South East European Research Centre – Profile
Introduction

The South East European Research Centre (SEERC) is a multidisciplinary, not-for-profit research centre based in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was established by the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, CITY College in 2004, as a truly international research institute with the mission to support the stable and peaceful development of South-East Europe by conducting pure and applied research in, and for the region. Research at SEERC is organised along three research tracks:

1. Enterprise, Innovation and Development
2. Information and Communication Technologies
3. Society and Human Development (Culture and politics, Health and Social psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience, English Studies)

Within each of these areas, SEERC has developed multiple research groups focusing their expertise on specific sets of questions. In line with the international vision established for the centre, each research group is composed at its base of researchers from the University of Sheffield and from CITY College, and is open to additional members coming from universities, research centres, and think tanks throughout Europe.

Since its establishment in 2003, SEERC has consolidated its structures and has put in place procedures – administrative and strategic- for the planning of its key activities, which include:

- **Collaborative Research:** SEERC participates and coordinates a great number of research projects and collaborations within international consortia, funded through EU sources as well as through foundations and national funding agencies. These projects address issues of importance to the South East European region and beyond, and cover a range of diverse and often cross-disciplinary research topics.

- **Doctoral Programme:** SEERC hosts the Doctoral Programme of the University of Sheffield in Thessaloniki. The programme offers the opportunity to study towards a PhD degree from the University of Sheffield, under joint supervision by academic staff from the University of Sheffield and CITY College. The programme currently numbers more than 30 Students (full-time and part-time) coming from numerous countries throughout Europe.

- **Networking / Events:** Each year SEERC organises numerous international or regional conferences and workshops within Greece and other countries of South East Europe, which aim at bringing together experts in a range of topics relevant to SEERC’s research activities. Along with targeted networking missions to SEE countries, these events contribute to the establishment of SEERC as an important research institute and international think-tank in the region.

- **Publications:** The outcomes from regional and international events organised by SEERC, or from funded research projects in which SEERC participates, are disseminated at an international scale through timely publications of books, bulletins, and more.

Each of the above key activities of SEERC is presented in further detail in the sections that follow.
1. Collaborative Research

SEERC’s goal is to conduct research on timely topics and deliver results of relevance and value to the scientific community, policy-makers, and the general public. To that end, SEERC has developed a number of Research Clusters that initiate activities leading to funded research projects in collaboration with other Research Institutes, Universities, Public Bodies and Governmental Agencies, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, Large Enterprises, Associations of Companies, Technology Transfer and Innovation Networks, Non-Governmental Organisations, and many more.

Since its establishment SEERC has received funding for a significant number of research projects by various funding agencies and funding programmes.

Ongoing research projects:

1. HOMER: Home Made Explosives and Recipes: The goal of the HOMER project is to implement a study to mitigate the threat of Home Made Explosives (HMEs) from the criminal and terrorist elements by enabling: maintainable substantiated HME knowledge; to be innovatively made available for the law enforcement, security and the manufacturers of precursor, in a secure, useable manner; increasing the security of the European citizen and support of Europe’s current and future security needs. The project is coordinated by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. (funded by FP7-Security)

2. STARTIFY7: A Team-building, thematically –focused and lean-training Summer Academy system for young future ICT Entrepreneurs. The project is coordinated by the University of Sheffield Management School (Funding HORIZON 2020/LEIT ICT)

3. PaaSword: A holistic data privacy and security by design Platform-as-a-service framework introducing distributed encrypted persistence in Cloud-based applications The project is coordinated by CAS Software, Germany (Funding HORIZON 2020/LEIT ICT)

4. NetMIB: Network of multidisciplinary ideation and business model generation. The project is coordinated by University of Pecs, Hungary. (Funded by Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership program).

5. TrainERGY: Training for Energy Efficient Operations. The project is coordinated by th University of Lodz, Poland. (Funded by Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership program).

6. REINVEST: EU-India Research & Innovation Partnership for efficient and sustainable freight transportation. The project is coordinated by the University of Sheffield Management School (Funded by the EU-India cooperation fund)

7. KEEP ME SAFE IN EUROPE: The project focuses on the development and implementation of a game infused e-learning tool to promote health and early access to services for neglect and abuse for young people on the move in Europe. Coordinated by Anglia Ruskin University, UK. (Funded by Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership program).

8. HELPCare: Health and socialcare workers: Employability Learning and Professionalisation. Coordinated by the University of Lancaster, UK (Funded by Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership program).
Completed research projects:

1. ICT2B: Bridging the Entrepreneurial Gap: Transforming European ICT research into Investment Opportunities. ICT2B aims to develop bridges and bring together ICT researchers and entrepreneurial minded individuals with different backgrounds and from many European countries. As a consequence, it will promote the creation of entrepreneurial and innovative ICT start-ups that exploit products and services developed from EU funded ICT R&D projects. The project is coordinated by Fraunhofer, Germany (Funding: FP7/ICT).

2. INVENT: Reinventing the Distribution and Delivery of Personal Services through Cloud Apps and Marketplaces. The project is coordinated by Singular SA, Greece. (Funded by the Greek-German research cooperation fund).

3. PRESS: Promoting Environmentally Sustainable SMEs. The project aims to develop an online Decision Support System that will allow European companies monitor and assess their current decision-making strategies in relation to environmental concerns, adopt low carbon decision-making patterns, and develop a long-term plan for low carbon management and environmental sustainability of their supply chains. The project is coordinated by the University of Sheffield Management School (Funding: LLP/ERASMUS).

4. ELIEMENTAL: Breaking Down Barriers to Enterprise. The project aims to use participatory action research (PAR) approaches to establish the socio-cultural barriers to entrepreneurship of under-represented groups in business start-ups and to develop and trial effective learning tools & a validated qualification in Enterprise Learning supported by online mentoring systems for developing & applying entrepreneurial skills. (Funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Program).

5. Broker@Cloud: Enabling Continuous Quality Assurance and Optimization in Future Enterprise Cloud Service Brokers. The challenge taken up by the project is to research and to develop solutions with respect to some of the most valuable and technically demanding types of brokerage capabilities foreseen for future enterprise cloud service brokers. (funded by FP7/ICT)

6. VIBE: Venture Initiative in the Balkan Europe. The project addresses the challenge of developing the innovation and entrepreneurship system across the SEE by enabling private investment into innovative entrepreneurial companies in partnership with smart public initiatives and investment. (funded by the SEE transnational cooperation Program)

7. RELATE: “Trans-European Research Training Network on Engineering and Provisioning of Service-Based Cloud Applications” (funded by FP7 Marie Curie Initial Training Network Programme).


9. SEE-SCIENCE: The overall objective of SEE Science is to contribute to the image formation of SEE region as a place of innovation through increasing public awareness on the importance of natural sciences, technological progress and innovation. The project is funded by the SEE transnational cooperation Program and coordinated by the Municipality of Debrecen in Hungary.
10. English in Europe. Opportunity or Threat?: The principal purpose of this project is to collect accurate comparative information on the role and effects of English in a range of contrasting regional contexts, some of which have been relatively little researched (e.g. English in the Balkans). It is funded by The Leverhulme Trust and coordinated by Professor Andrew Linn, from The University of Sheffield.

11. ICT-KOSEU: Supporting Dialogue and Cooperation between Europe and Kosovo (UNSCR 1244) in Collaborative ICT R & D is a project that aims at supporting Kosovo’s efforts for inclusion to the European Research Area by facilitating its ICT researchers’ collaboration with researchers in the EU thus strengthening its capacity to participate to FP7 ICT research and also by creating widespread understanding of ICT and its need for competitiveness, and integration with the European Union. ICT-KOSEU is a project funded by the European Community’s ICT Programme under the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) (Contract Number: 288097)


14. e-SDI NET+: European Network on Geographic Information Enrichment and Reuse (funded by eContentplus Programme, DG Information Society and Media, European Commission).

15. Rural Economic and Social Development for Mountain Villages in Turkish Thrace (funded by CFCU EU Delegation in Ankara).


17. QF Embodiment: The exchange of experiences during the creation and testing of sectorial qualification frameworks and their drawing near to each other, in the light of EQF (funded by Leonardo da Vinci Programme, DG Education and Culture, European Commission).

18. Multi-level Governance in South East Europe: Institutional Innovation and adaptation in Croatia, Greece, FYROM and Slovenia (funded by the British Economic and Social Research Council - ESRC).

19. FUSION: Business Process FUSION based on Semantically-enabled Service-Oriented Business Applications (funded by 6th Framework Programme - IST, European Commission)


22. Infusing Knowledge into South East European SMEs: Establishing a Platform for Developing Business Alliances, Supply Chains and SME-Research
Community Interaction (funded by the British & Foreign Commonwealth Office - FCO).


27. SPiB: Smoking Prevention in the Balkans (funded by Cancer Research UK - Tobacco Advisory Group).


29. ICT-WEB-PROMS: Promoting ICT cooperation opportunities and policy dialogue with the Western Balkan Countries (funded by 7th Framework Programme - ICT, European Commission).

30. ELEVATE: Integrating pedagogically-documented, value-added e-training add ons in commercial software products of European Software SMEs (funded by 7th Framework Programme - Research for the Benefit of SMEs, European Commission).

31. MedLab. "Mediterranean Living Lab for Territorial Innovation “(contracted by the Regional Authority of Central Macedonia within the framework of a project funded by the Mediterranean Transnational Cooperation Program).

32. CAST: Enabling Customisation of SaaS Applications by Third parties (funded by Eurostars programme, EUREKA & European Commission).

33. YOU RESPOND: Developing a good practice guide and training manual for young people’s participation in research, policy and practice developments to prevent and combat violence (funded by DAPHNE III programme, DG Justice, Freedom and Security, European Commission).


35. MORMED: Multilingual Organic Information Management in the Medical Domain (funded by CIP ICT Policy Support Programme).

36. INNOPOLIS: Innovation Policy in University City Regions (funded by INTERREG IV C Interregional cooperation program).

38. Cyprus Tobacco Control: An Econometric and Social Analysis of the Impact of Tobacco Control Policies in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Cyprus (funded by the Research Promotion Foundation in Cyprus).

39. INTERVALUE: Inter-regional cooperation for valorisation of research results (funded by South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme).

40. Asviloc+: “Agencies Supporting Value of Innovation Systems in Regional and Local Economies” (contracted by ANATOLIKI Regional Agency within the framework of a project funded by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Program).

41. Grun
tvig SILVER: Successful Intergenerational Learning through Validation, Education and Research. Funded by Life-Long-Learning Grundtvig Program. Coordinated by the Inholland University of Applied Sciences – Centre for Research in Intellectual Capital (the Netherlands).

2. Doctoral Programme

SEERC is committed to growing the number of highly trained researchers working in South East Europe. As part of its mission SEERC offers opportunities for postgraduate students to undertake research based at SEERC in Thessaloniki leading to the award of a PhD degree by the University of Sheffield. Today there are more than 40 students undertaking doctoral study at SEERC, in either full-time or part-time mode.

The programme aims to:

- build greater research capacity across the region
- provide greater access to South East Europe for students from elsewhere
- foster collaboration and the sharing of perspectives among researchers throughout the region and beyond

Faculty from the University of Sheffield and CITY College in Thessaloniki jointly supervise the students’ training and research. All full-timers are based at SEERC whereas the part-timers are normally mid-career professionals resident in South East European countries. In this way, there is a valuable exchange of knowledge and insight to the region among students, supervisors and SEERC.

Unique Features of the Doctoral Programme at SEERC

Joint Supervision scheme: Each student is assigned a supervisor from the University of Sheffield and CITY College respectively. This scheme exposes the students to a diverse set of knowledge and contacts that originates in the expertise and work of the two supervisors based in different regions.

Doctoral Development Training: All postgraduate research students participate in the Doctoral Development Programme (DDP). The DDP provides research students with a range of skills and competency-based training opportunities orientated both towards their specific programme of study and towards future employment. As an outcome of engaging with the DDP, during research studies, doctoral graduates will possess advanced skills in inquiry, communication and organisation. They should also be able to reflect critically and to take a creative approach to issues in and beyond their field of research expertise.
The Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference: Each year SEERC organises the Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference giving young researchers the opportunity to present their work in a doctoral forum. The aim of the conference is to initiate an exchange of knowledge between young researchers and to help establish a network of scholars undertaking research in Southeast Europe.

Research Student Seminars: SEERC encourages students to present the progress in their research in small scale events attended by fellow students and staff and to benefit from exposure to an audience of diverse composition. During these events they have the chance to utilise important feedback from the students and staff as well as to sharpen their communication and presentation skills.

Open Seminar Series: Alternatively, experts are invited from related sectors to hold seminars on topics at the forefront of European developments and to raise questions suited to the intellectual background of the students. The Open Seminar Series are planned with maximum student involvement so that students simultaneously develop and apply their organisational skills.
3. Networking / Events

One of the core goals of SEERC is to ensure targeted dissemination of its research findings particularly in South East Europe (SEE). Since 2003 a number of events have been organised in the region to address topics of importance to South East European countries and also to bring together a range of actors from academia, business and the government to discuss scientific developments in sectors of vital interest to the Balkan countries and Europe.

2016

• 31/03/2016. Symposium: European Migrant Crisis: Challenges of a fragmented corridor, Thessaloniki

2015

• 18/10/2015: 4th THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN WORLD AFFAIRS
• 17-18/09/2015: 10th South East European Doctoral Student Conference
• 10/09/2015: The Political Economy of Crisis in Southeast Europe
• 08/09/2015: Promoting Environmentally Sustainable SMEs (PrESS) - Final Event
• 03/12/2015 7th Balkan Venture Forum, Zagreb, Croatia
• 01/12/2015 Eliemental: breaking down barriers to enterprise. Final project event organised in Brussels
• 18/06/2015 International Conference for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development, Sheffield, UK

2014

• 25/09/2014 9th South East European Doctoral Student Conference 25 & 26 September 2014
• 05/06/2014 7th International Conference for Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Regional Development 2014 (ICEIRD 2014)
• 27/05/2014 MOBIP Investment and Partnering Forum 2014
• 15/05/2014 5th Balkan Venture Forum 15-16 May 2014
• 08/04/2014 Open Excellence Workshop : “Management and quality control in service-based software”
• 09/01/2014 CSB 2014: 2nd International Workshop on Cloud Service Brokerage
2013

- November 23-24, 2013: English in Europe Conference in Thessaloniki. The conference is organized in the frame of the European Project English in Europe. The English in Europe project is sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust in the UK and directed by Professor Andrew Linn (University of Sheffield).

- November 14-15, 2013: Balkan Venture Forum in Tirana-Albania, organized by Venture Initiative In the Balkan Europe (VIBE), Balkan Unlimited, Europe Unlimited, USAID, Crimson Capital in the frame of of the European Project ‘VIBE – Venture Initiative in Balkan Europe’.

- September 19-21, 2013: Pan-Hellenic Conference on Informatics, Organised by the Greek Computer Society, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki -Informatics Dept., University of Macedonia - Applied Informatics Dept., A.T.E.I. of Thessaloniki - Information Technology Dept., International Faculty of The University of Sheffield, SEERC.

- September 16-17, 2013: 8th Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference (DSC 2013), Thessaloniki, Greece (http://www.seerc.org/dsc2013/)

- June 20-21, 2013: 6th International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development (ICEIRD 2013). Organised by Istanbul Sehir University,CITY College- International Faculty of The University of Sheffield & SEERC.

- May 21-22, 2013: Balkan Venture Forum in Sofia-Bulgaria, organized by Balkan Unlimited, Balkan Unlimited Bulgaria, Venture Initiative In the Balkan Europe (VIBE), The Bulgarian Entrepreneurship and Innovation Cluster (BEIC), Crimson Capital Corp, in the frame of the European Project ‘VIBE – Venture Initiative in Balkan Europe’.

- April 11-12, 2013: Training Workshop on Smart Specialisation for South East European countries, held in Belgrade, Serbia. Organised in the frame of WBC-INCO.NET Project by Mihajlo Pupin Institute- Serbia, Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) – Austria, South East European Research Centre (SEERC) - Greece.


2012

- October 18, 2012: SEE – SCIENCE Festival: 1st South East Europe Science Festival - Innovation Through Science: Learn, Experience, Innovate, Celebrate! Organised by SEERC and NOESIS, within the context of SEE – SCIENCE Project.

- October 11-12, 2012: Innopolis Final Conference. Organised by The Decentralized Administration of Macedonia - Thrace (DAMT) & SEERC, within the context of INNOPOLIS Project.
• October 1-5, 2012: 10th International Conference on Software Engineering and Formal Methods (SEFM 2012). Organised by The Internation Faculty of TUoS – CITY College, SEERC & The Greek Computer Society - Macedonia Thrace Chapter.

• September 24-25, 2012: 7th Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference (DSC 2012), Thessaloniki, Greece (http://www.seerc.org/dsc2012/)

• September 24-28, 2012: 5th International School on Software Engineering and Formal Methods. Organised by the International Institute for Software Technology (United Nations University) and SEERC.

• June 1-2, 2012: 5th International Conference on Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development (ICEIRD 2012). Organised by Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, CITY College-The University of Sheffield International Faculty, VUZF University & SEERC.


2011

• December 15, 2011: Brokerage event “New Business opportunities in information technologies and transportation services” organised by SEERC, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and The Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH), Thessaloniki, Greece.

• October 12, 2011: “Training workshop for researchers on FP7 participation”. Organised by SEERC and GSRT in the frame of WBC-INCO-NET project, in Thessaloniki, Greece.

• October 11, 2011: “WBC-INCO-NET Brokerage event on FP7 Transport”. Organised by SEERC and GSRT in the frame of WBC-INCO-NET project, in Thessaloniki, Greece.


• June 2, 2011: “Social Enterprise and Investment: A trend, a fad, or an entirely new politico-economic system?” Organised by SEERC and CITY College, in cooperation with Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation of Industries of Northern Greece and Greek International Business Association. Invited speaker was Mr Rodney Schwartz, CEO of ClearlySo.

2010

• September 13-14, 2010: 5th Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference (DSC 2010), Thessaloniki, Greece (http://www.seerc.org/dsc2010/)
• May 27-29, 2010: 3rd International Conference in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development (ICEIRD 2010), Novisad, Serbia (www.iceird.org/2010/)

2009

• December 5, 2009: 4th South East European Workshop on Formal Methods, Thessaloniki, Greece (http://www.seefm.info/seefm09/).


• June 01-02, 2009: Workshop on “Multi-level Governance in South East Europe (SEE) – Institutional innovation and adaptation in Croatia, Greece, Slovenia and F.Y.R.O.M.” organised in the frame of the namesake research project funded by the ESRC, Thessaloniki, Greece.

• April 24-25, 2009: 2nd International Conference in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Regional Development (ICEIRD 2009), Thessaloniki, Greece (www.seerc.org/iceird2009).

• April 22-24, 2009: TII Annual Conference "Regional Excellence in Innovation: case studies from around the world", Thessaloniki, Greece (www.tii.org).

2008


• May 27, 2008: Workshop on Geographical Information Systems (GIS): Introduction and Practical Use, by Dr. Robin Smith and Ms. Diane Palmer of the University of Sheffield (Informatics Collaboratory of the Social Sciences and Department of Geography).

• May 13-14, 2008: Innovation Crossroads: A US and EU Comparative Perspective on Entrepreneurship and Innovation-focus on South East Europe, Thessaloniki, Greece. A two-day event that brings together panels of expert practitioners (entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers) to discuss critical success and failure factors and lessons learned from their entrepreneurial initiatives, successes and failures.
- February 15, 2008: Book launch event in collaboration with the University of St. Cyril and Methodius for the publication “Social policy and International Interventions in South East Europe”, edited by Bob DEACON and Paul STUBBS in association with SEERC. Published by Edward Elgar Publishing.

2007

- December 13, 2007: Consultation Workshop on the final Knowledge Investment Strategy for Central Macedonia and East Macedonia and Thrace, in the frame of SEERC’s MIRIAD project (Managing and Infusing Research Investment and Development).
- June 22-23, 2007: 2nd Annual South East European Doctoral Student Conference, Thessaloniki, Greece (www.seerc.org/dsc2007)

2006

2005

- February 4-5, 2005: 1st Workshop on Multi-level Governance and Policy transfer in South East Europe, Zagreb, Croatia.

2004

- June 10, 2004: Workshop on “Financial Sector Reform in South East Europe”, Skopje, FYROM.

2003

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