

SERBIEN

Minister of Science, Technological Development and Innovation

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Jelena BEGOVIC

Born in 1970 in Belgrade.

She completed primary and secondary school in Belgrade. She enrolled in Chemistry for Research and Development at the Faculty of Chemistry, but after her first year, she transferred to the Faculty of Biology at the University of Belgrade.

During her studies, she also spent two years at the University of British Columbia in Canada, after which she returned to Serbia, where she graduated from the Faculty of Biology at the University of Belgrade.

Since 1998, she has been employed at the Institute for Molecular Genetics and Genetic Engineering at the University of Belgrade. She obtained her master's degree in 2002, and in 2008 she defended her doctoral dissertation in the field of molecular genetics at the Faculty of Biology. Since 2018, she holds the title of scientific advisor.

Since 2014, she has been the director of the Institute for Molecular Genetics and Genetic Engineering. She was also the head of the Laboratory for Molecular Microbiology at the Institute. For more than 20 years, she has been engaged in research work in the fields of molecular genetics and biotechnology, as well as the application of research in various sectors, including the food and pharmaceutical industries.

She has published more than 60 scientific papers in leading international journals and is an active member of numerous scientific associations.

Since 2011, she has represented the Republic of Serbia in the Board of Governors – the governing body of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, founded by the United Nations, with centres in Italy, India and the Republic of South Africa. Through this organisation, over the years, significant financial resources have been secured for the financing of scientific projects, conferences and education of students from Serbia.

Through numerous projects, she actively participates in the implementation of the technology transfer process, as well as in the introduction of innovation concepts in research in Serbia and in the region. Over the years, she has gained experience and knowledge about the complete process of creation of innovations and their commercialisation – from the laboratory to the market.

During her scientific career, she managed and participated in numerous national and international scientific projects, as well as cooperation projects with the economy, including domestic and foreign companies.

In recent years, she has been dedicated to mentoring and providing assistance to researchers on innovation development projects. As an expert, she was involved in the development and writing of state strategies, including the Smart Specialisation Strategy of Serbia.

At the very beginning of the pandemic, in 2020, the government of the Republic of Serbia appointed her as the coordinator of the project of development and construction of the Fire Eye laboratories in Belgrade and Nis, which started work in 2020 and thus contributed to the strengthening of Serbia's testing capacity during the pandemic.

With the support of the state, in 2021, she established the Centre for Sequencing and Bioinformatics at the Institute and thus enabled Serbia to start forming a national genomic data bank.

She is one of the creators of the BIO4 campus project, which was supported by the government of the Republic of Serbia and which should gather research entrepreneurs and companies around one idea, which is the development of Serbia through the development of biomedicine and biotechnology.