

Eastern Europe Partnership Event: Policy-Makers & National Representatives from the Region Gathered to Deliberate on the Enhancement and Sustainability of E-Infrastructures in Eastern Europe

Inside this issue:

Eastern Europe Partnership Event	1
National Programme Cookbook	2
Joint Action Plan	2
Southeast Europe i* Forum took place in Sofia	2
ICT Turkey 2011 Event	3
Bilateral cooperation between Ministries of Bulgaria and Montenegro in the framework of SEERA-EI	3

Politicians, civil servants, managers of National Research & Education Networks, RGD advisors and the e-Infrastructure experts from 22 countries in Eastern Europe and beyond gathered on November 7-8 in Bucharest to discuss the future perspectives of e-Infrastructures & services in Eastern Europe, and their relation to the pan European e-Infrastructure activities. The Eastern Europe Partnership event lasted 2 days - 1st day focused on the current status of network, Grid and HPC infrastructures at regional and European level, as well as on the need for further collaboration and support, in order to ensure their development and sustainability. On the 2nd day the status of e-Infrastructure in macro-regions was presented, key stake-holders of eInfrastructures were identified, and management organization and Sustainability of eInfrastructures was discussed in the last session.

In his welcome address, the State Secretary & President of the ANCS Dragos Ciuparu, emphasized the significance of the event, which brings together key players in the field of electronic infrastructures. Keynote speakers Kostas Glinos, director of the Unit GÉANT and E-Infrastructure at the European Commission, DANTE's John Chevers and GRNET's Ognjen Prnjat highlighted the importance of

leveraging different aspects of the existing e-Infrastructures and services, thus ensuring the provision of advanced capabilities to the research and education communities in Europe and the region.

The event gave participants the opportunity to work together and agree on what is needed in order to achieve higher levels of collaboration and integration, as well as elaborate high-level national and regional policy issues concerning the development and sustainability of e-Infrastructures for the benefit of the research and education communities in the targeted regions. The Eastern Europe Partnership event built on the significant impact of past and current well-coordinated EC co-funded projects in the field of e-Infrastructures and services.

"The decade-long collaboration of the countries in the region regarding e-Infrastructure issues has greatly helped support both the local scientists and technology/infrastructure providers, as well as the European Commission's vision of bridging the digital divide and supporting wider pan-European integrations of the region and beyond. I am confident that this collaboration will continue with full support of the beneficiary communities, the national governments, and the EC.", says Dr. Ognjen Prnjat, coordinator of SEERA-EI and HP-SEE projects.

The event was hosted by the National Authority for Scientific Research of Romania in collaboration with RoEduNet and the EC co-funded projects SEERA-EI, GÉANT, HP-SEE and CEENGINE.



National Programme Cookbook

SEERA-EI Deliverable D3.3 -National Programme Cookbook- is produced as a base-level guide on e-Infrastructure programmes for national programme owners in the SEE region. The national programme cookbook provides fundamental framework, with strong alignment with the corresponding EC Framework Programme, for an e-Infrastructure programme considering the main pillars: programme identification and programme implementation.

The methodology used in this cookbook is based on two main principles, the "idealized" programme structure of EC Framework Programmes and the e-Infrastructure gaps and priorities of the SEE countries as identified so far during project execution. The consultation of the corresponding EC Framework programme allows the understanding of the concept of fundamental needs and structure of an e-Infrastructure programme. The previous studies performed in the context of SEERA-EI WP3 revealed the national and regional e-Infrastructure

gaps, programme weakness and priorities which also serve as input to this study.

The cookbook is a study to provide a flexible and adaptive e-Infrastructure programme guide that will allow to set-up well-balanced national e-Infrastructure programmes regarding national dynamics, constraints, as well as recommended framework structure.

The following recommendations can be given as the summary conclusion of this cookbook:

- * Future planning of the e-Infrastructure programmes should consult closely EC Framework programme to close the gaps between the current level of the countries in the region and the target one.
- * There is no "silver-bullet" / "one-fits-all" type of solution for national-level programme, but the template given in this cook-book provides a solid baseline which can be customised for specific

national needs.

- * Collaboration and coordination between SEE countries at programme level will help to increase the efficiency and effective usage of e-Infrastructures.
- * Each country has to investigate and target to ensure national funding to set-up and support e-Infrastructure programme for the sustainability of national e-Infrastructure's main constituents.
- * The fundamental European policies such as Digital Agenda and Europe 2020, e-IRG recommendations and ESFRI roadmaps, and EC publications should be followed up closely for the right outcome of the long term investments.
- * The cookbook should be distributed and shared between the all stakeholders of e-Infrastructure community: programme managers, policy makers, funding authorities, infrastructure owners and operators.

Joint Action Plan

The SEERA-EI action plan which describes in detail the long-term action plan that will be implemented after the end of SEERA-EI project is close to its finalization.

The Joint Action Plan will provide all the necessary documentation for the Pilot Joint Call which is

related to proposals on Research and Skill Building in Cloud Computing; plans for two regional operational centres: SEELIGHT Network Operations Centre and HPC Tier-I Regional Operations Centre; and actions stemming from the Memorandum of Understanding on regional vision and strategy between the Ministries.

Moreover the deliverable aims at specifying the templates and inputs for future regional activities such as future regional calls, definition of regional schemes for evaluation and monitoring of regional programmes and estimate of potential regional budgets.

Southeast Europe i* Forum took place in Sofia

The Southeast Europe i* Forum (SEEiF) was held on 23 - 24 November 2011 in Sofia. The forum was a significant event in the autumn calendar of the region, organized by the Bulgarian Economic Forum, and addressing the issue of deepening the economic relations in the region in four specific areas: infrastructure; innovations; information technologies (ICT), investments (FDI).

The focus of the event was the need for boosting further investments and enhancing regional cooperation among the countries in Southeast Europe, as an important prerequisite for addressing severe fluctuations and meltdowns of the global markets.

The event brought together more than 500 representatives from the business field, public institutions, non-government sector and the media from SEE countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey) to discuss important issues related to those sectors, and to develop collaborations that will lead to new investments.

The Bulgarian SEERA-EI partners (EA ECNIS and ICT-BAS) presented the project at the Forum. A presentation entitled "A successful model for regional development of e-Infrastructures: the SEE

case study" was given by Dr. Aneta Karaivanova on behalf of the project consortium. The talk included Pan-EU eInfrastructure vision and its relationship with SEE initiatives: Network (SEEREN, SEELIGHT), Grid (SEEGRID/2, SEEGRID-SCI projects), High-Performance and Supercomputing (HP-SEE project), and Policy support and program management (SEERA-EI project).



ICT Turkey 2011 Event

The ICTurkey 2011 event was held in Istanbul on 27 September 2011. This highly successful one-day technology networking & partnering event, was attended by over 215 delegates, including delegates from overseas, Turkey's leading ICT academics, industry representatives and research organizations, and discussed collaborative R&D supported by the European Commission's Framework Programme 7.

Following a welcome from President of TÜBİTAK, Professor Yücel Altunbaşak, Turkey's Minister of Science, Industry and Technology Nihat Ergün gave a keynote address, in which he commented, 'It is extremely valuable to have a platform like ICTurkey to share information and experience and to cooperate in international R&D in the research field of information and communication technologies.'

The event proved an ideal platform for delegates to exchange experiences and to discuss about future opportunities in the ICT field and collaborations with European organizations.

FP7 experts shared critical insights into developing winning proposals, building successful consortia and securing funding. Delegates also benefited from exploring different perspectives and progress in key ICT challenges such as smart energy grids, cloud computing and factories of the future during the event's four themed workshops.

There was a special session dedicated to eInfrastructures and FIRE (Future Internet Research and Experimentation) where key eInfrastructure actors found the opportunity to share and discuss ideas. This session was

targeted by SEERA-EI, where complementary information regarding e-infrastructure policy developments was shared with the audience.

ICTurkey 2011 is the first of three international brokerage events organised by Pera on behalf of TÜBİTAK, the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey, as part of TurkeyinFP7, a three-year project which aims to stimulate Turkish participation in FP7.



Bilateral cooperation between Ministries of Bulgaria and Montenegro in the framework of SEERA-EI

Two bilateral visits between Ministries of Bulgaria and Montenegro, which aimed at exchanging experiences regarding ICT policies, as well as initiating bilateral collaboration, have taken place in June and in October 2011, in the framework of the SEERA-EI project.

The bilateral visits reached effective twinning of common interest to both parties, in the following aspects:

- Willingness to implement the best achieved results in policies development and implementation;
- Sharing of good management and realization practices at regular basis for better improvement of policies

and outcomes:

- Elaboration of a joint formal act for bilateral collaboration on regular base.

The twinning reached consent for further information exchange and active collaboration on the following outlined issues:

- Information exchange on e-governance issues: interoperability, information security, cloud concepts exchange in political, legal, technical, operational and organizational aspects;

- Participation in ICT, scientific and professional fora organized in ME and BG and dissemination of achievements and good practices;

- Continuation of the established bilateral dialog and collaboration, initiated under the SEERA-EI regional initiative;

Establishing a political information exchange forum in SEE that is resulting in series of studies on national ICT programs, training and dissemination events, set up a common vision and strategy in SEE for ICT and IS development as well as e-infrastructure based joint calls.

Contact:

SEERA-EI Project Management Office
56 Mesogion Av.
GR 115 27
Athens Greece

Phone: +30 210 7475683

Fax: +30 210 7474490

E-mail: seera-ei-pmo@seera-ei.eu

About SEERA-EI

The SEERA-EI project brings together key policy-makers, stakeholders and infrastructure owners of the e-Infrastructure communities in SE Europe, enabling them to reduce the fragmentation of the European Research Area by increasing coordination between national research programmes, thus aiming to ensure equal participation of the region in European networking and Grid computing trends. The initiative brings together 19 partners from 10 countries in the South-East European region and will set the framework for the adoption of a common regional agenda for eInfrastructure. **SEERA-EI receives EC support through FP7 under the "Research Infrastructures" action.**

Having analyzed the e-Infrastructure national programmes and identified gaps, SEERA-EI has collectively created a common regional vision and strategy; the sustainable cooperation that can be achieved will strengthen the region, enable collaborative high-quality research, and it can serve as a potential platform for driving innovation using research outcomes, schemes, models and technologies in the next-generation industry.

SEERA-EI is coordinated by the Greek Research & Technology Network (GRNET) and the partnership consists of 19 partners: Ministries and Research councils involved in national funding of electronic infrastructures, and partners implementing the programmes strategy.

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