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1_Greetings from the President



Dear NEREUS Members,

Herewith I present you the Activity Report 2015. The reporting year marked an important step for bringing space closer to society: Successful satellite launches demonstrated major breakthroughs and advanced the maturity of both European space systems. This paved the way to create more business opportunities for satellite-enabled products and services, contributing to highly qualified jobs, with spill-over effects across the economy. Simultaneously, we were very content to see a growing awareness amongst our interlocutors. Compared to the past, the European Commission (EC) as well as the European Space Agency (ESA) put stronger emphasis on promoting a broader public and private awareness and uptake. We hope that this evolution will also be reflected in the EC's proposal for a future European Space Strategy.

Serving my second mandate as NEREUS President, I had the opportunity to deepen the exchange with the political level of relevant European institutions - such as the European Parliament, the European Commission, GSA - as well as ESA, accordingly to the NEREUS Work Programme 2015/2016 approved by the network community. These efforts contributed considerably to raise the recognition and profile of the regional dimension of space.

Extending my sincere gratitude to all NEREUS members for their support and trust in the network, I wish to highlight that their commitment to network activities, ranging from the newly established Standing Committee to Working Groups, make us a strong and dynamic community. Special thanks go to the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Management Board for their strategic advice which brings significant added value to the network's recognition at European level.

Nichi Vendola
NEREUS President

2_Report from the Secretary General



Dear NEREUS Community,

We like to share with you the main highlights of the past year: In the reporting year, NEREUS comprised 25 Member regions and 41 Associate Members. In May 2015, the General Assembly renewed the Board and the mandates for NEREUS-President, Nichi Vendola, and the Vice-Presidents, Christian Bruns (Free Hanseatic City of Bremen), Mark Lester (East Midlands) and Alain Bénêteau (now Languedoc-Roussillon-Midi Pyrénées) and elected the new Treasurer, Ms. Baerbel Deisting (Bavaria). All offices are valid for two years. Accommodating two regional ministers amongst its members, Minister Raffaele Liberali (Basilicata) and Minister Fabrizio Sala (Lombardy), the new Board was reinforced at political level.

NEREUS faced growing challenges as well as opportunities. Being involved in numerous initiatives, the Board stated the need for more expert advice supporting its strategic decisions as well as other network activities. This led to the creation of a new network body, the Standing Committee, comprised of multidisciplinary experts from all member regions.

With two flagship projects, we strived to enhance the presence of NEREUS in our member regions and gain joint experiences at a European scale. The NEREUS/ESA-workshop series is a vivid example of how to promote the use of Copernicus via interregional collaborations and dialogue amongst local space communities. The Space Girls Space Women exhibition, a mobile photo exhibition that NEREUS-regions share as a common tool to outreach to the public and in particular to the young generation, is another initiative to be quoted. It has traveled through several of our member regions: Apulia (Bari), Lombardy (Milan) and Abruzzo (Chieti) and will continue to East Midlands (Leicester), Azores (Ponta Delgada) and Veneto (Venice) in 2016. We hope to inspire you to take it to your region too!

2015 was also a year of change for the Brussels-based Secretariat: We wish to thank Federica Bordelot who worked with us for many years, and welcome the new staff members Ilaria d'Auria (Communication/Project Officer) and Elena Bratikova (Assistant). Efforts to revitalize Working Groups, the content level of the network, resulted in mobilizing new Chairs for the GNSS and Telecommunications Working Groups. We welcomed Paul Bhatia (GRACE Manager, University of Nottingham), Prof. Stefano Gandolfi (University of Bologna), Prof. Alessandro Caporali (University of Padua), and Patrick Mauté (Thales Alenia) and thank them for volunteering.

On this occasion we like to express our gratitude to all members, in particular the Vice-Presidents and Treasurer but also all Chairs of Working Groups for taking an active role and turning NEREUS in a rewarding experience. Your time, energy and resources are fully appreciated.

Have a pleasant read.

Roya AYAZI,
NEREUS Secretary General

3_Looking back at 2015



In line with the four main objectives for 2015/2016 presented by NEREUS-President Nichi Vendola to the General Assembly and included in the current Work Programme, we have compiled a collection of snapshots highlighting the main activities for 2015.

OBJECTIVE 1 | Strengthening relationships between the network and the European Space Agency, National Space Agencies and with GSA

In 2015, NEREUS has strived to reinforce relations and cooperation with the main space organizations through meetings at Director level. On these occasions, the NEREUS-President and accompanying delegations aimed at increasing the involvement of regions in specific programmes, leveraging on the general recognition that space services and applications need to be brought closer to European regions and their citizens, favoring both SMEs and users.



Meeting with ESA/ESRIN Director, Volker Liebig (Frascati)
November 2014



Meeting with GSA Director, Carlo Des Dorides (Brussels)
January 2015

The dialogues stressed the importance of developing concrete actions towards the implementation of joint initiatives. Other vital matters of the discussions were how to foster a better understanding and recognition of space via outreach and awareness raising activities, in particular for students and the broad public.

To date, NEREUS is valued as a strategic interlocutor for its capacity to voice regional concerns, including both the views of administrations as well as those of other relevant stakeholders, such as universities, SMEs and industry. We wish to bring the results of our collective efforts into 2016.

OBJECTIVE 2 | Build agreements with the new institutional framework at EU level

Local and regional authorities (LRAs) are a key end-user group of space-based services and products. In particular, Earth Observation/Copernicus is needed for a broad range of territorial and environmental purposes in public administrations. To date, however, the uses of satellite data and signals by LRAs is fragmented across Europe. For this reason, NEREUS organized the "SPACE4Growth and Jobs" conference together with the Committee of the Regions (CoR).



Round table "The Regional dimension of Space policy" | Moderated by NEREUS Vice-President Christian Bruns
May 2015

The aim was to see how regions have been designing specific policies and measures to facilitate the deployment and exploitation of the European space systems. Smart Specialization Strategies including space as a priority, public procurement and business incubators were some elements which animated the debate.

260 participants registered for the event, and a Twitterwall was set up in order to feed social media into the debate. A publication and a web story were produced after the event, featuring the main highlights of the conference.



Remco Timmermans @timm. 314d
Running a Tweetwall above a panel discussion *can* add good value. New @TweetBinder Tweetwall recommended! #Space4
pic.twitter.com/Q1U6m9cLhl



Details



NEREUS @NEREUSaisbl 314d
Thank you all for participating in our successful #Space4 Growth and Jobs Conference today, both in the room and on Twitter!

Details



Tim Reynolds @IntaComm 314d
At @NEREUSaisbl event on #space and #regionalpolicy at @EU_CoR - nice use of twitter #Space4 and interesting discussions of course!

Details

More Tweets online!
www.nereus-regions.eu

OBJECTIVE 3 | Increasing the visibility of the network at the EU, national and local level, in order to foster the interregional and intercluster cooperation

Network members are spread across different countries although some have representations in Brussels, at the heart of Europe. NEREUS organizes workshops and events at regional level as they are an effective tool to pool local expertise, exchange knowledge and raise awareness on space matters. 2015 confirmed once again the importance of strengthening the network's regional anchorage via local initiatives which consolidate the regional space community and shed light on space capabilities of each territory.

During 2015, more events have been organized at local level than in Brussels: regional administrations and aerospace clusters have been the main protagonists in the involvement of relevant players and their proactiveness has been vital to the successful outcomes of all these meetings. With the following snapshots we wish to thank you all for the collective efforts which make the difference in NEREUS.



Workshop on Space Applications, Bremen | April 2015

A workshop presenting Bremen's space capabilities as well as other information on the international space community that attended the event.

From left to right: NEREUS Vice-President Christian Bruns (Bremen), Bremen Economic Senator Martin Guenther, NEREUS-President Nichi Vendola (Apulia) and NEREUS Vice-President, Alain Bénétteau (Midi-Pyrénées)

Organizing already the second edition of the Space Policy / Space Industry Dialogue, NEREUS and bavAIRia e.V., the Bavarian Aerospace Cluster, initiated a debate that addressed recent challenges and concerns of regional actors and SMEs with regards to EU Space Policy of the next decade. Amongst the invited speakers were MEP Monika Hohlmeier as well as other key actors from industry and politics, such as Executive Director of GSA, Carlo Des Dorides, Piero Messina (ESA) and Juergen Ackermann (Airbus).

2d Edition of the Space Policy / Space Industry Dialogue, Bavaria | July 2015

60 participants from both the space industry and the political sphere met in Augsburg to discuss what needs to be done to support/strengthen the competitiveness of European industry on the global market



From left to right: Baerbel Deisting (bavAIRia e.V.), industry representative, Dietmar Schneyer (Bavaria Region), Carlo Des Dorides (GSA) - Photo credits: bavAIRia e.V.

In 2015, NEREUS pursued its long-term collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA) with a project especially targeted towards public end-users: "Improving Copernicus take-up among Local and Regional Authorities (LRAs)". A pan-European dialogue with public administrators was launched in three NEREUS Regions (Azores, Lombardy, Bavaria) through thematic workshops.

The commitment and professionalism of the organizers was crucial for the success of each workshop. The work and interaction around them made a local Copernicus community emerge, ranging from scientists working in close contact with public administrations, to less aware administrators who only just heard about the potential of Copernicus data for their daily work.

This community of interested stakeholders is the social capital on which Copernicus uptake can leverage. All in all, the series of thematic workshops served not only for outreach, but as a catalyzer for motivation, enabling networking and interregional collaboration.



Land and Marine planning and management using Sentinel data: Small Oceanic Islands as a Model | 28 September 2015

The workshop attracted 100 participants from the area, but also from Portugal mainland and abroad. The workshop was characterized by open and lively debates, where representatives of public administrations from various European regions could share their perceptions and experiences.

From left to right: Alessandra Tassa (ESA), Nelson Simoes (Azores Region), Roya Ayazi (NEREUS), Silvia Fabrizi (CGS SpA)

NEREUS meets the local space community in the Azores | September 2015

After the regional workshop organized with ESA in Ponta Delgada, NEREUS exchanges with the local community on space matters.





A Trip from Mountains to Valleys: Copernicus satellites as "sentinels" of environmental and economic challenges | 20 October 2015

The workshop attracted 131 participants on site and over 100 followed online via streaming. It gathered together regional and environment agencies and administrations having different degrees of experience with EO data. The portrayal of examples of use of EO data by public institutions committed to deliver public policies allowed participants to exchange upon concrete cases.

From left to right: Paolo D'Angelo (Journalist), Laura Candela (ASI), Armando De Crinito (Lombardy Region), Josef Aschbacher (ESA), Nichi Vendola (NEREUS)

Natural Resource Management using Copernicus' Services and Data | 12 November 2015

The workshop hosted 63 participants, and showcased solutions for specific needs presented by teams of representatives from public administration paired with commercial service providers.



From left to right: Prof. Manfred Schroeder (bavAIRia e.V.), Baerbel Deisting (bavAIRia e.V.), Robert Roschlaub (LDBV), Markus Probeck (GAF AG) - Photo credits: bavAIRia e.V.

NEREUS' vitality is based on the proactiveness of its members. In line with the network's core mission, aiming at spreading the uses of space technologies, the workshop organized in Brussels on "Space applications and Development cooperation" demonstrated the importance of linking space with non-space communities.



"Space Applications and Development cooperation" | December 2015
Workshop organized by the Free Hanseatic city of Bremen, GIZ and NEREUS, launched a dialogue on how space applications could be valuable for developing countries in the fields of climate and weather observations, as well as agriculture and maritime affairs.

OBJECTIVE 4 | To strengthen the fascination for space through public outreach initiatives

Raising awareness on the benefits of space applications also implies stimulating the curiosity and imagination of a broader and non-scientific audience. With the screening of the movie GRAVITY, in presence of ESA astronaut François Clervoy, NEREUS reached out and fascinated a whole new public, ranging from children, youngsters to regional and EU officials outside the space community.

Going in the same direction, the support to the Space Girls Space Women exhibition by Sipa Press, together with the European Space Agency and other partners, has been an opportunity for NEREUS members to bring a set of 40 pictures portraying women with their heads in the stars to their regions. After Paris and Brussels, NEREUS Regions Apulia, Lombardy and Abruzzo organized local editions of Space Girls Space Women in their capitals Bari, Milan and Chieti. They used the exhibition as a tool to reflect on gender issues in science, and show the broad range of work opportunities in the space field. Through these initiatives, NEREUS proved its core added-value in providing a tangible European dimension to specific projects and a platform to share experiences and joint objectives.



The SPACE GIRLS SPACE WOMEN exhibition, funded by ESA and Sipa Press and supported by NEREUS, CNES, Cité de l'Espace, Universcience and the GSA, has been touring NEREUS member regions. After Paris and Brussels, Bari, Milan and Chieti hosted the exhibition in 2015, using it as a tool to attract broader audiences to the space sector.

Interested institutions part of the NEREUS network can benefit from special advantages if they wish to organize a local event around the SPACE GIRLS SPACE WOMEN exhibition. East Midlands, Azores and Veneto have already made contact with the Secretariat, so expect new dates for 2016.

More information: <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/spacegirlspacewomen>

Enhancing people's awareness of the benefits of space on Earth is one of NEREUS' core missions, and culture is a powerful tool to work on the common imagination. The success of the screening of the movie GRAVITY, with live explanations by ESA astronaut Jean-François Clervoy, was a big achievement not only for the number of participants who attended the event, but also because NEREUS reached out to a whole new and broader audience. He answered the following questions by the audience



What did you miss the most in space?
What is your favourite food in space?
What is the smell of the International Space Station?
How long were you in space for?
How was your sleep in space?
What was the most difficult situation in space?
What is the body's sensation when you are in outer space?
What happens when you come back on Earth?

"Once you come back, you definitely think that our planet is the most beautiful thing we have. It is like a spaceship: you have to be careful of every resource as they are limited and we share them all. Once you come back, you realize that space is our destiny and our future"

We wish to thank all our Full Members that make the network so vital...



As well as our rapidly growing group of Associate Members ensuring a significant industry, SME and research representation



2016 will be a busy year for European Space Policy.

Later this year, the Commission will present its proposal for “A space strategy for Europe”, emphasizing the importance of the space sector for Europe as a driver for growth, competitiveness and jobs. However, as a European network working closely with local and regional administrations, NEREUS measures daily the gap between Europe’s potential and the reality of the market uptake, especially from the point of view of the public users.

- - - The importance of Regions for market uptake

NEREUS recommends to add a regional dimension to the European Space Strategy putting the user at its center. Being closest to the citizens, regions are a crucial point of reference for connecting space with society, businesses and public policies. They also are a key user group of space-based products and services. Broadly promoting its position paper, NEREUS highlights how a better exploitation of space applications relies on a mix of actions at different levels. In addition to that, the network stresses the importance of acting together. While making specific suggestions to both the European Commission and ESA, it also assigns an active role to the regional level and positions itself as a facilitator.

- - - Space beyond Space

Societal challenges call for complex and demanding responses. Space applications offer cross-sectorial and transversal solutions for policy objectives in fields such as agriculture, development aid, health and tourism. Linking space with non-space topics is vital for the network’s mission. The activities on the NEREUS platform, in particular leveraging on the valuable work done by the EO/Copernicus Working Group (chaired by Prof. Valerio Tramutoli and Branka Cuca), identified a great interest in space solutions for challenges related to Development Cooperation and Agriculture. Given the positive outcomes of such experiences, more activities are planned in 2016.

- - - Interregional collaboration

A strong regional anchorage doubled by members’ initiatives are the lymph of our network’s vitality. With view to the upcoming challenges, we wish to invite all members to fully exploit the numerous opportunities offered by NEREUS and make the best of the platform’s dynamism. Looking into next years’ activities, we wish for each and every one of you to find inspiration and motivation to take action in one or many network activities.

