

Networking Session Regions - “SPACE4REGIONS: SATELLITE SOLUTIONS AS A DRIVER FOR GROWTH AND INNOVATION”

📍 Athens, 13th May 2014

🕒 14.30 – 18.00

✉ EVGENIDIS Foundation, 387 Syngrou Avenue,
175 64 P. Faliro, Athens, Greece

In the frame of the conference “Copernicus - Sentinels Serving Society and the Environment” organized by the European Space Agency – ESA, the Greek Presidency and the European Commission – EC on 12/13 May 2014 in Athens/Greece, NEREUS in collaboration with the Apulian Aerospace Cluster and the Hellenic Association of Space Industries, organized a session focused on networking regions and debating their needs. The event brought together more than 40 participants from all over Europe. Amongst the invited speaker were the Governor of Corfù Christos-Iraklis Skourtis and Head of ESA-Copernicus space office, Simon Jutz as well as speakers from different European regions. By presenting regional best practices as well as cluster initiatives participants discussed how regional programs and instruments, especially structural funds can be exploited to finance space activities.

“Satellite services are very important to create innovation but it should be a social innovation, bringing benefits to the society” said Governor of Corfu and Vice Governor of the region of the Ionian Islands when opening the session. The significant contribution of space services for fostering regional growth and innovation was also highlighted by BoD of the Apulian Aerospace Cluster, Giovanni Sylos Labini who, continuing the dialogue started earlier this year at the SPACE4YOU conference, said “Apulia’s space strategy focuses on strengthening international relations” and, he continued “NEREUS is one of the main partners in this process”. When presenting the NEREUS platform, SG Roya Ayazi called for a systematic overview of EU-Directives and EU-environmental legislation whose implementation might be facilitated by Copernicus data. This will serve as an orientation for regional administrations and service provider alike.

Head of ESA-Copernicus space office, Simon Jutz stated “data is now available but its real impact depends on what the users make out of it”. The best-practices from six NEREUS-member regions (Bavaria, Azores, Lombardy, Veneto, Basilicata, Apulia) illustrated the broad panorama of different regional Copernicus uses, e.g. air and water quality monitoring. The presentations gave regions the opportunity to share common challenges and needs and highlighted the dimension of Copernicus in the context of regional development and regional

policies touching upon innovation, SME-support, economic growth and qualified employment. The speaker from the Azores Marlene Antunes told the audience that she was very surprised to learn throughout the two days of conference how many commonalities the Azores have with Greece and its islands.

Finally, the second part of the session focused on the ability of regional clusters to connect space technologies with end users. Marek Baranowski from the Mazovia Institute of Geodesy and Cartography presented the FP7 funded project THE ISSUE. This project, which brings together research clusters from 5 member regions, aims at using intelligent Traffic Management to boost competitiveness of transport-related economies at urban, regional and local levels. The presentations of Basilicata, Athenian and Apulian space clusters demonstrated that regions are also strategic laboratories for the utilisation and development of new space services.

NEREUS - Network of European Regions Using Space Technologies - currently unites 23 European regions and 40 Associate Members with the common objective to spread the use and understanding of space technologies across Europe for the benefit of regions and their citizens. As voice of the European Regions, NEREUS not only serves as an advocate for the regions in matters of space uses but also as a direct channel to the regional users of space technologies (such as local authorities, SMEs, universities and research institutes and citizens). The network is the key interface between the regional level and national and European institutions.

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