IncoNet EECA

S&T International Cooperation Network for Eastern European and Central Asian Countries

Deliverable Title	**D4.5 Visits to / interviews of EECA NCPs/NIPs** **Part B: Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine**
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Abstract	The goal of the deliverable is to review of the state of the art of NCPs/NIPs in the EECA countries through visits and interviews. The results of interviews together with other studies and analytical activities are the basis for the development of recommendations for NCPs/NIPs strengthening to be addressed to national decision makers. Interviews of Eastern European NCPs were organised in the capital cities of the respective countries in March (Moldova) and April (Belarus and Ukraine) 2009.

Versioning and Contribution History

Version	Date	Modification reason	Modified by
v.01			
v.02			

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BELARUS

1 INTRODUCTION

Increased cooperation in the field of science and research is of mutual interest for the EU and the East European and Central Asia countries (EECA), because the two regions share numerous scientific challenges, most notably in the fields of climate change, environment and energy. This can be achieved in all scientific areas by fostering the participation of organisations from EECA countries in the 7th Framework Programme (FP7). The IncoNet EECA project which was launched in early 2008, aims at facilitating a bi-regional coordination of EU and EECA countries' S&T policies and at strengthening their scientific cooperation.

Over the last years NCPs/NIPs of EECA countries have gained considerable experience and have created links with EU structures and NCPs from Member States and Associated Members. One of the aims of the IncoNet EECA project is to support the further development of the existing structures and their efficiency, building on the acquired experience of the EECA NIPs/NCPs and the expertise of the well- functioning trans-European NCP network and in addition to stimulate regional networking of the EECA NIPs/NCPs.

2   AIM OF THE INTERVIEWS

As a tool to facilitate these activities, a review of NCP/NIP structures in EECA countries is foreseen in IncoNet EECA project. This is part of a larger activity described under WP4/ "Support to NCP/NIP in EECA" which also includes training of existing NIPs/RIPs through a training workshop on regional level, training visits to EU-NCPs and continuous consultancy for EECA NCPs/NIPs by experienced EU NCPs.

The aim of the review as mentioned in the Technical Annex (p.16) is: "to support the further development of the existing NCP-structures and their efficiency building on the ownership of the respective EECA country and the expertise of the well-functioning trans-European NCP-network" or in other words to identify potential for development, describe and present this potential and finally to contribute in a positive way to the development.

The review foresees the following steps (Technical Annex, page 45/46):

•   Interviews

•   Drafting of four analytical reports for each EECA region (or individual countries) with recommendations to EECA national authorities how to strengthen their respective NCP/NIP systems

•   Organisation of workshops for communicating the recommendations to EECA national authorities

The present deliverable is the Report on the interviews of the NCPs of the Republic of Belarus and describes the process of the preparation, implementation and follow up of the interviews of the NCPs of the Republic of Belarus.

3   TARGET GROUP OF THE INTERVIEWS

The NCP structure in Belarus consists of 11 physical persons for 9 thematic and 4 "horizontal" priorities. The NCPs are coordinated by the 'Belarusian Institute of System Analysis and Information Support for Scientific and Technical Sphere' (BELISA). In addition, 3 of the NCPs operate within the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB), whilst the remaining through the Belarusian State University and other organisations. BELISA operates under the umbrella of the State Committee on Science and Technologies Republic of Belarus (ranked as a Ministry for S&T). It was founded to perform functions of system analysis of the status and development tendencies in the scientific and technical area, research and development aimed at providing scientific and information support for activities of the Belarus State Committee on Science and Technologies, and other state authorities, and scientific institutions in the Republic of Belarus, as well as those of development of methodical principles of information support for scientific and technical sphere. Apart from the NCP coordinator function, BELISA also hosts the ICT, Mobility and INCO NCPs.

The NCPs in the Republic of Belarus have initiated their active involvement through the FP7, but in overall they have relatively little experience in FPs. More details about the participants can be found at Annex A.

4 ACTIVITIES

The interviews were based on the "Interview Guide", which was developed by FFG and agreed with the partners and Task Leaders of Tasks 4.2-4.5/ "Implementation in EECA regions". It can be found in D4.1 – "Concept for the analysis of NCP/NIP-structures in the EECA countries".

The interviews were structured in five chapters that reflect the structure, activities, modus operandi and environment of operation of the NCP system: The organisational framework, Target groups, NCP activities, Networking/ Cross Linking and Monitoring of success/Self Monitoring.

Before the interviews took place the following steps were undertaken:

•   A questionnaire was formed from the "Interview Guide", so that the NCPs had preconfigured answers and space to write down notes.

•   BELISA was initially contacted and informed about the interview. BELISA facilitated a series of interviews with the NCPs.

•   The questionnaire was sent to the NCPs prior to the visits to allow some time for preparation.

•   The interviews took the form of discussion and analysis upon each point of the questionnaire.

•   The interviewees noted down their answers in their questionnaires and the interviewers took notes of the answers and other comments recorded during the discussion.

•   At the end of the interviews the interviewers gathered the completed questionnaires for further analysis.

5   BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

Currently, the NCP structure in Belarus consists of 11 physical persons for 9 thematic and 4 horizontal priorities of FP7. The NCP coordinator role (and 3 NCP roles) is assumed by BELISA, whilst other NCPs are established within the Belarusian State University and National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB) and other organisations. At the time of the interviews only 5 NCPs were available representing 9 priorities.

Some basic conclusions can be drawn regarding the operation of the NCP system:

- The NCP coordinator in Belarus is the driving force which leads the further development and improvement of the NCP structure.

- One of the main problems the Belarusian NCPs face is the lack of training they receive as NCP's. NCP activities are not supported by local authorities because there is no legal basis for Belarus-EU cooperation (the PCA isn't in force, no S&T agreement) – according to the national rules, the budget financing has to be provided only for meeting the obligations fixed on the level of the President or by the Government. So, most of NCPs have no opportunity to attend NCP trainings abroad and take part in the NCP meetings. The cases when the host organization covers the travel costs of NCPs for attending such events from its overheads are exceptional. Besides, due to internal procedures and cross border paper work (visas) that is cumbersome and time consuming, the Belarusian NCP's need to be informed way in advance of any meeting abroad. In many cases they need at least 6 months to arrange the necessary paperwork for attending an event which is not the case in most of the trainings and events arranged abroad.

- Whilst the NCP coordinator organisation has good links with contacts abroad and part takes in European projects, the remaining NCPs seem to be isolated in relation to network building. There is emphasis put on their actual need for participation in NCP networks and other FP projects.

- There is a tendency to block out potential cooperation with some countries, due to perceived competition or due to political issues between the governments. On the other hand, there is in some cases the tendency to link potential rejection from participation in consortia to the political climate between Belarus and other countries.

- The SMEs make up for a minor part of the NCPs target group. This is due to the fact that the SMEs are a very new group to the Belarusian economy. The NCPs in Belarus work mostly with RTO's but apparently SMEs, mostly developers of software and providers of IT services are on the increase so hopefully in the near future SMEs will also become a target group.

- The NCPs identified as a major problem faced by the Belarusian research community the lack of adequate English speaking which results in a low participation level in FP7. However, they are optimistic that young people receive English language lessons as part of their overall education and are more exposed to the English through other means and it is hoped that the next generations of researches will be fully capable to participate in FP7 projects.

The NCPs in Belarus value the importance of their activities and are overall satisfied with regards to the output of their work. It is stressed that training, employment of specialised staff as NCPs, and linkages with the NCPs in Europe are required.

6   ANNEX

6.1   Organisations visited and timetable

NCP Coordinator/ICT/Mobility/INCO, BIO – KBBE and SSH/SiS – Interview at the hotel the interviewers stayed	28.04.2009
NMP/Energy - Heat and Mass Transfer Institute and Institute	29.04.2009
HEALTH - Institute of Biophysics	29.04.2009

6.2   People interviewed

Name	NCP	Organisation	Contact Details
Olga Meerovskaya,	NCP Coordinator/ICT/Mobility/INCO	Belarusian Institute of System Analysis and Information Support of S&T Sphere	E-mail:meerovskaya@fp7-nip.org.by tel.: +375 17 2033139 fax: +375 17 2033139
Anna Svirshchevskaya,	BIO – KBBE	Institute of Genetic and Cytology, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	E-mail: A.Svirshchevskaya@igc.bas-net.by tel.: +375-172841916
Vitaly Bikboulatov	NMP/Energy	Heat and Mass Tranfer Institute, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	E-mail: vitally_oms@itmo.by tel.: +375-172842608
Igor Volotovskiy	HEALTH	Institute of Biophysics and Cell Engineering, National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	E-mail:volot@presidium.bas-net.by tel.: +375-172840379
Larisa Titarenko	SSH/SiS	Department of Sociology, Belarusian State University	E-mail: larissa@bsu.by tel.: +375-172613606

MOLDOVA

MOLDOVA

7 INTRODUCTION

Increased cooperation in the field of science and research is of mutual interest for the EU and the East European and Central Asia countries (EECA), because the two regions share numerous scientific challenges, most notably in the fields of climate change, environment and energy. This can be achieved in all scientific areas by fostering the participation of organisations from EECA countries in the 7th Framework Programme (FP7). The IncoNet EECA project which was launched in early 2008, aims at facilitating a bi-regional coordination of EU and EECA countries' S&T policies and at strengthening their scientific cooperation.

Over the last years NCPs/NIPs of EECA countries have gained considerable experience and have created links with EU structures and NCPs from Member States and Associated Members. One of the aims of the IncoNet EECA project is to support the further development of the existing structures and their efficiency, building on the acquired experience of the EECA NIPs/NCPs and the expertise of the well- functioning trans-European NCP network and in addition to stimulate regional networking of the EECA NIPs/NCPs.

8   AIM OF THE INTERVIEWS

As a tool to facilitate these activities, a review of NCP/NIP structures in EECA countries is foreseen in IncoNet EECA project. This is part of a larger activity described under WP4/ "Support to NCP/NIP in EECA" which also includes training of existing NIPs/RIPs through a training workshop on regional level, training visits to EU-NCPs and continuous consultancy for EECA NCPs/NIPs by experienced EU NCPs.

The aim of the review as mentioned in the Technical Annex (p.16) is: "to support the further development of the existing NCP-structures and their efficiency building on the ownership of the respective EECA country and the expertise of the well-functioning trans-European NCP-network" or in other words to identify potential for development, describe and present this potential and finally to contribute in a positive way to the development.

The review foresees the following steps (Technical Annex, page 45/46):

•   Interviews

•   Drafting of four analytical reports for each EECA region (or individual countries) with recommendations to EECA national authorities how to strengthen their respective NCP/NIP systems

•   Organisation of workshops for communicating the recommendations to EECA national authorities

The present deliverable is the Report on the interviews of the NCPs of the Republic of Moldova and describes the process of the preparation, implementation and follow up of the interviews of the NCPs of the Republic of Moldova.

9 TARGET GROUP OF THE INTERVIEWS

The NCP structure in Moldova consists of 8 physical persons for 9 priorities chosen and closely coordinated by the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (A.S.M.). The A.S.M. guides and supports the NCPs through a state financed project, aimed at creating the infrastructure for enhancing participation in European RTD programmes. The NCP team is newly formed (December 2008 – January 2009). The NCPs work at several organisations but their NCP activities are supervised and coordinated by the A.S.M. Their selection was based on their background (academic for thematic priorities, administrative for coordination, SME related agency for NCP-SME, Centre for International Projects of A.S.M. for MOBILITY). They have relatively little experience in FP7. More details about the participants can be found at Annex A.

10 ACTIVITIES

The interviews were based on the "Interview Guide", which was developed by FFG and agreed with the partners and Task Leaders of Tasks 4.2-4.5/ "Implementation in EECA regions". It can be found in D4.1 – "Concept for the analysis of NCP/NIP-structures in the EECA countries".

The interviews were structured in five chapters that reflect the structure, activities, modus operandi and environment of operation of the NCP system: The organisational framework, Target groups, NCP activities, Networking/ Cross Linking and Monitoring of success/Self Monitoring.

Before the interviews took place the following steps were undertaken:

•   A questionnaire was formed from the "Interview Guide", so that the NCPs had preconfigured answers and space to write down notes.

•   The Moldovan authorities, namely the A.S.M., were conducted and informed about the interview. They facilitated with arranging the interviews with the NCPs.

•   The questionnaire was sent to the NCPs.

In Moldova the NCPs were gathered by the A.S.M. and the interviews were taken in the form of discussion:

•   Each point of the interviews' questions was discussed with all the NCPs

•   The interviewees noted down their answers in their questionnaires

•   The interviewers took notes of the answers.

After the interviews the interviewees sent their answered questionnaires by e-mail to the interviewers.

11 BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

The NCP structure in Moldova consists of 8 physical persons for 9 priorities chosen and closely coordinated by the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (A.S.M.). The A.S.M. guides and supports the NCPs through a state financed project, aimed at creating the infrastructure for enhancing participation in European RTD programmes. The NCP team is newly formed (December 2008 – January 2009) and the findings can be easily generalised, since their background and their experience is quite similar.

The NCPs work at several organisations but their NCP activities are supervised and coordinated by the A.S.M. Individual experts were appointed, not organisations. Their selection was based on their background (academic for thematic priorities, administrative for coordination, SME related agency for NCP-SME, Centre for International Projects of A.S.M. for MOBILITY). They have relatively little experience in FP7. They receive funding by the A.S.M. for their NCP activities, which is just enough for organising events, but is not adequate for travelling expenses and additional staff.

The target groups of the NCPs are closely linked with their primary occupation. They had not had enough time to create further links outside academia / industry respectively. For the same reason they do not cooperate very closely with business and industry associations and similar entities to use for multipliers or visibility (with a few exceptions). There is a plan for a more systematic approach to widen target groups which is gradually implemented. This is closely coordinated by the A.S.M.

Most of their clients are beginners in FP7 and they use the standard tools to reach them (e-mail, personal contact, infodays) and a centralised system to help monitor these activities is being in the process of design. The NCPs have shown some activity which is relevant to the time they operate, but no concrete results can be made for such a short period, especially for such a new team.

The NCPs and their Coordinator have expressed very strongly, formally and informally, the need for more training provided by experts and also the need to establish stronger contacts within the EU. At the moment only the NCP Coordinator has contacts outside Moldova with E.C. officials and other NCPs. The other NCPs depend on the Coordinator and their personal contacts.

One recurrent problem is that of competition with other funding schemes. NCPs find it difficult to persuade researchers and SMEs to participate in a highly competitive procedure with unknown outcome, when there are other more easily accessible funding opportunities (esp. bilateral with USA, Russia, and Ukraine).

The NCPs rate their mission as very important to the progress of their country.

12 ANNEX

12.1 Organisations visited and timetable

Academy of Sciences of Moldova	04-05.03.2009

12.2 People interviewed

Name	NCP	Organisation	Contact Details
Ms. Elena SEVERIN	Coordinator	Department of European Integration and International Cooperation, Academy of Sciences of Moldova	E-mail: elena.severin@asm.md tel.: +373-22-272254 fax: +373-22-270502
Dr. Angela PARASCHIV	HEALTH	State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu"	E-mail: angela.paraschiv@fp7.asm.md tel.: +373-22-205148
Dr Alexei LEVIłCHI	KKBE	Plant Biology Department, State University of Moldova	E-mail: alexei.levitchi@fp7.asm.md tel.: +373-22-212823
Mrs Elena ZAMŞA	ICT	Information Society Development Institute	E-mail: elena.zamsa@idsi.md tel.: +373-22-733365
Dr Denis NICA	NMP	Department of Theoretical Physics, State University of Moldova	E-mail: denis.nica@fp7.asm.md tel.: +373-79033725
Mr Veaceslav BOLDESCU	ENV & ENERGY	Department of Industrial and Ecological Chemistry, State University of Moldova	E-mail: veaceslav.boldescu@fp7.asm.md tel.: +373-79454062
Mrs Diana STAH	SSH	State University of Tiraspol (Chisinau)	E-mail: diana.stah@fp7.asm.md tel.: +373-68023253
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Mrs Elena BRINZA	MOBILITY	Centre for International Projects of ASM	E-mail: lbrinza@mrda.md tel.: +373-22-577707

UKRAINE

UKRAINE

13 INTRODUCTION

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14 AIM OF THE INTERVIEWS

As a tool to facilitate these activities, a review of NCP/NIP structures in EECA countries is foreseen in IncoNet EECA project. This is part of a larger activity described under WP4/ "Support to NCP/NIP in EECA" which also includes training of existing NIPs/RIPs through a training workshop on regional level, training visits to EU-NCPs and continuous consultancy for EECA NCPs/NIPs by experienced EU NCPs.

The aim of the review as mentioned in the Technical Annex (p.16) is: "to support the further development of the existing NCP-structures and their efficiency building on the ownership of the respective EECA country and the expertise of the well-functioning trans-European NCP-network" or in other words to identify potential for development, describe and present this potential and finally to contribute in a positive way to the development.

The review foresees the following steps (Technical Annex, page 45/46):

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•   Organisation of workshops for communicating the recommendations to EECA national authorities

The present deliverable is the Report on the interviews of the NCPs of Ukraine and describes the process of the preparation, implementation and follow up of the interviews of the NCPs of Ukraine.

15 TARGET GROUP OF THE INTERVIEWS

The NCP system of Ukraine consists of a network of 9 information points (LIPs) representing the 9 geographical regions of Ukraine with the most substantial research potential. NCP services are provided by a total of 11 physical persons on a part time basis. Coordination of the LIPs is performed by the National Information Centre for Ukraine - EU S&T Cooperation at the Kyiv State Centre of S&T and Economic Information (NIP) which was established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MESU) in 2003 to promote Ukrainian scientific community integration to ERA via the EU Framework Programmes and other R&D programmes funded by the EC.

Selection of the institutions to act as LIPs was carried out by NIP on the basis of research activities and excellence, special interests, expertise or performance. The Ukrainian network is not organized on the basis of thematic specialization (i.e. a different person/laboratory/institution for every different thematic priority) but NCP services are provided on a regional basis, i.e. each LIP covers all thematic priorities in its region. Where specific technical issues need to be addressed, a sign-posting process is performed on the basis of an informal thematic expertise (e.g. the LIP of Lviv is considered as the unofficial ICT expert) among the LIPs.

16 ACTIVITIES

The interviews were based on the "Interview Guide", which was developed by FFG and agreed with the partners and Task Leaders of Tasks 4.2-4.5/ "Implementation in EECA regions". It can be found in D4.1 – "Concept for the analysis of NCP/NIP-structures in the EECA countries".

The interviews were structured in five chapters that reflect the structure, activities, modus operandi and environment of operation of the NCP system: The organisational framework, Target groups, NCP activities, Networking/ Cross Linking and Monitoring of success/Self Monitoring.

Several steps were planned in advance and performed before the actual interviews took place:

•   A questionnaire was drafted on the basis of the "Interview Guide" so as to guarantee that all Ukrainian NCPs would have to answer specific questions with preconfigured answers as well as blank space to write down notes or comments where requested.

•   Help-Forward in cooperation with the Ukrainian NCP coordinator (NIP) agreed on the dates the physical interviews would take place. These dates were consequently communicated with the LIPs and upon confirmation of availability of the target group, meeting dates and place were finalised.

•   The questionnaire was forwarded to the LIPs for pre-processing of answers prior to the interviews.

The interviews with the LIPs took place in Kiev on April, 8th with the presence of the NCP coordinator (3 staff), 8 LIP representatives and Help-Forward as the interviewer with 2 representatives. On the 9th of April, a separate interview with the NCP coordinator only was arranged with the aim to discuss in detail organisational and administrative issues as well as NCP strategy issues.

It was agreed that interviews with the LIPs would be carried out on the basis of the questionnaire drafted in this respect and in the form of open discussion:

•   Each question of the questionnaire was first explained and then discussed with each individual LIP

•   The interviewees noted down their answers in printed questionnaires

•   The interviewers took notes of answers and comments made by the LIPs.

After the interviews had been completed, the LIPs were asked to fill in their answers in the electronic version of the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were consequently collected by the NIP and forwarded to the interviewers.

17 BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSIONS

The NCP system of Ukraine consists of a network of 9 information points (LIP) representing the 9 geographical regions of Ukraine with the most substantial research potential. NCP services are provided by a total of 11 physical persons on a part time basis and coordination of the LIPs is performed by The National Information Centre for Ukraine (NIP). The NIP activities are funded through a state financed project as well as some European funded projects whereas LIPs are contracted with the NIP for performing NCP services at agreed fees.

Selection of LIPs is carried out by the NIP on the basis of research activities and excellence, special interests, personal contacts, expertise or performance. Although contracts are binding LIP institutions for performing NCP services, however such services are strongly dependant on the personal engagement of the individual experts. These individuals usually work in the contracting body (LIP) and provide NCP services at a part time basis, along with their main duties which are usually research related. Funding received by the NIP for providing NCP services is usually not enough for justifying full personnel costs or travelling expenses but just covers expenses for organising events.

No concrete monitoring system of NCP activities performed by the LIPs has been established by the coordinator NCP (NIP) yet. Contracts are signed and renewed on an annual basis, without however clearly stating deliverables or other monitoring tools.

The target groups of the LIPs are closely linked with their primary occupation and therefore limited to researchers of the contracting bodies (i.e. researchers belonging to the organisation that performs NCP activities in the certain region). Shortage of available time is the main reason for not managing to create further links outside their institution. In this respect, it should be noted that contacts have not been built to a satisfactory extent with the industry and the SMEs, or with business and industry associations that could be used as multipliers.

The majority of the clientele is either inexperienced in FP7 or not aware of European funding projects. The NIPs and the LIPs use the standard communication tools for reaching them (e-mail, personal contact, infodays, etc) and there is an on-going effort for approaching clients not engaged in FP yet.

The personnel engaged in the NCP structure of Ukraine strongly expressed their need for training sessions provided by experts and also the need to establish stronger contacts within the EU. Currently, only the NIP (as the NCP Coordinator) has (limited) contacts with E.C. officials or other NCPs whereas on the other hand, LIPs mainly rely on the Coordinator and their personal contacts.

18 ANNEX

18.1 Organisations visited and timetable

The National Information Centre for Ukraine - EU S&T Cooperation at the Kyiv State Centre of S&T and Economic Information (NIP), 8th and 9th of April 2009.

18.2 People interviewed

Region	Institution	Postal address	Contact person	E-mail address
Donets'k	Donets'k National University	Vul.Universytets'ka, 24, Donets'k 83055 Ukraine	Mykola Shestavin	nss@skif.net
Zaporizhzhya	Zaropizhzhya State Centre for Scientific, Technical and Economic Information	Prospect Lenina, 77, Zaporizhzhya 69002 Ukraine	Stanislav Selin	birzha-intellect@mail.ru
Ivano-Frankivs'k	Vasyl Stefanyk Prycarpethian National University	Vul. Shevchenka, 57, Ivano-Frankivs'k 76025 Ukraine	Lyubomyr Nykyruy	intelect@pu.if.ua
Autonomous Republic of the Crimea	Regional Information Centre for S&T Cooperation with the EU of Tavrida National V.I.Vernadsky	Prospect Vernads'kogo, 4, Simferopol 95007 Ukraine	Aurika Murava-Segeda	aurikam@mail.ru
Lviv	Lviv State Centre for Scientific, Technical and Economic Information	Prospect Chornovola, 57, Lviv 79058 Ukraine	Ivan Kul'chyts'ky	ivanppp@cstei.lviv.ua
Odessa	Odessa National I.I.Mechnykov University	Vul. Dvoryans'ka, 2, Odessa 65026 Ukraine	Tetyana Stepanova	tanya.stepanova@onu.edu.ua
Uzhgorod	Information and Consultancy Centre for International S&T Cooperation of Uzhgorod National University	Vul. Pidgirna, 46, Uzhgorod 88000 Ukraine	Nadiya Boyko	lesik@uzh.ukrtel.net