



European Union

SB/sw D (2014) 86

24 January 2014

The Horizon 2020: Teaming up with EU for Research Excellence - South Asia Launch

The European Union in collaboration with the University of Salford, UK, and University of Moratuwa today organised the launch of the 'Horizon 2020' programme for the South Asian Region.

'Horizon 2020' is the EU flagship programme for Research and Technological Development. With an overall budget of EUR 80 billion (LKR 14,000 billion) over the period 2014-2020 the programme is one of the most significant in its kind. It is also most open to international cooperation. It aims to boost knowledge-driven economies through research and innovation and promises new breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas 'from the lab to the market'.

Priorities for funding include sciences, industrial leadership and global challenges.

The programme that was launched in December 2013 in Brussels and now in South Asia aims at further boosting the participation of key researchers, academics and industries from the South Asia region.

Sri Lanka remains eligible for funding. In the context of previous programs, Sri Lankan researchers have participated in 10 collaborative projects. Participants from Sri Lanka have included the Ministry of Health and Nutrition, the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities, the International Water Management Institute and the Universities of Colombo, Peradeniya, Moratuwa, Kelanyia and Sri Jayawardenepura.

In addition, 12 researchers from Sri Lanka have received individual research grants to European institutions. Furthermore, approximately 170 Sri Lankan students, researchers and University staff have benefitted from scholarships and fellowships under the EU Erasmus Mundus programme for higher education. Participation in the programme is by academic excellence.

EU Ambassador David Daly has reiterated that: "Many countries had accelerated their economic growth, development and industry competitiveness by paying close attention to research and innovation. With the Horizon 2020 funding, the goal is first and foremost to contribute to growth, jobs and a better quality of life. It has the potential to make a substantial contribution to reaching Mahinda Chintana's goal of making Sri Lanka a Knowledge Hub in the region. Investment in this field is an investment in our shared future and over the last few years numerous European and Sri Lankan academics have been increasingly working together through such programmes. With a simplified and more accessible Horizon 2020, I encourage researchers, universities, business including SMEs to sign up !"

The launch of Horizon 2020 has been organised with the financial assistance of the European Union received as part of the CASCADE (Collaborative Action towards Societal Challenges through Awareness, Development, and Education) project: <http://www.cascade-inconet.eu>.

End

For more information on the European Union's Delegation to Sri Lanka and the Maldives go to: http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/sri_lanka