

Report of the YM round table “Careers in Physics” at 11th International Conference of the Balkan Physical Union (BPU11), Belgrade, Serbia

The Young Minds Careers in Physics session had two main goals:

1. Offer awareness of different careers paths for physics students.
2. Engage with the speakers in an open discussion.

Ms Milena Simić opened and welcomed the audience to the session.

The first speaker was Mr Mattia Ostinato with an “Introduction to EPS Young Minds”, which connected perfectly with the students.

Next was Ms Jovana Stanimirović with an “Introduction to the YM section in Niš, followed by Mr Zlatan Vasović with an “Introduction to IAPS”. The potential collaboration between IAPS and YM was discussed.

Dr Enrique Sanchez-Bautista presented his career path with the engaging talk “From Science to Science Policy”, providing an overview on what works in science policy means with clear examples of current projects and activities.

Originally from Belgrade, Dr. Jelena Pesic presented her career path and her current role at NOKIA in France.

Finally, ex EPS President Prof. Petra Rudolf joined remotely with the talk “Career Paths for Physics Graduates”.

For the round table, we had David Lee (EPS secretary), Mattia Ostinato (EPS YM president), Nikola Jovančević (Assistant professor University of Novi Sad), Jelena Pesic (Systems Integration Specialist NOKIA), and Georg Dücks (Assistant to the Executive Board DPG).

The differences in the career paths and seniority of the panellists added an amazing basis to start the conversation. From the academia to industry to completely different career options, the round table, moderated by Dr. Araceli Venegas-Gomez (QURECA), engaged the students in a wonderful and open discussion.

Conclusion

It seems nowadays, being all connected all the time, it is very easy to find information everywhere. However, students find themselves lost when they finish their studies and need to move further in their career journeys. PhD/Postdoc or industry position? Can I go back to academia? Can I work in science policy? These are some of the questions the students asked the panellists.

All in all, the importance of networking and the serendipity of how things happen were two of the key messages.

There is a strong need for providing career advice to students all over the world. In this case, for the students to understand how individuals originally from the region developed their careers, or to hear about completely different careers paths, was an incredible opportunity.