

Brussels, 29 February 2008

## Europe's GÉANT, the world's highest speed computer network, goes global

***Europe's GÉANT, the world's largest multi-gigabit computer network dedicated to research and education, is linking up to similar networks worldwide to create a single global research network. In Europe, GÉANT already links researchers from Reykjavik to Vladivostok, serving around 30 million users in over 3500 universities and research centres and connecting 34 national research networks. High-speed links will now be established with regional research network infrastructures emerging in the Balkans, the Black Sea and Mediterranean regions, as well Asia, Southern Africa and Latin America. In Europe, GÉANT has enabled ground-breaking research collaboration in fields such as climate change, radio astronomy and biotechnology.***

*"With GÉANT's massive data processing capacity, Europe can now bring together the best minds in the world to tackle the challenges that we all face. Europe's financial investment in a high speed backbone network for research – around €23 million per year – benefits Europe's competitiveness, but is also boosting collaboration between researchers on a global scale,"* said Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media. *"By investing a further €90 million up to 2012 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation GÉANT, the EU is committed to staying at the forefront of the Internet's evolution, and to making scientific collaboration seamless and straightforward."*

GÉANT was launched in 2000 as a jointly funded initiative to upgrade Europe's research and education networking infrastructure with €200 million in total. It was further upgraded to become a world leader and to boost Europe's attractiveness as a place to do research ([IP/04/1058](#) and [IP/05/722](#)).

GÉANT provides huge technological advances for "big science" such as EXPRéS, an EU radio astronomy project. This links the world's largest radio telescopes in China, Europe, South Africa and Chile to a supercomputer in the Netherlands which produces real-time imaging, made possible only by the massive data-flows from the GÉANT network.

GÉANT also provides global communications support for the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN, the single largest scientific experiment ever undertaken. Going live later this year, it depends on high speed links around the globe for seamless transmission of unprecedented amounts of data (15 million gigabytes/year) to 5,000 scientists working in 500 institutes worldwide.

On the global scene, the Commission recently announced €12 million of funding for TEIN3 (Trans-Eurasia Information Network, see [IP/08/269](#)), a large-scale Asia-Pacific network, as well as high speed links from GÉANT to the UbuntuNet Alliance in Africa and the Ukrainian Research and Academic Network (URAN). The Black Sea Interconnection (BSI) project, another EU-funded initiative linking the Black Sea and Southern Caucasus countries to GÉANT, will be launched on 1 March in co-ordination with the Turkish National Research and Education Network.

On 3 March, Commissioner Viviane Reding will attend the Global Leader event in Bled (Slovenia) reviewing the achievements of GÉANT and its role at the heart of global research networking.

**Background:**

**GÉANT** is an advanced pan-European backbone network connecting National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) across Europe totalling more than 50,000km in length. GÉANT offers unrivalled geographical coverage, high bandwidth and innovative hybrid networking technology. GÉANT offers European academics and researchers high speed, private network connection to other research centres.

The European Commission's current contribution to GÉANT is funded by the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (2002-2006), amounting to €93 million over 58 months. The remainder is co-financed by the participating countries. The project's partners are the NRENs, the Trans-European Research and Education Networking Association (TERENA) and DANTE, who manage and operate the GÉANT network on behalf of Europe's NRENs.

A [GÉANT Press Pack](#) is available at :

[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item\\_id=3915](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/newsroom/cf/itemlongdetail.cfm?item_id=3915)

See also MEMO/08/133

