

Conclusions From The Meeting

The 8th eSEE WG meeting was held in Bled hosted by the State Ministry of Information Society of the Republic of Slovenia on the 10th of Jun 2003 (See attached list of participants and agenda of the meeting). The objective of the meeting was to submit WG final comments and to proceed with official adoption of two major documents for the timely implementation of the eSEE Agenda for the Development of Information Society, that is Terms of Reference for Information Society State Bodies and eSEEurope Common Guidelines for National Information Society Policies.

The 3rd draft version of the Terms of Reference for Information Society State Bodies was presented by Mr. Dusan Caf, Ministry of IS of Slovenia. The latest ToR version incorporated the suggestions from European Commission and has been harmonized with the Common Guidelines. This document is much more complete and practical than previous versions and is flexible enough to allow for each country to adjust and organize the IS State Bodies in accordance with the specific situation in each signatory country and to accommodate diversity of various national contexts. The eSEE WG members have therefore unanimously agreed to officially adopt the presented version of Terms of Reference for Information Society State Bodies.

The 3rd draft of the eSEEurope Common Guidelines for the National IS Policies was prepared by Mr. Yuri Misnikov, UNDP Bratislava office, IT coordinator and Mr. Angelidis Pantelis, INA director (Chapter on Telecommunication). It was agreed that Chapter on Telecommunication should be titled as National Electronic Communication Infrastructure, that Guidelines publication should include ToR as an Annex, and be translated in local languages prior to being distributed to the decision makers. The WG agreed with an overall content of this consolidated document and adopted eSEEurope Common Guidelines for National Information Society Policies.

It was agreed that the eSEE WG future focus of activity would include hard work on promotion within governments of these two documents. This promotion should be conducted at all levels and SEE WG members should also bring in the dialogue with the donors, initiate organization of seminars and workshops on this issues. Also in order to foster promotion it was suggested that the key eSEE Documents (Terms of Reference for Information Society State Bodies, National Information Society Policies: eSEEurope Common Guidelines, eSEE Agenda for Development of Information Society and Letter of Intent to build Information Society) should be compiled into high quality brochure available to all interested parties.

Matrix on status of fulfillment of eSEE Agenda that outline the progress made in signatory countries in relation to eSEE Agenda was prepared by Ms. Nera Nazecic, Operations Manager of eSEE Secretariat. The WG accepted to regularly feed the Secretariat with input whenever there is some progress and development made in

their signatory countries The Matrix will be available on eSEE web site.

Benchmarking was once more confirmed as one of the priorities of the eSEE WG activity. If eEnvoys and Senior Policy Officials send to Mr. B. Andjelic the relevant contact details of national focal points it will be feasible to plan the Workshop for October 2003. The nominated locations for the Benchmarking Workshop were Ljubljana, Belgrade or Thessaloniki. Benchmarking Taskforce, body in charge of organizing the workshop, consist of the following persons: Mr. Branislav Andjelic (Serbia), Mr.Dusan Caf (Slovenia), Mr. Hans Hansell from UNECE (TBC) and Mrs. Ruzan, (Croatia-TBC).

The WG members agreed that it is time for SEE countries to make a statement that major progress has been made in the context of eSEE Initiative and that there is a need for establishing a new framework of the Initiative out of the SP, probably from beginning of 2004. Referring to the concluding remarks from European Ministerial e Governance Conference held in Athens on 2-3 May 2003 under the auspices of Greek Presidency, that Balkan Region as a whole should be a part of Information Society along EU countries, WG concluded that eSEE Initiative should apply to enter under auspices of European Commission. The idea about inviting the Signatories of the eSEE Agenda into the eEurope+ process should be carefully considered under the fact that eEurope+ formally ends with 2003. The Chair agreed to address a letter to EU asking about future context of eSEE Initiative, while stressing the progress that has been made and all achieved results. The Working Group members agreed to inform their respective governments of the proposed new framework.

Next eSEE WG meeting is planned in Tirana in end September 2003. Host is also offered by Croatia in Zagreb in mid November 2003.

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