

Thessaloniki Declaration



Research and Innovation
in the service of Economy and Society
European Neighbourhood and the Black Sea Region



RInES

29 & 30 May 2014
Thessaloniki Concert Hall
Thessaloniki, Greece



We, scientists, policy makers, and representatives of private enterprises from EU, European Neighbourhood, Black Sea region gathered on 29 and 30 May 2014 in Thessaloniki to discuss future challenges within the framework of “Research and Innovation in the Service of Economy and Society” (RInES) Conference.

Having regard to:

- The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Black Sea Synergy;
- The Euro-Mediterranean Conference on research and innovation held in Barcelona on 1 and 2 April 2012 which identified important common societal challenges;
- The opportunities for International Cooperation provided by Horizon 2020 – EU’s Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and other relevant national and International Programmes;
- The Lithuanian Presidency conference held in Vilnius on 30 September – 1 October 2013 which highlighted the key role of research and innovation for further enhancing the cooperation between EU and its neighbours.

We acknowledge:

- The ancient-long importance of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions as corridors for growth and prosperity connecting cultures and people from the three continents that border them;
- The strong interconnection of energy, water and food supply and the associated environmental impacts as a driver for international cooperation and synergy especially in the European Neighbourhood and the Black Sea region;
- The complex marine environment of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and its importance on health, food, energy and economic growth;
- The importance of clean energy technologies for fulfilling Europe's objectives for 2020 and 2050, including the development of a new generation of low/zero footprint carbon technologies and innovative integrated business solutions spanning the entire energy chain;
- The need for environmental awareness and protection to the benefit of socio-economic progress;

- The emerging opportunities for innovation, sustainable development and job creation in marine resources, maritime services, renewable energy, transport and tourism;
- The reinforcement of international cooperation with support of networking initiatives towards common policies and approaches on key issues as highlighted by EU international policy in research and innovation;

And we call upon all relevant stakeholders to join efforts in:

Unlocking the natural and human potential of the concerned regions to generate a new growth paradigm, rooted in interdisciplinary research and innovation, leading to the development of highly skilled scientific workforce, new businesses and job creation in service of society and economy;

Fostering further cooperation between EU, European Neighbourhood and Black Sea countries on both scientific and industry projects aimed at tackling global and common societal challenges, good practices exchanges and strengthening the R&I capacities and systems in the regions;

Exploiting the growth potential and promoting research that valorise the regional assets towards products with sustainable and smart uses and beneficial impacts on health, environment and economy; the demonstration of the market potential of innovative low/zero carbon technologies, processes and management practices engaging all stakeholders of the triple helix;

Promoting innovative environmental (ecosystem) monitoring, with technologically advanced methods, to bolster good environmental status and support policy making; building bridges between marine research and industry by commercializing products and services; using marine spatial planning as a powerful tool for sustainable economic growth and job creation;

Raising awareness and disseminating R&I information and engaging the general public in advancing the knowledge-based society in the regions.