



euraxess
RESEARCHERS IN MOTION

Seventh Annual Meeting Report of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America 2021

***European Scientific Diasporas in Synergy:
Strengthening Researcher Networks through Interaction and Collaboration***



Introduction



The Seventh Annual Meeting of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America took place virtually on December 15th, 2021. This year's annual meeting was virtual and themed *European Scientific Diasporas in Synergy: Strengthening Researcher Networks through Interaction and Collaboration*. This event was hosted by EURAXESS North America and moderated by FUTOUR.



Host

Jackson Howard
EURAXESS North America

Facilitator

Paolo Martinez
IAF Certified™ Professional Facilitator (CPF)
Platinum Facilitation Impact Awardee 2020



Event Agenda

Introduction

Keynote Remarks

Jean-Eric Paquet

*Director-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)
European Commission*

Dr. Florent Bernard

*Counselor, Research & Innovation
Delegation of the European Union to the United States*

Presentations

Jackson Howard

Regional Coordinator, EURAXESS North America

Dr. Derya Büyüktanır Karacan

*Program Manager, EURAXESS North America
Visiting Fellow, George Washington University*

Synergising in breakout groups

Break



Panel: Strengthening Researcher Networks through Interaction and Collaboration

Dr. Sergio Crespo-Garcia

*Canada East Coordinator, Marie Curie Alumni Association -
North America Chapter (MCAA-NA)*

Dr. Johannes Aigner

Executive Director, Office of Science and Technology Austria (OSTA)

Teodor Stan

President, Immigration Research Forum (IRF, Romania)

Anna Oberle-Brill

Program Director, German Academic International Network (GAIN)

Sofia Sedergren-Booker

President, STARS Network (Sweden)

Conclusions

Post-event networking session

Keynote Interview: Key Messages

Jean-Eric Paquet

Director-General, Research and Innovation (DG RTD)
European Commission



Collaboration between scientific communities, especially across the Atlantic, is vital. As a global community, staying within the Paris agreement of 1.5 degrees and tackling other climate change challenges highlighted in the IPCC report requires cooperation. With the current US administration, there is now common grounds for Europe and the U.S. to team up to deploy science and scientific outcomes.

Europe has much to offer to the scientific community. The continent's tradition of engineering and deep tech will drive innovation for society. Europe is also leading the clean technology revolution and transformation, making the continent ahead of anyone else around the world.

Dr. Florent Bernard

Counsellor, Research and Innovation
Delegation of the European Union to the U.S.



Bridging the gap between science and society is necessary. European researchers and scientist are deploying science for society through dialogues with citizens.

- During the pandemic science drove public policy and there was a strong consensus among society for science based solutions.
- In Europe, for example, the anxious around technological advancement - such as AI and gene editing- has necessitated conversations with society to make informed science choices.
- Key players such as universities and research institutions play a central role in driving better policies and debates with societies to advance scientific agendas.

“The best Science is happening in Europe”

-Jean-Eric Paquet

“There is no scientific truth but only scientific methods”

“We need to team up and deploy science and science outcomes”

Jean-Eric Paquet, Director-General, Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission



Overview of scope and activities of EURAXESS



Jackson Howard
EURAXESS North America

“EURAXESS North America serves as the information broker and the point of contact in the United States and in Canada to researchers of all nationalities, but also in all research fields and in all stages of your research career.”

- Jackson Howard, EURAXESS

EURAXESS North America - research in motion - is a European Commission initiative that promotes Europe as a research destination. EURAXESS acts as the information broker and point of contact in the US.

EURAXESS provides a platform for European scientific diasporas to network among themselves and their North American counterparts; to keep connected to the European Research Area; and to learn and share their knowledge and skills with Europe, North America and beyond.

Launch of the European Scientific Diasporas (ESD) Incubator Pilot Program

What is it? The ESD Incubator Program offers tailored support services to research networks. The incubator program assists the formation of a new ESD networks and supports existing ESD networks to expand scope.

For new ESD networks, the program supports the use of shared resources including social media support, mentoring sessions with other ESD networks among many others.

For existing networks, the program provides networking platforms with other ESDs and creates connections.

Incubator tools provided:

- Zoom Hosting
- Basecamp Projects
- Testing out new platforms
- Domain name purchasing
- Promotion via EURAXESS North America

zoom

Seventh Annual Meeting of the European Scienti... - Shared screen with speaker view

ESD Incubator Pilot Program

Two Tracks:

- Formation of new ESD networks
- Support for existing ESD networks



We have started a Five-Stage Call to Action



1. Survey

- “Dynamics of Global Mobility: Opportunities and Challenges of European Scientific Diasporas”

2. Strategy Session (*State of the Art*) Call to Action for the European Scientific Diaspora Leaders

- 8th September 2021
- Austria, France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and Canada

3. Participatory Focus Group 1

- 10th November 2021
- Croatia, Ireland, France, Spain, Canada, Turkey, and Italy

4. Participatory Focus Group 2

- 18th November 2021
- France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Moldova, Austria, Slovenia, Sweden, Poland

5. Seventh Annual Meeting of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America

- *European Scientific Diasporas in Synergy: Strengthening Researcher Networks through Interaction and Collaboration*

1 - SURVEY

Dynamics of Global Mobility: Opportunities and Challenges of European Scientific Diasporas

- The survey aims to:
 - Provide information on the *challenges and opportunities* of European talent in different parts of the world where EURAXESS Worldwide has hubs
 - Investigate the *willingness and ideas of European researchers on how to get more connected with the other European scientific networks*
- It was prepared in a *participatory way*
- We facilitated the process with a digital brainstorming tool
- It provides data on the expectations and concerns of European scientific diaspora *members*
- It reflects *researcher's perspectives* – from the EU member countries and associated countries

We hope that the collected information from this study can support policymakers in their future agenda settings

We hope to get as many participants as possible, so the results will be representative. We encourage you to take the survey and also disseminate it in your networks.

The link for the survey:

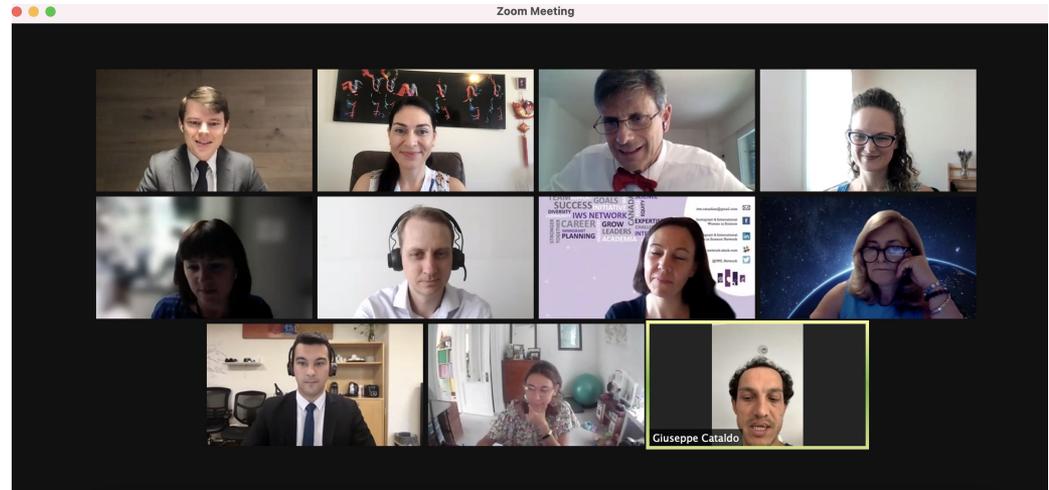
<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide/north-america/survey-dynamics-global-mobility>

2 - STRATEGY SESSION 1: STATE OF THE ART

Call to Action for the European Scientific Diaspora Leaders

8th September 2021

- It was the first part of our community building process to warm up the scientific diaspora community
- and
- We discussed the themes of our 7th annual meeting and selected the key topics in a participatory way



PARTICIPATORY FOCUS GROUPS (STRATEGY SESSIONS 2 & 3)



In the lead-up to our Annual Meeting of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America, we invited diaspora leaders and embassy representatives for an open dialogue to get their feedback on their members' challenges and needs as well as to hear about their expectations from policymakers

GroupMap, an interactive brainstorming platform, was used

Qualitative aspect of the survey--We asked similar questions extrapolated from the survey

Diaspora leaders or representatives know the realities or current challenges of their members. We aimed to motivate and engage them into a future vision

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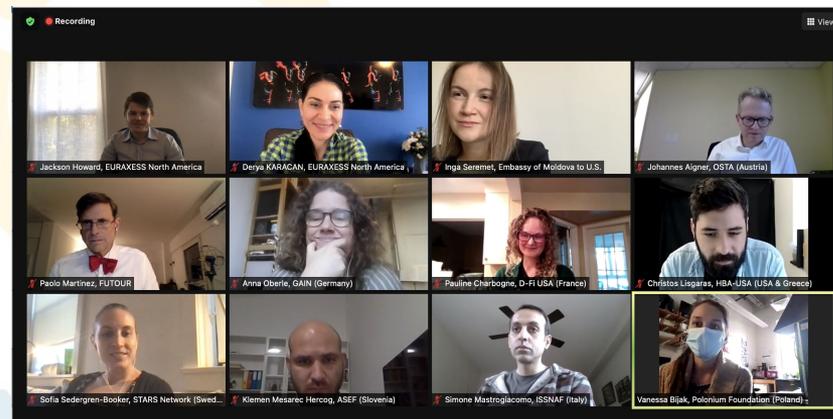
PARTICIPATORY FOCUS GROUPS (STRATEGY SESSIONS 2 & 3)



Focus Group 1



Focus Group 2



Organizations Attending the Strategy Sessions



**POLONIUM
FOUNDATION**



stars

Swedish Trans-Atlantic
Researchers & Scholars
Network

OSTA

OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY AUSTRIA
WASHINGTON, DC

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RESEARCHERS IN MOTION



ECUSA
ESPAÑOL
CIENTÍFICOS
EN USA



**IRELAND AMERICA
SCIENCE FORUM**

ASEF
AMERICAN SLOVENIAN
EDUCATION FOUNDATION



HBA of USA



Docteurs Français à l'international



ISSNAF
ITALIAN SCIENTISTS & SCHOLARS
IN NORTH AMERICA FOUNDATION



Immigrant & International
Women in Science

tagga | TURKISH -
AMERICAN
SCIENTISTS
AND
SCHOLARS
ASSOCIATION

FUTOUR

Insights from the strategy sessions with diaspora leaders and embassy representatives



Dr. Derya Büyüktanır Karacan
Project Manager, EURAXESS North America
Visiting Fellow, George Washington University

Five-stage call for Action

- Survey
- Strategy Session (*State of the Art*)
- Call to Action for the European Scientific Diaspora Leaders
- Participatory Focus Group 1
- Participatory Focus Group 2
- Seventh Annual Meeting of the European Scientific Diasporas in North America

What are your members' main challenges and/or needs while they are working or living in the US and/or Canada?

- Navigating rules and regulations in the US and Canada, including visa issues, taxes, paperwork. The heterogeneity of rules and regulations within the US states and Canadian provinces is a particular challenge.
- Lack of career development opportunities such as difficulty finding funding and networking.
- Difficulty balancing work and personal life, especially during COVID, were identified as a challenge.

What are the contributions and/or benefits of engaging with a diaspora group for your members' personal and career development?

- Expanding network.
- Platform to share knowledge, resources, job opportunities, and best practices.
- Opportunity to collaborate on research.
- Acts as a support system.
- Encourages community building (sense of belonging).

How can the EU further facilitate the European scientific diaspora to get more involved?

- Funding for online platforms (Zoom, Slack, LinkedIn).
- Organizing more focus groups and AM.
- Better communication between the EU and the diaspora.
- Better advertisement for jobs and funding.

...Continued

How can your home country facilitate the European scientific diaspora to get more involved?

- Participants unanimously agreed that connecting and collaborating more with their Embassy or consulate in the U.S. and Canada is crucial to get the European scientific diaspora involved. However, science diplomat's duties can be more diplomatic, making facilitating and collaborating with the diaspora more difficult.

How does engaging with other diaspora networks enhance the career development of your members?

- Widen member's network.
- Increase knowledge on what other diasporas are doing.
- Creates opportunity to co-host events.
- Sharing best practices.
- EU community building.

What can the US and or Canada do to retain researchers from the scientific diasporas?

- Provide visa sponsorship.
- Make access and retention of H1B visas less cumbersome.
- Recognition of professional experience and education from outside Canada and the US.
- What can EURAXESS do to support researcher careers long-term after working in the U.S.? (Particularly if they were here during COVID).

What actions, ideas, or models can be initiated to help you connect more with other European scientific diasporas and improve communication between diaspora networks?

- Using more virtual platforms like LinkedIn, Slack to share resources, experiences.
- Attending more facilitated events and workshops
- Creating a mailing list with all the EU diaspora
- Setting up a hub as a platform where all EU diaspora can connect

Synergising the European Scientific Diasporas



**Breakout
rooms**

A large, hand-drawn style speech bubble with a thick black outline, containing the text "Breakout rooms" in a purple, sans-serif font.

Panel:

Strengthening Researcher Networks through Interaction and Collaboration



Dr. Sergio Crespo-Garcia
*Canada East Coordinator, Marie Curie
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Panel: Q&A

Paolo: Why are scientific diasporas important for global competition for talent?

Sergio: Diasporas are very important for two reasons. They are agents of change. So, when they migrate they bring diversification of knowledge. Diasporas are also an efficient way to prevent university endogamy.

Johannes: Bringing together diasporas are important for creating value, sharing experiences, and building knowledge.

Teodor: In the US, immigrants played a central role in advancing innovation and the economy. The role of the European diasporas are similar. Diasporas are central to transatlantic scientific collaborations including building a stronger international intellectual property regime. Scientific diasporas are also inherently competitive as they strive to solve some of humanity's biggest problems.

Anna: People who take their research to another country are inherently enterprising and competitive. Scientific diasporas are also avenues to share information.

Sofia: The main point is that researchers who are moving abroad are talented and practical issues like visas should not be a hindrance. So, diaspora groups play a vital role in sharing experiences and information with one another.

Jackson and Derya: EURAXESS acts as an information broker and helps people connect to other networks that are counterparts to them, or opportunities. So, EURAXESS plays an important role in alleviating some of the issues that diasporas face.



Paolo: As a diaspora leader, what has been the most inspiring and the most challenging aspects?

Sergio: Belonging to the Marie Curie alumni association has been a pleasure especially in terms of being exposed to talented individuals, multiculturalism, and interdisciplinarity. Being able to reach out to other members regarding professional and migration issues has been inspiring. In my case, geographical distance and different time zones, especially during covid, has been a huge challenge.

Teodor: Personally, conducting a series of qualitative questionnaires with diasporas has been rewarding. The questionnaire focused on their definition of cultural belonging and values which provided a breadth of information on their professional and personal achievements. The most challenging aspect has been, being able to establish long term institutions ties with universities and government in Romania.

Anna: In the case of GAIN, being funded by the German government has been rewarding. It has led to many synergies and collaborations with other groups who play a role in international science diplomacy. In addition, diasporas have been a place for scientist from many disciplines to connect, which has also been inspiring. Pandemic related issues such as not being able to see and interact with people and travel restriction has been challenging.

Sofia: The most inspiring aspect of working with the diaspora groups has been (1) being of service to talented researchers, and (2) learning about the contributions they make to their fields. The challenge has been to completely run a volunteer based organization, in my case. Lack of funding limits the impact and work we can do.

Paolo: Where can similar problems that diaspora groups face be sorted in a synergistic way.

Jackson and Derya: EURAXESS is a meeting space, both in-person and virtual, for all groups where challenges and solutions can be discussed and shared. The ESD incubator program which aims to address the needs of national and individual diasporas is a way EURAXESS is trying to solve similar problems that groups face in a synergistic way.

Panel: Q&A

Paolo: How have embassies been collaborating with their scientific diasporas.

Johannes: As an embassy we are the institutional backbone for our diasporas. We provide infrastructure such as communication channels and special needs supports. Embassies can also create a space of belonging for their diasporas.

Paolo: According to you, in terms of embassies working with their diaspora groups what is working well and what could be improved?

Johannes: What is going well is creating contacts and meeting people in person. However, with covid creating that in person connection has been a huge challenge.



Our Takeaways...

Researchers want more funding opportunities, as well as **smooth, clear, and easy pathways to residency permits, and variety of programs or platforms enabling researchers to develop their careers during their stay in the host country.**

- Networking
- Mentoring
- Team up: more collaboration, more interdisciplinary research

For the Policymakers

- International mobility of talent in STI is of growing importance:
 - Talent is important in the creation and diffusion of knowledge.
 - The scale and complexity are increasing.
 - International mobility patterns differ substantially across countries
 - Mobility and funding opportunities are growing.
- Migration of talent has been playing an important role in governments' policies, but:
 - Scientific diasporas should also be part of their migration policies and a part of their science diplomacy mechanisms or tools.
 - Both receiving and hosting countries should not delay policy reforms to ensure that these scientists and engineers have better career prospects and quality of life.

And

- **We know that we cannot propose one recipe to address all these challenges and needs.**
- **As EURAXESS North America**
 - We want to create a snowball effect by connecting peers, help create common platforms, and strengthen scientific diaspora networks.

EURAXESS