



PRESS RELEASE

Malta, 6 February 2006 – Official kick-off meeting of the EUMEDGRID Project: empowering e-Science across the Mediterranean

Funded by European Commission, the EUMEDGRID project starts officially with a meeting located, both symbolically and geographically, at the heart of the Mediterranean. During the next two years, a group of highly-motivated experts will collaborate to develop a Grid e-Infrastructure for e-Science across the Mediterranean: a concrete initiative aiming at bridging the Digital Divide and fostering collaboration between Europe and its Mediterranean Neighbours.

Today, with the official kick-off meeting held in Malta, the EU EUMEDGRID Project - empowering eScience across the Mediterranean – officially starts. The main objective of this initiative, funded by the European Commission in the framework of the 6th Framework Programme for research and technological development, is to support implementation and use of a Grid infrastructure across the Mediterranean Area, thus fostering the development of e-Science applications (such as hydrogeological and medical applications) connected with already existing activities in Europe, in line with the support to the intercontinental extension of the European Research Area (ERA).

The Project will exploit the existing e-Infrastructures, i.e. the pan-European high bandwidth backbone GEANT2 (Gigabit Pan-European Research & Education Network) and the Mediterranean EUMEDCONNECT Network. Furthermore, EUMEDGRID will actively collaborate with the EU EGEE project and its regional extensions (the Projects: BalticGrid, EELA, EUChinaGRID, SEEGRID, etc), using common guidelines to encourage the porting of new applications on the pilot e-Infrastructure, thus promoting the growth of new user communities and the adoption of new powerful Grid tools and services.

One of the major strengths of the EUMEDGRID workplan will be the dissemination and training activities which, thanks to the growth of new competences related to this innovative technology, will allow new research groups and applications to access the infrastructure, thus promoting new developments in scientific – and eventually industrial – fields.

EUMEDGRID can therefore be regarded as a concrete initiative towards bridging the digital divide across the Mediterranean as well as an effective way to promote the growth of high-level competencies within developing Countries in the Area of Computational Grids, which, in experts' opinion, will become of strategic importance both for Research and Industry in the next few years. Moreover, the initiative will foster international cooperation between European scientists and their Mediterranean neighbours, thanks to the creation of a human Network for e-Science.

The EUMEDGRID project is coordinated by INFN, the Italian National Institute of Nuclear, Particle and High Energy Physics and involves several partners and third-party



Organizations from Europe (i.e. GARR, INFN and ICTP from Italy, REDES from Spain, GRNET from Greece, Cynet from Cyprus, and the University of Malta) and beyond (CERIST from Algeria, CNRST from Morocco, EUN from Egypt, HIAST from Syria, MRSTDC from Tunisia, TUBITAK from Turkey, PalNet from Palestinian Territories, IUCC from Israel, and Junet from Jordan), plus CERN and DANTE, promoters and coordinators of EGEE and EUMEDCONNECT Projects, respectively.

1. For further information about EUMEDGRID please visit: <http://www.eumedgrid.org> or contact the Project Office (po@eumedgrid.org).
2. For further information about INFN please visit: <http://www.infn.it>
3. For further information about the EGEE - Enabling Grids for E-sciencE project, please visit: <http://www.eu-egee.org>
4. For further information about the GEANT2 Pan-European Backbone please visit: <http://www.geant.net/>
5. For further information about the EUMEDCONNECT project and network, please visit: <http://www.eumedconnect.net>