

European Metrology Research Programme Launching event
Bled, Slovenia, 12th February 2008
Pozdravni govor/Welcome address by Nineta Majcen, Director MIRS

Spoštovana gospa ministrica Mojca Kucler Dolinar, spoštovani gostje, lepo pozdravljeni
Dear Minister, Ms Mojca Kucler Dolinar, dear distinguished speakers, dear colleagues and guests,

It is my pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Metrology Institute of the Republic of Slovenia and in my personal name on the occasion of launching the European Metrology Research Programme here in Bled.

The European Metrology Research Programme brings an entirely new dimension in European metrology.

This is very much needed, as European metrology, which used to be an exclusively state governed activity, is facing very much the same challenges as the European countries do since 1950s. As for the state, the challenges are caused by enlarging European Union and therefore by a free movement of goods and services. Like the states, also metrology - as being closely linked to the governments - needs to respond to these challenges.

Although the European metrology has recently been re-structured, this is only one mere step towards fulfilling the needs of the contemporary society and therefore justifying its existence and its need for public funding. Besides structural changes, bringing metrology research activities closer to the contemporary needs of the society is even more important.

Having said this, the role and contribution of the European Metrology Research Programme in getting metrology research needs driven is enormous. So far, many things have already been done and many actions have been undertaken in order to support the well needed change. However, the most challenging part – its implementation - is still to come.

I of course can't but to mention also a different role "metrology as a science of measurement" has nowadays.

In so far, metrology has very much been the synonym for traceability dissemination. However, nowadays metrology is understood in a much broader context:

It covers everything from reference values for traceability dissemination and for comparability purposes as well as development and validation of new measurement procedures, both also to a large extent in new measurement areas.

It is therefore obvious that the way the metrological services have been developed and delivered up until the modernity, will need to be modified as to face the new challenges successfully.

Let me summarise my welcome with the following:

As I have stressed at the beginning of my talk, metrology is being changed considerably and we are lucky to be living this challenging times.

However, shall we not tackle the change appropriately and in time, the heritage we would leave to the generations to come and to the society they will live in, will be unfortunately of a very little use if not even unfavourable for their further development. In this respect, we all do have a big responsibility and therefore we shall not forget that the key to a successful change in metrology is only by simultaneously being able to:

- on one side, think EU, and
- on the other side, think local.

In practice this means establishing&developing expertise in specific areas, which are important for a certain country instead of duplicating research facilities which might already exist in the neighbouring country or in a region.

It also goes without saying that the new competence centres for metrology research can only prosper if they are designed as an open network, which can respond promptly to the sophisticated needs of the society.

Last, but not least, I would like to express my sincere thanks to iMERA and EURAMET management for accepting the proposal of Prof. Janko Drnovšek, Slovenian EURAMET Delegate, for organising this event in Slovenia.

I hope that you will find it useful and enjoyable, both from the content as well as from organisational point of view. As for the latter, my sincere thanks go also to dr. Rado Lapuh, Bernarda Krištof, Tanja, Maja, Vesna and the other MIRS staff who has been working on logistical tasks for this event and who will also be taking care of all of us in the coming days.

I wish you all a lot of fruitful discussions and pleasant and enjoyable stay in Slovenia.

Vsem želim uspešno delo in prijetno bivanje v Sloveniji.