



Advancing R&I ecosystems in the Western Balkans with regard to their ERA integration

(ESOF 2020 - Virtual Room 3, 12:00 – 13:30)

Speakers



Vedran Šimunovic is a highly experienced project manager, business developer and technology enthusiast, who is currently serving as the **Executive Director of INTERA Technology Park**. Prior to his work at INTERA, Vedran has worked in the private sector as foreign markets expert. With current engagement through INTERA Technological Park, he aims to improve the economic scene of the region and to help

individuals realize their entrepreneurial potential through providing adequate knowledge, skills and initial resources that include space, equipment, infrastructure, partnership, mentorship, access to finances and connection to investors. With implementing more than 30 different projects of domestic and foreign donors, INTERA Technological Park has gained experience that has become a reliable partner in creating a better business environment for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Dr. Branka Zizic graduated at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade. Master degree gained at the University of Montenegro, in the field of comparative education policy. A UWCAD alumna. After gaining working experience in different sectors: education, business, NGO, she started working in the public administration (Ministry of Education and Science, later Ministry of Science), in 2007. She has led numerous

projects in the field of design and implementation of research and innovation policies (national, EU, World Bank), international collaboration and EU integrations in the field of R&I. Currently, she is carrying out the duty of the **General Director for innovation and technology development in the Ministry of Science of Montenegro** (since June 2018). She is a member of the Steering Platform on Research and Innovation for the Western Balkans and member of the Western Balkans Chapter of the MC Alumni Association Steering Board.



Dr. Ales Gnamus is a **scientific policy officer at JRC Seville** since February 2008. He has been working for the European Commission (DG RTD and DG REGIO) since 2004. He has long-standing analytical experience with European, international and macro-regional S&T cooperation, as well as with the environment, energy, transport and smart cities. His interests include policy analysis, benchmarking, qualitative and quantitative

assessment of policies and on modern internet-based communication/dissemination information platforms. He holds a PhD in natural sciences and had been previously working as a researcher dealing with different research topics at universities and research institutes in various countries. Since 2012 he works as an expert in energy, smart cities and engineering in a Smart Specialisation Platform on supporting the EU regions and Member States as well as macro-regions in Europe and beyond in designing and implementing the smart specialization strategies. In 2012 he has co-developed the [RIS3 Assessment Wheel](#) with C. Saublens from EURADA and assured its applications in the RIS3 design peer reviews methodology. Since 2012 he has been a team leader in the [Smart EU Macro-regions](#) activities and has been involved in designing the S3 tools such as the [Eye@RIS3](#), [ESIF-viewer](#) and [ESIF-Energy](#) tool as well as the [S3 Platform's website](#). Since its creation, he has been working also in the [Thematic Smart Specialization Platform on Energy](#). Since November 2018 he is also the team leader of the project dedicated to the smart specialization cooperation in the field of Blue Economy (S3P-Blue Growth) and since June 2019 also a team leader of the project supporting the design of smart specialization strategies in the [Enlargement countries](#) (S3P-NEAR).



Dr. Ognjen Prnjat, holds the position of **Director of National Infrastructures for Research and Technology at GRNET** - National Infrastructures for Research and Technology provides advanced network, cloud computing and IT infrastructures and services to the academic, research, educational community as well as to agencies of the public, broader public and private sector. It holds a key role as an advisor to the Ministry

of Digital Governance in the implementation of Digital Transformation Strategy for the Greek Public Sector.. In his role, Ognjen is responsible for the overall GRNET involvement in pan-European and worldwide e-Infrastructures. He is also organizing various aspects of e-Infrastructures in the South-East European region and beyond, their sustainability and seamless integration in the pan-European landscape. In the past 15 years, he has acted as project coordinator for 7 EC projects in the field, focusing on e-Infrastructure service development in South-East Europe. Previously Ognjen was with the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering, University College London, where, as a Research Fellow, he was leading technical and project management aspects of a number of EC ACTS/IST and UK EPSRC projects in diverse fields of computing and telecoms. He holds a Bachelor of Eng. Degree in Electronics and Electrical Eng. (First Class Honors) from University of Surrey, UK, 1995; MSc (Distinction), 1996, from University College London; and Ph.D. in Telecoms from UCL, 2001.