

Greek EMBnet node: progress report



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The Bioinformatics and Medical Informatics Team of the Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens (BRFAA) is the Greek EMBnet node. It is headed by Sophia Kossida and it is composed of 26 persons including Senior Researchers, PhD candidates, Technicians, Master's and undergraduate students.

During the past two years, the Greek EMBnet node organized various workshops and seminars in BRFAA as well as in other Institutes in Greece, promoting Bioinformatics both at an introductory level as well as at an advanced one with specialized topics. In collaboration with the Swedish and Swiss nodes, two of these seminars entitled "Introduction to Bioinformatics" and "Introduction to Sequence Analysis" were delivered. Moreover, a Master's program has been organized together with the University of Athens entitled "Biomedical Informatics Technologies".

In late 2008, through the Greek EMBnet node, the first Bioinformatics book written in Greek was published, entitled "Bioinformatics: Potentials and Perspectives". The 14 chapters of this book are assembled harmonically in order to offer to the reader the basic knowledge to understand the specialized issues of Bioinformatics such as Proteomics, Systems Biology, Biological Databases etc. This book could be useful to students who want to familiarize themselves with the basic concepts of Bioinformatics, educators who want to have their knowledge updated and researchers who work on the same or similar scientific field. Many Universities and Technological Institutions in Greece use it already in their teaching curriculum for Bioinformatics courses.

The members of the team are actively pursuing research within different fields of Bioinformatics. Several publications have come out the last two years. A list of them is accessible at: <http://www.bioacademy.gr/bioinformatics/publications.htm>

The immediate future plans of the team include first an upgrading of its hardware infrastructure in order to host implemented web bioinformatics tools specialized in protein data analysis. Then, we plan to develop an e-learning bioinformatics platform for Greek Universities and Technological Institutions, which will be funded exclusively from National funds. Finally, additional seminars will be organized in BRFAA, introducing Bioinformatics to graduate Greek students.



Figure 1. Mycenae: This mythical city of king Agamemnon was the background for many classical Greek tragedies and the beginning of the Trojan war of the Iliad.