**BalticGrid
Kickoff Conference**
Cracow, Poland

The First BalticGrid conference and kick-off brought together participants from all Project partners for the first time.

The main organizer of the conference was one of the BG partners and leader of the NA2 activity: the Institute of Nuclear Physics PAN (IFJ PAN). The event took place on the premises of the Institute in Cracow, Poland. The conference was attended by 49 participants representing 10 institutions from Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Switzerland and Sweden.

The conference started with the EGEE gLite tutorial, concluding the Cracow Grid Workshop '05 (20-23 Nov) which was also held in Cracow. Some 20 BalticGrid members from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania participated in this tutorial, designed for new and prospective users of EGEE infrastructure interested in the concept of Grid computing. It covered an introduction to basic Grid concepts, descriptions of Grid middleware components and end-user experience with Grid interaction. All with focus on the EGEE middleware - gLite.

The kick-off event itself started on 24 November and lasted for one and a half days. The opening talk was given by the Project Director – Per Öster from KTH in Stockholm, who presented a general overview of the Project. Subsequently, a plenary session took place where all activity leaders presented their plans for the upcoming months.

In the afternoon, all BalticGrid activity participants reconvened for a number of parallel sessions.

At the end of the day a "Questions and Answers" session as well as a Project Management Board meeting took place. Participants had the opportunity to continue discussions during the conference dinner, held in the Old Town of Cracow.

On the next day, the conference resumed with an Executive Board meeting held in parallel with further activity sessions. The event concluded with a summary session during which all activity leaders presented the results of discussions which had taken place during the parallel meetings.

The next meeting of the BalticGrid project is scheduled for month 6 of the project (April 2006) in Vilnius, Lithuania.

The BalticGrid project background.
The concept of a project, whose aim would be to establish a production Grid in the Baltic countries, was born two years ago in Cracow, during one of the Grid conferences held there (the annual Cracow Grid Workshop). Subsequent working meetings in Cork (Ireland), Vilnius (Lithuania), Tallinn (Estonia) and in Riga (Latvia) helped define the aims and means of realization of the Project. Gathering key institutions from the three new EU member states, Estonia (EENet, Tartu and NICPB, Tallinn), Latvia (IMCS UL and RTU in Riga) and Lithuania (VU and ITPA both in Vilnius) and a number of institutions with experience from previous and ongoing Grid projects, from Poland (IFJ PAN, Cracow and PCSS, Poznan), Switzerland (CERN, Geneva) and Sweden (KTH PDC, Stockholm) the project have the mix of partners necessary to successfully deploy an Grid infrastructure in the region. Built on the experience from participation in other European Grid projects such as DataGrid, CrossGrid and EGEE the partners would together develop the Grid infrastructure, care for software installation and integration with the EGEE information system as well as in operation on a European scale. The Grid infrastructure of the BalticGrid project would initially be in use for applications from the field of the biological and medical sciences, material engineering and high energy physics.
The Baltic Grid project is financed by the European Union to the amount of 3 million Euro and will last for 30 months (from 1 November 2005 to 30 April 2008).