

EARSel member ERATOSTHENES Research Centre, at the Cyprus University of Technology is set to establish a Space and Earth Observation Centre of Excellence in Cyprus.

*As member of the EARSel network, ERATOSTHENES Research Centre (Remote Sensing & Geo-Environment Lab at the Department of Civil Engineering and Geomatics) has demonstrated high quality research in the fields of Earth Observation and Remote Sensing throughout the Symposia organized by the Network. **Now, it finds itself in front of a dynamic opportunity to create a regional hub in Earth Observation in Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and Northern Africa region.** It aims to achieve this, through the EXCELSIOR project, a EU Horizon2020 funding programme which aims to upgrade the existing ERATOSTHENES Research Centre in the Cyprus University of Technology to a Centre of Excellence for Earth Observation and Space-based monitoring of the environment.*

The EXCELSIOR project envisions the creation of a Centre of Excellence to conduct a high level of basic and applied research in areas related to Earth observation and space technologies. Drawing on the existing infrastructure in research and innovation that has been developed over the last 11 years in the field of Earth observation and space, in the ERATOSTHENES Research Centre within the Faculty of Engineering and Technology of the Cyprus University of Technology, **the ERATOSTHENES CoE aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the fields of combined use of new space and geo-informatics technologies, as well as the implementation of these methodologies for monitoring of the natural and built environment.** The ERATOSTHENES CoE is expected to become a research and innovation hub as well as an investment attraction, since according to the National Charter of European Research Area it will contribute to the increased participation of the private sector in research and innovation activities and promote the creation of spin-off companies. The Centre of Excellence will be based in Limassol with supportive infrastructure in the coastal municipalities of Cyprus, while its implementation will benefit the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa.

The project has already received the vehement support of leading international Space organizations such as **the American NASA, the European ESA, the German DLR and the National Observatory of Athens** while qualified experts with extensive experience in the Space sector, from Czech Republic, Italy and Austria have already been mobilized.

With the support of the **Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works**, in conjunction with strategic partnerships with leading partners in the field such as the **German Aerospace Centre (DLR), the National Observatory of Athens** and the **German Institute for Tropospheric Research (TROPOS)** in Leipzig the ERATOSTHENES Centre of Excellence will work towards placing Cyprus

