



Annual Report 2013

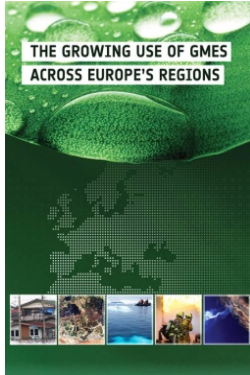


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Introduction/General overview

The year 2013 was in many respects strategic for the future of the NEREUS network. In the reporting year concrete actions were initiated, paving the way for long term interregional collaborations and activities in the years to come.



In the framework of the ongoing *collaboration between NEREUS and ESA* aimed at raising awareness on the Copernicus programme, in 2013 a new joint-initiative was developed: *"Improving Copernicus take-up among Local and Regional Authorities via dedicated thematic workshops"*. A follow-up to the collection of regional Copernicus uses "The Growing Use of GMES across Europe's Regions"¹ produced jointly by NEREUS and ESA in 2012, the current project wants to learn more about the **deployment situation at regional level**. Through a series of thematic workshops this new NEREUS/ESA-initiative wishes to animate the dialogue between end users (mainly regions and LRAs) and the supply side with the objective to gain more

information about the factors that are behind a slow Copernicus uptake and potential roadblocks.

2013 was also a year of transition as regards EU-funding programs. With the adoption of the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020 in December 2013, a whole set of new programs responding to Europe's key political priorities for the next 7 years were launched and financially equipped. The 7th Framework program for Research and Innovation gave way to the new Horizon 2020-program. NEREUS participated in and organized a series of events to inform regions and their stakeholders about this new program. To quote few examples, the NEREUS-**working session** on the *"Role of the EU-flagships (EGNOS/Galileo and Copernicus) to respond to societal challenges of Horizon2020 programme"*² with representatives from European Institutions, European Space Agency and European research organizations and universities. Further to this, NEREUS was involved in some of the events around the road-show *"The Countdown to Horizon2020"* organized by the COSMOS-network³ in many European cities. The German NCP had invited the German network community to its premises in Bonn and hosted an information event. NEREUS supported the **Toulouse** workshop which brought together more than 150 participants from SMEs, universities, national authorities and local administrations. NEREUS-President Alain Bénéteau, in his speech emphasized the importance to foster the development of interregional collaboration in cross-sectoral activities and NEREUS' efforts in this respect. Additionally, in December, Secretary General (SG) Roya Ayazi was among the invited speakers for the Brussels-infoevent. While presenting the FP-7 project



¹ <http://esamultimedia.esa.int/multimedia/publications/NEREUS/>

² http://www.nereus-regions.eu/EU_flagships_for_H2020

³ the EU funded network of National Contact Points (NCPs) for Space within FP7

DORIS-Net and its RCO-network, she highlighted the need for support actions targeted at regions and SMEs to better exploit the Copernicus and EGNOS/Galileo systems.

The NEREUS internal and external **communication strategy** was broadly reshaped and expanded. In this context, new communication tools were implemented and the potentials of social media explored. Different social media tools were analyzed and accessed in how far they could contribute to promote the network towards new communities and also to better outreach and interact with the broad public. As a result a NEREUS twitter account was launched in January 2014.

Efforts by the NEREUS-community aimed at mobilizing activities for students and young graduates, led to some concrete results in 2013. **The ERASMUS project FORMAT-EO⁴**, stimulated through the activities of the CET WG, set up a 14-day summer school at the University of Leicester bringing together students from 8 EU-member States. Apart from this, the **NEREUS e-catalogue⁵** got new subscriptions and visits in 2013, increasing the figures by 20%.



The 2013 NEREUS General Assembly (1st July 2013), was again the main annual occasion for the network-community to debate past and future network strategy and activities and to learn more about the new EU Space Industrial Policy and its contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy. Additionally, a special panel was dedicated to presenting **NEREUS WGs⁶ activities**. All chairs/co-chairs of the 5 WGs introduced their activities as well as future work programme. While the number of activities and results achieved,

positively surprised the members, the presentations at the same time stimulated an open debate on how to improve the work structure of the working groups. New interregional collaborations and ideas of possible future cooperation among the different WGs were discussed. The opinions collected became an important contribution for a broader and long-term strategy oriented to re-organize the WGs.

Finally, throughout the year, five management boards were scheduled (January, April, July, October and November).

Reinforcing the political dialogue at EU, national and regional level

The dialogue with the European Institutions was also in the reporting year among the priorities of the network. As a network of regions NEREUS introduced the regional dimension in the European space policy making and offered a unique platform for its members to speak as a sole body with European Institutions.

⁴ FORmartion of Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Training in Earth Observation

⁵ <http://www.nereus-space-training.eu/>

⁶ <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/working-groups>

With regard to the 2013 EC-proposal for a Regulation on establishing the European Earth Observation program (Copernicus)⁷, NEREUS highlighted the regional perspective and urgent need for a broad and free use of Copernicus data across Europe. A **NEREUS position paper**⁸ was authored by the EO/Copernicus (GMES) - WG in collaboration with the NEREUS-secretariat.

Highlighting the dimension of space exploration and associated technologies in the Horizon 2020 programme was an important objective of the NEREUS-Exploration-working group. To this end, putting emphasis on encouraging and supporting innovations as well as more effective mission exploitation for the benefits of European citizens, the Space Exploration WG in collaboration with the NEREUS-Secretariat, in September 2013 released a **position paper** on **"NEREUS views on Space Exploration in Horizon 2020"**⁹.

The paper was broadly disseminated amongst relevant player and presented on the occasion of the **"HUB:BLE-2 Boosting Local Enterprises"-workshop**¹⁰, 16-17 October 2013 in Leicester/UK. Bringing together the UK space community, the WS provided SMEs and other player with a particular interest in innovation, exploration, and technology transfer, an opportunity to foster relationships and forge links within the region and beyond.



NEREUS supported the 2nd Annual **European Satellite Day**. Hosted by ESOA and EUROSPACE, this second edition brought together a high level and exclusive group of policymakers, industry representatives and other stakeholders to discuss the role of satellite services for responding to today's global stability risks as well as mitigating them going forward.



While maintaining its role as a dedicated interlocutor of the European Institutions for matters of regional space policy, in 2013 NEREUS continued its efforts to increase its visibility and awareness also at regional level and among the different regional communities.

On 28 May 2013, the German Space National Contact Point (NCP) at the DLR (German Space Agency) hosted in Bonn a **meeting of the German network** but also addressing interested participants outside the membership. The German Länder representatives were invited to present activities and initiatives of their regions and to discuss with the DLR against the background of the latest (EU) space policy developments. While giving the participants a broad panorama of the state of play the focus of the event was on introducing the Horizon2020-program (see above).

⁷ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2014.122.01.0044.01.ENG

⁸ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/NEREUS_Position_paper

⁹ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/sites/all/documents/wgdocs/TechnfromSpace/20131014_finalm.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/HUB_BLE_event

The Italian Embassy in collaboration with the Italian Space Agency and the Italian Trade Agency (ICE), organized the “**3-day mission to Belgium for a group of Italian SMEs**” on 13-15 November. The event, aimed at reinforcing the Italian-Belgian collaboration in the aerospace sector, centred on a series of meetings and informative sessions for both parties. NEREUS contributed to organizing an informative session on EU- space programs with relevance for Italian SMEs.

Partnership/collaboration with the European Space Agency (ESA)



NEREUS developed jointly with ESA-ESRIN the Copernicus initiative “**Improving GMES/Copernicus take-up among Local and Regional Authorities via dedicated thematic workshops**” (see above). The idea was to foster the dialogue among service provider and local and regional authorities (LRAs) through a series of thematic workshops. The outcomes of these workshops should contribute to promote awareness about available and forthcoming Copernicus

services/products as well as to get more information on the deployment situation in Europe. The project proposal was submitted in December 2013 and the workshops are meant to start in the second half of 2014. An **online consultation**¹¹ to identify the workshop topics that are of priority interest for LRAs was launched in April 2014. The project duration will be 2 years and more than 13 NEREUS-regions are actively involved. Most of the former DORIS_NET partners are involved in this initiative. More information can be found in the project dedicated page in the NEREUS website¹².

The initiatives developed in partnership with ESA are examples of interregional collaborations. The NEREUS-Secretariat acts in most cases as a coordinating interface and support structure. For promoting regional Copernicus uses, NEREUS got involved in an **advisory role in the ESA-funded initiative “Copernicus (formerly) GMES Application Factsheets and Animations: Data Processing and Production”**. The project objective is to create Copernicus factsheets, animations and electronic panels that allow decision makers to assess in a short time the key benefits of Copernicus for their specific area of interest. The NEREUS-network supports this initiative by advising the project consortium led by the German Space Agency (DLR) from a regional perspective. Based on the activities and experiences of its network partners, NEREUS feeds the portrayed Copernicus-uses with feed-back, inputs and graphic material. The main project consortium comprises DLR and Geoville.

¹¹ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/Online_consultation_ESA_NEREUS_COP_2014

¹² http://www.nereus-regions.eu/Other_NEREUS_projects

EU-funded projects and initiatives

NEREUS facilitates the involvement of its members in EU-funded activities. The network supports the creation of consortia of NEREUS partners and sustains them for the entire project circle. In addition to that, NEREUS provides also a platform for disseminating project results of its members.

NEREUS flagship projects

DORIS NET (*Downstream Observatory organized by Regions active in the Space_Network*)¹³, the first EU-funded project mobilized on the NEREUS platform ended in February 2013. The main outcome of this project, in which 13 NEREUS partners were involved, was a network of Regional Contact Offices (**RCOs**) which served as a meeting/information point among local authorities, providers and potential users of Copernicus services and other stakeholders. Despite the termination of EU-funding the ***RCO-network still exists and strives to find new ways of funding*** to ensure its sustainability. Its mission was to increase the use of space technologies and to help create business opportunities in order to demonstrate the broad array of existing Copernicus services at regional level in Europe and to boost a wider use of Copernicus applications. Since July 2011, seven RCOs have been established in NEREUS members regions and some other regions are currently exploring the opportunity to open a new RCO in their territory.



THE ISSUE (*Traffic-Health-Environment. Intelligent Solutions Sustaining Urban Economies*)¹⁴ brought together research clusters from 5 NEREUS regions and was qualified as the second NEREUS flagship project. The 3-year FP7 project aims at using intelligent Traffic Management to boost competitiveness of transport-related economies at urban, regional and local levels. In 2013 the project put many efforts in the **publication “Space and ICT applications supporting Smart, Green, Integrated Transport and Urban Mobility”** produced in collaboration with NEREUS. The publication was launched on the occasion of the exhibition *“Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Urban Transport Using Space and ICT Technologies”*¹⁵ organized in partnership with Midi-Pyrénées region and the project “THE ISSUE” in the framework of the Open Days 2013 in October.

Projects by NEREUS members

¹³ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/DORIS_NET

¹⁴ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/THE_ISSUE_project

¹⁵ http://www.nereus-regions.eu/Open_Days_2013_exhibition

In response of the (2012) ICT Policy Support Programme (PSP) as part of the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) two projects were submitted: SABER and BRESAT Thematic Network. The two projects are involving several NEREUS members.

The **SABER** (*Satellite Broadband for European Regions*)¹⁶ thematic network aims at exploring how broadband satellite technology can help to reduce the Digital Divide in Europe and at defining a set of guidelines to use these technologies optimally. A report on the benefits of satellite Broadband and a series of guidelines on satellite service procurement were released in May 2013 as two of the main outcomes of the project. The first year project results were presented and discussed during 4 workshops organized throughout the reporting year as well as in several International conferences and events around Europe. **BRESAT** (*Broadband in EU Regions via Satellite*)¹⁷ thematic network is, instead, mainly focused on defining the guidelines for the successful deployment of high speed broadband via satellite across regions of Europe. In 2013 the project launched its website available in 7 EU-languages.



Communication strategy

In 2013 several efforts were dedicated to reshape and expand the internal and external communication strategy of the network. New and effective communication approaches and techniques were accessed in order to make NEREUS communication more effective and to reach a different and broader public. In this respect, in July 2013 NEREUS launched a new **monthly newsletter** - a short and clear regular update on the network activities, events and initiatives. This new tool, together with the newsflashes, increased and reinforced the exchange between the Secretariat and the NEREUS community. However, the website remained the main information and communication tool of the platform. The statistics of the website visits for the period December 2012 - October 2013 revealed a considerable increase in the number of visitors especially concomitant to the annual General Assembly or newsletters/position papers release:

- Monthly visits: 14.563 (average Dec.2012-Oct.2013)
- Daily visits: 594-602 in peak times (May-July)



In 2013 particular attention was dedicated to **study** the opportunities offered by **social media** technologies. Thanks to the efforts of NEREUS interns, an overview of the different social media technologies available, and a specific analysis of **Twitter** - its functionality and the necessary steps to set up a profile and share contents - was developed. The results of this analysis led to the opening of a new Twitter account in January 2014.

¹⁶ <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/SABER>

¹⁷ <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/BRESAT>



NEREUS promoted the network and its activities in several **International conferences and exhibitions organizing a communication/information stand** comprising NEREUS publications, the video showcasing regional examples of space applications in different domains as well as other information material. To quote few examples, NEREUS was invited by the European Environment Agency to participate with an info stand at the 2013 GISC event in Copenhagen. The

GMES in-situ coordination (GISC), was a 3-year FP7 funded project with the main objective to develop an adequate management system for in-situ data. Additionally, as mentioned above, the COSMOS event in Toulouse was also another occasion where NEREUS organized an info stand. From the exchanges and networking with the participants, NEREUS established important contacts with space players and gained new associate members.

Young Network Community

NEREUS is committed to offer students and young professionals networking and study/training opportunities at a European level. For this reason, also in 2013 NEREUS actively promoted new activities and fostered partnerships in the area of education and training.

The **"NEREUS training courses" e-catalogue**¹⁸, launched in 2011 in the context of the activities of the CET WG, was **broadly promoted all over Europe**. A two-year free of charges-trial of the e-catalogue was offered to all Universities interested in advertising their courses in space-related matters and in attracting talented students. The result of this activity was a good increase in the number of visits and adhesion since last year:



- 180 courses and 85 universities registered in December 2012
- 219 courses and 10 universities registered in December 2013



A 14-day master-level summer school on Earth Observation was held at the University of Leicester in July 2013. The summer-school was organized within the **ERASMUS project FORMAT-EO** (FORmartion of Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Training in Earth Observation)¹⁹, mobilized by the members of the NEREUS CET working group and involving 8 partners from 7 NEREUS member regions. Eight nationalities of students attended the course which trained students on the principle of Earth Observation with specialist skills (analytical, programming, use of specialist

¹⁸ <http://www.nereus-space-training.eu/>

¹⁹ <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/FORMAT-EO>

software) required for a career in this field of research/industry. Following the great success of the 2013 edition, the course has been financed also for the year 2014.

Finally, also in the reporting year NEREUS offered to students and young graduated, *internship opportunities*²⁰ in its Brussels-based Secretariat. The activities of the reporting year were mainly centred on the promotion of the e-catalogue among Universities outside the NEREUS-Network and on a project focused on exploring the potentialities of social media useful for NEREUS activities.

List of members

The NEREUS Regions (*) - Full Members

1. Abruzzo (Italy)
2. Andalusia (Spain)
3. Apulia (Italy)
4. Aquitaine (France)
5. Azores (Portugal)
6. Baden-Württemberg (Germany)
7. Basilicata (Italy)
8. Bavaria (Germany)
9. Brandenburg (Germany)
10. Brittany (France)
11. Brussels Capital (Belgium)
12. East Midlands (United Kingdom)
13. Free Hanseatic City of Bremen (Germany)
14. French Guiana (France)
15. Hesse (Germany)
16. Lazio (Italy)
17. Lombardy (Italy)
18. Madrid (Spain)
19. Mazovia (Poland)
20. Molise (Italy)
21. Midi-Pyrénées (France)
22. Piedmont (Italy)
23. South Holland (Netherlands)
24. Veneto (Italy)
25. Wallonia (Belgium)

The NEREUS Associate Members (*)

1. ALTEC SpA (Piedmont)
2. Capital High Tech SARL (Aquitaine)
3. Compagnia Generale per lo Spazio CGS SpA (Lombardy)
4. Centre d'Etudes Techniques de l'Equipement Sud-Ouest, CETE (Midi-Pyrénées)
5. Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales, CNES (Midi-Pyrénées)

²⁰ <http://www.nereus-regions.eu/internship-opportunities>

6. Centro de Vulcanologia e Avaliaçao de Riscos Geologicos, CVARG (Azores)
7. Centro Interdipartimentale Studi e Attività Spaziali, CISAS, «G. Colombo» (Veneto)
8. Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Gers , CCI Gers (Midi-Pyrénées)
9. Cité de l'Espace (Midi-Pyrénées)
10. Consorzio per la Gestione di Coordinamento delle Attività di Ricerca Inerenti il Sistema Lagunare di Venezia, CORILA (Veneto)
11. Consorzio per le Technologie per le Osservazioni della Terra e dei Rischi Naturali, TeRN (Basilicata)
12. CYBERMAP Lda (Azores)
13. CTOTUS project under POR CREO FESR 2007/2013 (Tuscany)
14. EADS Astrium (Midi-Pyrénées)
15. EDISOFT SA (Azores)
16. Escola de novas tecnologias dos Açores, ENTA (Azores)
17. EURAC Research European Academy (South Tyrol)
18. European Satellite Service Provider, ESSP (Midi-Pyrénées)
19. Fundacion Aragonesa Para el Desarrollo de la Observacion de la Tierra, FADOT(Aragon)
20. FFG, Austrian Research Promotion Agency (City of Vienna)
21. Geoville Information Systems (Innsbruck)
22. GIS Bretagne Teledetection (BreTel) (Brittany)
23. GLOBESTAR SYSTEMS Lda (Azores)
24. Institute for Electromagnetic Sensing of the Environment, IREA CNR UOS, Milan (Lombardy)
25. Observatoire Midi-Pyrénées (Midi-Pyrénées)
26. Pole Mer Bretagne (Brittany)
27. Politecnico di Milano, B.E.S.T. Department (Lombardy)
28. Politecnico di Torino (Piedmont)
29. SELEX Galileo (Lombardy)
30. SES SA (Luxembourg)
31. STAE Foundation (Midi-Pyrénées)
32. TELESPAZIO FRANCE (Midi-Pyrénées)
33. TéSA Laboratory (Midi-Pyrénées)
34. Tele-Rilevamento Europa, T.R.E. (Lombardy)
35. Thales Alenia Space
36. Toscana Spazio (Tuscany)
37. University of Surrey (South East)
38. University of Turin (Piedmont)

(*) as of December 2013