did you decide to come to Croatia?**

In 2009, a Croatian research team got in contact with me and after overcoming a series of initial administrative difficulties, I finally came to Rudjer Boskovic Institute (RBI) in 2011 as a postdoc, sponsored by the Croatian Science Foundation (CSF). In the following years I worked under a few more postdoc level contracts at Rudjer Boskovic Institute (RBI), in the division of theoretical physics, until joining the laboratory for magnetic resonances, division of physical chemistry, as a research associate in May 2017 and starting in a whole new research area which I am working on now.

How would you describe everyday life and work in Croatia?

I currently live a usual researcher's life in Zagreb: intensive at work while simple and peaceful otherwise. The work load is not low, but thankfully the working environment is flexible so I can set up the schedule that is most suitable for me. After work, I spend most of my time doing sports, playing badminton as well as doing the physical training necessary for it.

What advice would you give to your fellow researchers who are thinking of coming to Croatia?

I would like to say that Croatia is a good place to start developing something for and on your own. You are coming to a country with a solid high education tradition as basis, and a country seeking all chances to catch up to the highest standard in the European Union right now. From my point of view such a scenario presents many opportunities, but of course challenges, too.

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