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PSF Open

Boosting the Greek research infrastructure

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19 actions from PSF experts for research infrastructures and open science: opportunities for improving Greece's research and innovation system.

Research infrastructures are facilities such as labs, equipment, computing systems which enable the research community to carry out research. They are essential for a well-functioning research and innovation (R&I) system. This is why improving them is one of the central pillars to create an attractive environment for researchers in Greece. At the heart of these effort is the **National Research Infrastructure (NRI) programme**. It grants researchers access to essential infrastructure, equipment, and valuable research data. Moreover, it encourages collaboration within the Greek R&I system and ensure that the NRIs are sustainable in the long-term. The success of the first edition of the programme (2014 – 2020) has led to a planned second round of investments for 2021 – 2027.

Research infrastructures increasingly include open access to publications in their terms and conditions. Greece is no exception and has launched several initiatives¹ to promote open science. These initiatives cover principles such as open access to publications, re-use of research data, development and management of research software, and open access to national infrastructures and e-infrastructures.

Getting ready for a new round of investment in national research infrastructures

The Horizon Europe Policy Support Facility (PSF) Country exercise previously assessed the performance of the 28 NRIs. Building on this, the PSF Open Greece focusses on three recommendations:

- creating a system where funding is based on NRIs' performance;
- developing key performance indicators (KPIs) in line with the role of NRIs in the local R&I system;
- creating guidelines on using Open Science and digital tools to help NRIs improve their data policies and work with national and European research data platforms.

The PSF experts put together three implementation plans for each of the above topics. The plans are based on meetings with Greek authorities and stakeholders, as well as on international best practices, for example, from Finland and Portugal. Implementing these recommendations will strengthen the Greek R&I system and make it more attractive to scientists. These plans will also help Greece to better align with EU initiatives such as the European Research Area and the European Open Science Cloud platform to share knowledge and research².

¹ National Open Science Plan was published in June 2020 and the Hellenic Open Science Initiative was launched in February 2022

² The European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) is a pan-European project designed to create a virtual environment for sharing and accessing research data across borders and scientific disciplines. See <https://eosc-portal.eu/>

Three implementation plans for more sustainable and efficient research infrastructures

The three implementation plans are inter-connected to maximise the impact and to optimise the use of European and national funds. Within the plans, the PSF Open experts proposed 19 actions for Greek authorities to carry out in the next four years.

These actions not only outline ways to enhance NRIs' performance but also prepare for funding beyond 2027, addressing the challenge of sustaining NRIs' operations with EU funding. To ensure long-term sustainability, Greek authorities should consider bolstering resources within their research and innovation system and establish diversified funding avenues. This will make NRIs appealing to Greek and international researchers, businesses, and other potential stakeholders.

In addition, the long-term sustainability of research infrastructures requires a balance of good governance, long-term funding and effective management. The right level of funding ensures effective support for research and attracts businesses and talent. To achieve this goal, it is important to create the right conditions throughout a research infrastructure's life cycle.

The experts recommended that NRIs should receive a performance bonus linked to specific criteria. The bonus should be high enough to encourage NRIs to achieve agreed performance targets, but not so high that it undermines their ability to make long-term financial plans. As a compromise, the PSF Open team suggested fixing a performance bonus between 10-20 % of the total funding allocated to NRIs until 2027.

The experts also proposed a framework to track the performance of NRIs over time. This framework will allow Greek authorities to assess performance and allocate a performance bonus. It will also allow NRIs to evaluate their contribution to national priorities. NRIs will be able to ensure that research infrastructures are funded by different public sources and generate revenue by providing services.

The PSF Open team suggested that all NRIs should report on a basic set of KPIs, including usage of the NRI, education and training, income, publications, and open science. NRIs should also be encouraged to set additional KPIs on their performance.

To improve open science practices, it is important to invest in infrastructure and tools that support findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data. This makes it crucial to invest in the skills and training of researchers and data managers. NRIs should hire experts to manage data effectively. The experts also urged to keep an eye on and encourage the uptake of open science and develop the necessary technical infrastructure.

Dr Agnes Spilioti, Director at General Secretariat for Research and Innovation, said, "we welcome the fruitful cooperation under the Policy Support Facility. We drew up a comprehensive strategy for research infrastructures in Greece thanks to the recommendations of the two PSF exercises".

For further information:

[Final Report: Support to Greece in the implementation of PSF Country recommendations](#)

[The webpage of the PSF Open Greece](#)

The PSF's objective is to help Member States and Associated Countries to 'improve the design, implementation and evaluation of R&I policies.' The PSF provides expertise and practical support to Member States in three major ways: PSF Country (formerly PSF Peer Reviews & Specific support to countries); PSF Challenge (including the PSF Mutual Learning Exercises, focused on specific and operational R&I challenges of interest in several volunteering countries); and PSF Open (which allows countries that have already benefited from a PSF exercise to receive support to follow up on PSF recommendations). The PSF is funded under Horizon Europe.