

# Promoting e-Governance in South Eastern Europe through Regional Cooperation: the eGovernance Center

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# South East Europe: A Region Moving Forward Economically

- **Energy:** October 2005 Treaty creates a regional energy market based on EU standards
- **Trade liberalization:** Move to a single regional free trade area and updated CEFTA 2006
- **Investment:** Commitment to a Regional Investment Framework
- **Infrastructure:** Five billion Euros in projects completed or underway. Investment needs over the period 2006-2015 estimated at 17 billion Euros for energy and 16 billion for transport; telecoms sector particularly promising and dynamic
- **ICT Sector:** eSEE and bSEE Initiatives support the sector; growing private sector interest and opportunity

# South East Europe: Information Society Crucial to Sustained Progress and Modernization

**ICT and eGovernance offer broad political, economic and social benefits:**

- **Promotes job creation in ICT and related services areas**
- **Brings openness and transparency to government**
- **Key ePrograms address critical shortcomings:**
  - eProcurement makes for more efficient and transparent government spending, and represents a constraint on corruption
  - eCustoms can facilitate the increase in trade likely to result from CEFTA 2006 agreement, and represents a constraint on corruption
  - eEconomy/eBusiness can spur economic growth and employment and open doors to the world market place
  - eEducation prepares the younger generation for the knowledge economy and to be competitive globally

# Initiative for Electronic South East Europe – eSEE

- Participants: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Moldova, UNMIK/Kosovo and Romania;
- Working since 2002 to promote Information Society legislation
- Sarajevo Ministerial (October 28-29) to adopt eSEE Agenda Plus, a policy and strategy document for the Information Society keyed to i2010;
- Adoption and implementation of a legal framework for Information Society according to Acquis Communautaire;
- Establishment of regional cooperation and national implementation mechanisms;
- Promotion of Information Society for Development.

# Broadband South East Europe - bSEE

- **Participants: eSEE Members + Greece and Romania**
- **2007 bSEE Action Plan on Sarajevo Ministerial Agenda**
- **Key objectives**
  - Propose legal and regulatory framework consistent with EU Directives and global standards;
  - Evaluate broadband technologies and international best practices;
  - Aggregate demand leading to broadband development;
  - Enhance broadband investment by building awareness, increasing level of public interest and fostering SME's participation;
  - Prepare regional projects of common interest and assist in applying for EU and other sources of funding.

# Supporting eGovernment Programs: Establishing a Regional e-Governance Center (eGC)

## The eGC project:

- Responds to growing interest in implementing e-Governance as part of the eSEE Agenda Plus program;
- Seeks to emulate the success of the e-Government Academy in Tallin, Estonia and other similar efforts around the world;
- Draws on eSolutions from the region and from key stakeholders;
- Is underpinned by interest from a range of stakeholders and supporters: Slovene Government, UNDP, USAID, INA Academy, European Foundation for Information Society and e-Government ; CSI Piemonte, leading ICT Companies, national IT Associations, eSEE governments



# e-Governance Center: the Approach

## The eGovernance Center will:

- strive to promote the development of the range of eGovernance programs within South East Europe;
- rely on a decentralized network of institutions and experts, public and private, in a manner consistent with the direction laid out in the ongoing EU activities and policies as well as with recognized global best practices;
- be served by an administrative focal point to ensure effective coordination between regional governments, existing networks of ongoing eGovernance programs, and local training nodes to enhance implementation of eGovernance programs and policies throughout the region

# e-Governance Center: the Structure

- Supervisory Board chaired by eSEE Chairperson
- Administrative Focal Point (small staff in Ljubljana), with input from:
  - Program Advisory Committee (eGC Stakeholders, eSEE/bSEE Initiatives Governments, other experts)
  - Private Sector Advisory Committee
- Network of Programs and Training Nodes
- Close working relationship with eSEE governments

# e-Governance Center: Key Activities

The principal areas of proposed activity will include:

- **Education and training** to assist regional governments' efforts to build capacity and knowledge of eGovernance on content and experience, to define concrete topics that require training and support;
- **Knowledge Base (including Web Portal)** via a thorough survey of existing eGovernance programs and best practices within the region and from other partners as well as the network of program managers and providers working in the eGovernance area;
- **Workshops/seminars** on specific eGovernance topics and policy issues and along with create training opportunities where needed;
- **Projects** to support regional eGovernance programs by delivering specific services and programs

# Public Private Dialogue and Partnership

- **Stability Pact – Business Advisory Council** working together to improve the business climate in SEE
- **ICT sector:** eSEE and bSEE private sector outreach involving major international, domestic ICT companies and local business associations
- **Key goals:**
  - to promote productive public-private dialogue and cooperation across the range of ICT issues and opportunities
  - to strengthen the results of the eSEE/bSEE Initiatives
  - to make a real contribution to economic growth and competitiveness, job creation, governmental efficiency and transparency in South East Europe
  - Role for Private Sector in the eGovernance Center

# Looking Ahead: eGC Seeks to Address Key Challenges

- Governments' competing economic and political priorities
- Lack of administrative capacity in governments and regulators in the eGovernance area
- Relatively lower level of economic and social development (i.e. resources) vis a vis the EU member states
- Cost of broadband high relative to per capita income
- Connecting the regional InfoSociety effort to the EU accession process, to the EU's i2010 program and the new Instrument for Pre-Accession and FP-7
- Need for political understanding, leadership and vision on national and local levels



Thank you for your attention!

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