

## Mladen Čučak, PhD

### PROFESIONAL PROFILE

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- Aspiring agricultural researcher in the field of plant pathology/epidemiology with global experience of technical and development issues in crop protection
- Motivated achiever with PhD in Plant Pathology focused on field-based agronomy, agrometeorology and quantitative methods
- Track record of developing integrated pest management tools for practical disease control outcomes
- Strong collaborative qualities, leads change to effect positive outcomes
- Proficient problem-solver with the analytical skills to evaluate risks and develop realistic and effective strategies
- Strong logistics and programme organisational skills
- Proven ability to adapt to new subject areas and roles, along with the ability to develop strong professional relationships at all levels
- Influential interpersonal communicator, negotiator, and presenter
- Farmer focused approach through hands-on experience

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

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Crop Protection	Statistical analysis	Agricultural development
General plant pathology	Statistical programming	Collaborative research
Integrated Pest Management	R language	Data Science
Epidemiology of Plant Diseases	Trial design	Agrometeorology

### EXPERIENCE

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**Date:** February 2016 - May 2020

**Employer:** Teagasc, Crops Research Centre, Oak Park, Carlow R93 XE12, Republic of Ireland

**Position:** Doctoral researcher

**Main achievement:** Development of potato late blight risk prediction models, analytic and field evaluation, and integration in practical integrated management in the Republic of Ireland

**Main tasks:**

- Design, implementation and analysis of the crop protection *in vivo* and *in vitro* trials (including all relevant agricultural operations from planting to storage);
- Collection, curation and analysis of database with historical and forecasted hourly weather observations and implementation of an automated decision support system to guide pesticide applications;
- Sampling, isolation and molecular characterization of *Phytophthora infestans*;
- Presentation of results of IPM tools to producers and industry; national and international scientific meetings from different fields (agronomy, plant pathology, epidemiology, meteorology);
- Supervision of lab interns (six three- and six-months placements);
- Initiated, led and tutored data analysis and R programming language group at the institute;
- Intensive collaboration with European and international groups.

**Date:** December 2014 – December 2015

**Employer:** NIBIO Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research, Plant Protection Division Høgskoleveien 7, 1430 Ås, Norway

**Position:** Intern (01.12.2014 – 10.06.2015) on project *Introduction of ICT in IPM in Bosnia and Hercegovina's agriculture*; Senior Research Technician (10.06.2015 – 15.12.2015) involved in several projects of Plant Pathology Department

### Main tasks:

- Assisting project coordinator in project management;
- Monitoring pest and disease population and modelling risk of harmful organisms in agriculture;
- Work on the development and international promotion of decision support systems in agriculture;
- Facilitating international collaboration Norway – Balkans;
- Development of an automated insect trap.

### Teaching:

2018 - 2019 GY310B – Tutoring group of 16 students writing Bachelor thesis.  
2019 Intro to R workshop for colleagues from the institute (weekly sessions for 2 months).

### Internships:

01.06.2013 - Plant protection department; Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, Kmetijsko gozdarska  
01.07.2013 zbornica Slovenije; Vinarska ulica 14, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia  
01.04.2009 - Phytopharmacy store. Trznica A.D. Jedinica: Poljoprivredna apoteka, Banja Luka, Bosnia  
15.04.2009 and Herzegovina  
01.04.2008 - Apple fruit orchard (200 Ha); Agroimpex, Laktasi, Gradiska, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
15.04.2008

### Volunteering:

2010 Youth engagement project: *Global exchange*. Three-month stays in Egypt and the UK  
1998-2012 Youth and development organisations such as Scout club, IAESTE (International Organisation of Agronomy Students) and “Rada” (Society Of Agronomists And Tourism Workers)

## EDUCATION

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2016 - 2020	PhD	Plant Pathology/Epidemiology. Maynooth University/Teagasc; Ireland
2012 - 2015	MSc	Agronomy: Biomolecular Techniques and Plant Protection. Maribor; Slovenia
2006 - 2011	BSc	Plant Production - Plant Protection. Banja Luka; Bosnia and Herzegovina

## GRANTS, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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2021	Co-PI on the project: Development of mummy berry decision support tool in north-west Washington state (21.000\$)
2019	Teagasc Walsh Fellowship Travel Award for three-month research stay at UC Davis (5000€)
2016	Student travel award for participation on EAPR Pathology and Pests section meeting
2016 - 2020	Doctoral fellowship at Maynooth University and Teagasc
2014	EEA grant for an internship at Norwegian Institute for Bioeconomy Research (3000€)
2012 - 2014	Erasmus Mundus scholarship for Master studies

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

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### Synergistic Activities

Early career associate editor *Phytopathology* (APS)  
Reviewer for *Plant Disease* (APS) and *Agronomy* (MDPI)

### Membership in Professional Associations:

The American Phytopathological Society (APS)  
EuroBlight group  
Open Plant Pathology

## PERSONAL

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Driving license: Category B (license from Ireland)

Hobbies: sports, cooking, photography