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The Integrated Initiative of European Laser Research Infrastructures IV

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Final report on the NCP activity

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<i>Deliverable Type</i>	
R = Report DEM = Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs DEC = Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc. OTHER = Software, technical diagram, etc.	R
<i>Dissemination Level</i>	
PU = Public, fully open, e.g. web CO = Confidential, restricted under conditions set out in Model Grant Agreement CI = Classified, information as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC	PU

1 Introduction

The network of “National Contact Points” (NCPs) acts as an additional information bridge between the Laserlab-Europe consortium, on the one hand, and laser researchers, users, and science and policy bodies in countries with relatively small but emerging laser communities, on the other hand. The network also interacts regularly with relevant initiatives of the ELI project towards the consolidation of user communities and promotion of advanced training of human resources, taking into account the considerable evolution of the European laser landscape during recent years through the construction of the pan-European Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) project in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania. This evolution opens up exciting opportunities to consolidate Europe’s position in laser research, but at the same time implies significant challenges, in particular related to the availability of highly trained researchers both at these new facilities and at the national level. In addition, the members of the network interact with networks in developing regions outside Europe for disseminating the activities of Laserlab-Europe.

2 Objectives

The overall objective is to increase the participation of these laser communities in Laserlab-Europe’s activities, such as the access programme, training schools or technical meetings. This networking activity therefore constitutes an important instrument for the successful development of the Consortium.

3 Work performed

Each NCP member is actively engaged in the home country as main representative of Laserlab-Europe, reaching out to their national user communities, by

- spreading and promoting information about Laserlab-Europe, especially about Access opportunities, user training activities and possibilities for sharing of best practices;
- promoting the establishment of formal national networks in lasers, optics and photonics;
- assisting in the development and consolidation of national laser communities;
- assisting local facilities in engaging in national research infrastructure roadmaps;
- assisting prospective first-time users by acting as an interface to the relevant RIs;
- informing the Laserlab-Europe consortium about national roadmaps, infrastructures and needs and requests from the national user community regarding the access programme.

Examples of national and regional activities are given in the periodic reports.

Reports on and exchange of experience with these activities took place at general meetings of the NCPs:

Laserlab Meeting of Network of National Contact Points, 12 May 2017, Berlin, Germany

The objectives of the First General Meeting were to bring together all NCP representatives, as well as representatives from the Laserlab-Europe Management, and evaluate the activities carried out during the first 18-month period.

Actions of the NCP participants towards the goals of this activity include a broad range of activities for dissemination and outreach, training events and access programmes developed by the partners, with some activities even reaching a transnational audience. In several cases there have been significant changes in the status of the national laser communities and access capabilities (e.g. CLPU, Spain). The ELI and HiLASE projects have also brought an increase in the laser development in their respective regions.

A second aim of the meeting was to define future activities for the network, as well as strengthening the collaboration within the network.

Details are given in deliverable report D8.1.

Laserlab-Europe Meeting of Network of National Contact Points, 22 May 2019, held as video conference

The objectives of the second general meeting were to bring together representatives from all the NCP's, as well as representatives from the Laserlab-Europe Management, and evaluate the activities carried out since the first meeting in May 2017. In addition to evaluating the activities carried out, the aim of the meeting was to define future activities and recommendations for best practices for the network.

One outcome of the meeting was that the participants agreed that there was a need for guidelines or a handbook with recommendations for feasible and effective actions of NCPs. In view of the recommendation to involve all partners in Laserlab-Europe as national contact points, this would also facilitate the take-up of similar actions by.

Details are given in deliverable report D8.2.