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PRESS RELEASE

POLICY-MAKERS WORKSHOP FOR E-INFRASTRUCTURES IN SE EUROPE: WORKING TOWARDS A COMMON VISION AND A LONG TERM REGIONAL STRATEGY

The **Policy-makers Workshop for e-Infrastructures in South-East Europe** was held with great success in Divani Caravel Hotel in the center of Athens, on February 21st.

The workshop was organized by the **European Commission SEE-GRID-2 project** (South-East European GRID e-Infrastructure Development) with the support of the **Greek Research and Technology Network (GRNET)**.

The workshop brought together delegates from 12 countries of the South-East European Region, including representatives of various regional ministries and national authorities, who provide support for the deployment of national-level e-Infrastructures. The European Commission representative of the DG-INFSOM "GÉANT & e-Infrastructure", as well as representatives of National Research and Education Networks and National Grid Initiatives, who implement the national-level e-Infrastructures, were also present.

An overview of EC-sponsored initiatives targeting at regional development was presented. The SEEREN and SEEGRID projects were presented as flagship projects that established the SEE regional networking and Grid computing e-Infrastructure.

Furthermore, participants exchanged experience regarding the current status of e-Infrastructures in all countries of the region and an overview regarding the national-level support for e-Infrastructures was provided.



Finally, the policy-makers engaged in an open dialogue. A number of countries have in the past strongly contributed towards local NRN funding and network interconnections at a regional level, as well as towards diverse Grid programs at a national level. The importance of the awareness of the necessity of national-level programs and financial support for electronic infrastructures at a country level, in order to complement the EC initiatives, was pointed out.

The delegates agreed on the fact that the region has to use the current momentum to work together towards implementing a common vision and regional strategy that will be sustainable in its funding, operations and use in a much longer term.

About SEE-GRID-2 <http://www.see-grid.eu>

It is an initiative carried out within the European Commission's Sixth Framework Program under Research Infrastructures and aims to assist the participation of the South-Eastern European (SEE) states to the pan-European and worldwide Grid initiatives by establishing a Grid infrastructure that will expand and support the European Research Area in the region. The initiative is coordinated by the Greek Research & Technology Network and the project consortium consists of representatives from National Grid Initiatives of Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Hungary, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Moldova, Croatia, as well as CERN in an advisory role. The project has established National Grid Initiatives in all countries in the region, developed the regional Grid infrastructure, and is currently supporting more than 20 end-user applications from more than 10 different scientific fields.

The Greek Research and Technology Network operates as the driving force of the Greek Information Society. It supports the research and development of Information and Communication Technologies within Greece and internationally, through the provision of its high-capacity networking and grid computing infrastructure, the strengthening of e-Learning & e-Business practices, as well as the participation in international research and education efforts. GRNET operates under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Development (www.grnet.gr).

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