

STABILITY PACT – ELECTRONIC SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE INITIATIVE “ESEE”

ESEE AGENDA +

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION SOCIETY IN SEE

2007- 2012

Reaffirming the importance of Stability Pact Electronic South Eastern Europe Initiative (henceforth eSEE Initiative) starting from the signing *Statement of Intent* adopted in Ljubljana on 4 June 2002 and in accordance with the *eSEE Agenda for the Development of the Information Society* signed by eSEE Initiative participants in Belgrade on 29 October 2002 at the International Conference: Telecommunications for Development; *Joint Statement of intent to build inclusive information society* signed in Budapest on 27 February 2004 at European Ministerial Conference on Information Society; *Ministerial Conclusions* and *Memorandum of Understanding for Unified Regional Broadband* signed at in Thessaloniki on 1 July 2005 at South Eastern Europe Ministerial Conference;

Acknowledging that the development of Information Society:

- Is fundamental to the rapid development of the region, the reduction of the development gap between the region and the European Union, as well as between the participants within the region and with the rest of the world;
- Is a vehicle for integration with the European Union, in which a movement from the industrial to the information society is already in the advanced stages;
- Provides a foundation for confidence building and closer cooperation in the region.

Confirming the responsibility of the participants of the region for creation of favorable environment for development of the Information Society for all, and the joint will for harmonized regional cooperative activities;

Taking account of the bilateral obligations and commitments of the individual participants with the European Union, especially in the field of information society and media, and the importance to meet all obligations and commitments.

Recognizing the specific role of participants and based on the positive experiences of the eEurope and eEurope+ processes towards development of Information Society, we are determined to take concrete actions in the fields of:

- Organization through establishment of an institutional framework for ICT-based society;
- Legislation through introduction of new and modification of the existing legislative frameworks for Information and Communication Technology-based society;
- Regulation, policy and strategy related to electronic communications infrastructure and associated services;
- Promotion through encouragement of civil society, non-governmental organizations, e-Governance, e-Learning, e-Health, e-Democracy, eGovernance Center for South East Europe and other regional-scale activities;
- e-Economy for growth, productivity and employment;
- Inclusiveness through providing citizens with the access and skills needed to live and work in the new information society.

Following European and other worldwide initiatives, such as Government on-line initiative (G7, 1995), eEurope Action

Plan (Feira, 2000, as having been passed on the basis of the conclusions from Lisbon at the level of Prime Ministers of European Union member-states), plan Europe+ for the informatisation of participants in the process of candidacy for accession into the European Union, a global world initiative for the Information society development under the auspices of United Nations and the Millennium Development Goals agreed by nearly 190 countries at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, "i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment ", and other international initiatives;

Understanding and accepting that the implementation of the eSEE Agenda Plus is of vital importance for the development towards an Information Society".

WE THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE and The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with UNSC 1244

Are firmly resolved to pursue the priorities and objectives defined by this document (eSEEurope Agenda+) and will look to the eSEE Working Group to ensure and monitor, within its responsibilities, their fulfillment, as a major step to a joint effort for building Information Society in South Eastern Europe.

Republic of Albania

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Republic of Croatia

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Republic of Moldova

Montenegro

Romania

Republic of Serbia

The United Nations Interim
Administration Mission in Kosovo
on behalf of Kosovo in accordance
with UNSCR 1244

ESEE AGENDA +

WE ENDORSE

the following *strategic framework*, in accordance with which we encourage the development of information society in eSEE Initiative member countries of the Stability Pact for Southern Eastern Europe (Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Republic of Serbia) , and The United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with UNSCR 1244¹⁾ during the period 2007-2012:

- (i) We are accepting the “i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment”² as general framework for Information Society development in our region;
- (ii) We are associating ourselves with the priorities defined in “i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment” framework, but within the specific environment of South Eastern Europe region, and therefore rephrasing the defined priorities for Information Society development policies into our region specific priorities:
 - a. Further development of a Single SEE Information Space which promotes an open and competitive internal market for Information Society and media, moving it toward a common European Information Space in terms of interoperability;
 - b. Strengthening Innovation and Investment in ICT Research and Education while working with the private sector to promote growth and more and better jobs;
 - c. Achieving an Inclusive Information Society that promotes growth and jobs in a manner that is consistent with sustainable development and that prioritizes better public services and quality of life.

WE ACCEPT

The responsibility for:

- (i) Including the priorities defined by this document into domestic development policies,
- (ii) Achieving the objectives defined in this document,
- (iii) Creating suitable environment for the accelerated development and the building of Information Society.

WE DEFINE

The following list of priorities as a development framework for Information Society development :

A) PRIORITY AREA: SINGLE SEE INFORMATION SPACE

1. Availability of high speed broadband networks and secure services;

The participants will promote, regulate, in the absence of a competitive environment, and develop high-speed broadband communications and services capable to offer secure access to rich content.
2. Development and accessibility of rich online content and transfer from conventional format;

Digital content and services are an important potential source of new jobs. The participants will stimulate the development of digital content and services in areas of public interest - cultural, health, scientific and educational content, geographic information, etc.
3. Interoperability in accordance with the European Interoperability Framework (for administrations);

The participants will adopt national interoperability frameworks with regards to the European Interoperability Framework (for administrations) to ensure compatibility and co-operation of

¹ Reference to Kosovo and UNMIK in this document is made pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

² “i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment”, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions, Brussels, 6 January 2005

systems, processes and human resources, and to deliver seamless and customer-centric services.

4. Harmonization of rules for Information Society and media;

The digital convergence of Information Society and media services, networks and devices is becoming a reality and requires policy convergence. It calls for a consistent system of rules for Information Society and media based on technological neutrality as defined in the relevant European regulatory framework.

5. Domestic/ regional electronic identity management;

Domestic/ regional communication and trade will be facilitated by building up a domestic and regional level Infrastructure for secure e-business based on qualified electronic signature. Moreover, the participants will consider collaboration on the harmonization of the trade data requirements by various agencies and private operators.

B) PRIORITY AREA: INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT IN ICT RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

1. Computers and access to Internet in all schools;

Computer literacy is becoming mandatory in the new economy. We therefore need to invest into ICT infrastructure in our educational institutions, and into creating classrooms equipped with computers and Internet links.

2. Curriculum for ICT skills;

In order to increase ICT skills in our societies, we shall improve our education system by directly changing curriculums in our schools. Such change should create mandatory standards for minimum and advanced ICT skills that pupils must acquire in their education.

3. Establish vocational training in ICT;

For the purpose of bridging knowledge gaps between generations, we shall establish vocational trainings in ICT and work with the private sector in order to level ICT knowledge in our societies. Vocational training should provide life-long learning programs available to all.

4. Include ICT related research among domestic research priorities

In order to deliver new technologies and methods for improving regional economies, our aim is to strengthen the ICT related research in the region.

5. Further development of National Academic and Research Networks and improvement of regional interconnection;

We shall support the ICT research and transfer of technology by further developing academic and research networks, and improving connections between researchers and institutions.

C) PRIORITY AREA: INCLUSIVE INFORMATION SOCIETY

1. Access to technology and equal opportunities;

The issues related to e-accessibility, domestic and regional digital divides, and digital literacy will be systematically addressed by respective domestic and regional strategies and action plans. All activities will be designed and implemented to ensure that they are gender responsive and support active and meaningful participation in the Information Society to avoid the gender and digital divide³. At the same

³ CEDAW Convention on gender equality adopted in 1979 by the General Assembly of the United Nations; Beijing Platform for Action signed in 1995 by 189 Governments

time, access to technology and equal opportunities should be provided in equal manner for different socio-demographic groups (disability, age, culture, etc.).

2. ICT enabled public services and e-Government;

The set of basic e-Government solutions will be implemented by the participants. This issue will be approached in a holistic manner through review and formulation of domestic e-Government strategies and integration with the overall public administration reforms introduced by the participants.

3. Fostering the development of e-Business;

Working with the private sector, the participants shall develop a strategy for e-Business and take active measures to overcome all obstacles for development of e-Businesses based on the Regional Guidelines developed by UNECE and adopted by eSEE Working Group in Thessaloniki on 1 July 2005. In order to prevent the brain-drain and foster the successful ICT business climate in the region, the participants will take active measures to overcome all obstacles for development of e-Businesses.

4. Digital libraries and heritage;

Public, school and special libraries will be equipped with library information systems with the emphasis on the domestic and regional cooperation and interconnectivity. Programs of digitalization of the cultural and historic heritage will be introduced and developed.

5. e-Participation and e-Democracy;

Since EU directives are calling for participation of citizens and business as integral part of our e-Government services, we shall pay special attention to e-Participation tools to ensure full involvement of citizens in all society matters, including use of ICT in electoral process.

WE ARE DEVOTED

To accomplishment of following list of objectives by the end of 2012:

A) PRIORITY AREA: SINGLE SEE INFORMATION SPACE

1. Availability of high speed broadband networks and secure services
 - a. Increase penetration of broadband services on a technological neutral basis in telecommunication to reach 50% of EU average by 2010;
 - b. Establish regional high-bandwidth backbone by 2009 connected to EU;
 - c. Establish domestic Internet exchange centers by 2009
 - d. Establish domestic computer emergency response centers and start the exchange of information by end 2008.
 - e. Agree on a common subset of i2010 indicators of the development of information society by end 2008 and start regular benchmarking in 2009.
2. Development and accessibility of rich online content and transfer from conventional format;
 - a. Aggregate demand for domestic/local rich content by 2009;
 1. Define domestic/regional priorities for domestic/local rich content using EU's roadmap and experiences;
 2. Identify best practices at the regional/European level for Internet usage and content availability;
 3. Develop interactive contents in the official languages;
 - b. Follow European Safer Internet Plus⁴ practice by 2011;

Final version

1. Fighting illegal content through public support;
 2. Raising safer Internet awareness among teachers, parents and children;
 3. Limiting unwanted and harmful content through content rating, filtering technology and fighting spam;
 4. Promoting a safer environment through Safer Internet Forum.
3. Interoperability in accordance with the European Interoperability Framework;
 - a. Adopt domestic interoperability framework, harmonized with the European Interoperability Framework for administrations by end 2008.
 4. Harmonization of rules for Information Society and media;
 - a. Adopt converging broadcasting policies and harmonize it with the positive European experience by end 2008;
 - b. Adopt efficient radio spectrum management strategy on the domestic level for the future needs and harmonize it with the region by end 2008.
 5. Domestic/regional electronic identity management;
 - a. Establish Domestic Root CAs by mid 2009;
 - b. Establish regional CA trusts Centers by mid 2010;
 - c. Recognising the effort to negotiate a single free trade area (CEFTA) for SEE to create the environment for electronic Single- Window for international trade and electronic trade documents in cooperation with UNECE, the World Bank and other relevant organizations by 2010.

B) PRIORITY AREA: INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT IN ICT RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

1. Computers and access to Internet in all schools;
 - a. Every school should have a computer laboratory and internet connection available for the pupils by the end of 2009;
 - b. Number of pupils per computers should be less than 20, by end of 2010;
 - c. Broadband Internet access should be made available in all schools, by the end of 2010 in a technological neutral manner, supported by the proper regulatory framework.
2. Curriculum for ICT skills;
 - a. Make ICT curricula mandatory on all education levels, especially in elementary schools, by end 2008.
 - b. Implement across the region uniform standards for minimum of ICT skills, by 2009.
3. Establish vocational training in ICT;
 - a. Fund life-long learning programs for adults by 2012;
 - b. Develop programs for continuous learning of public officials in the sphere of contemporary information and communication technologies by mid 2010.
4. Further development of domestic academic and research networks and improvement of regional interconnection;
 - a. Support and fund local academic networks and professional organizations to implement the regional and local ICT research by end 2008;
 - b. Create an open, domestic database of research professionals and institutions by the

beginning of 2009;

- c. Establish domestic/regional competence center for OSS policy by mid 2008
- d. Measure and track intellectual capacity in IT industry by 2009.

C) PRIORITY AREA: INCLUSIVE INFORMATION SOCIETY

- 1. Access to technology and equal opportunities;
 - a. Adopt the domestic Action Plans for e-Accessibility for the period 2008-2011⁵ by mid 2008⁶;
 - b. Reach the minimal 50% of Internet penetration level by 2010;
- 2. ICT enabled public services and e-Government issues;
 - a. Adopt the domestic Action Plans for e-Government for the period 2008-2012 by end 2008⁷;
 - b. Introduce the set of basic e-Government services by 2011 (given in Annex 1);
 - c. Introduce the central e-Government systems and portal by 2010 (given in Annex 2);
- 3. Fostering the development of e-Business;
 - a. The participants shall develop a strategy for e-business based on the Regional Guidelines developed by UNECE and adopted by the eSEE Working Group in Thessaloniki on 1st July 2005⁸;
 - b. In order to prevent the brain-drain and foster the successful ICT business climate in the region, the participants will take active measures to overcome all obstacles for development of e-Businesses, by end 2008;
 - c. Further removal of obstacles to both direct foreign and domestic investments in order to stimulate the development of IT Sector in South Eastern Europe, by 2009;
 - d. Create environment conducive to decrease of the running costs and the consequent cost of services of software companies, by 2009;
 - e. Introduce favorable and growth-oriented tax schemes for IT sector, by 2009;
 - f. Foster creation of favorable environment for IT professionals by stimulating business incubators, techno-parks and business start up centers through partnership with universities and private sector, by 2009;
 - g. Create environment for all companies to use ICT in their daily operations and to use modern technologies as a tool for participation in the global economy, by 2009.
- 4. Digital libraries and heritage;
 - a. Domestic Programs for Digitalization of Libraries will be adopted by the end of 2008 and all libraries will have access to digital systems by 2011⁹;

⁵ DIRECTIVE 2002/22/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, of 7 March 2002, on universal service and users' rights relating to electronic communications networks and services (Universal Service Directive)

⁶ Each participant will review the existing domestic policies related to digital access and adopt the domestic Action Plans for E-Accessibility for the period 2007-2010. Action Plans will address the issues of stimulation measures for making ICT easier to use for a wider range of people, improvement of digital literacy, and decrease of the digital divides, especially in rural environments and having in mind the gender component.

⁷ Each participant will review the existing domestic strategies and policies related to introduction of ICT enabled public services and adopt the domestic Action Plans for E-Government for the period 2008-2011.

⁸ Ministerial Conclusions signed by the ICT Ministers of eSEE Initiative Member States and UNMIK on behalf of Kosovo in accordance with UNSCR 1244 at the Regional Ministerial Conference on Information Society held on 1st July 2005 in Thessaloniki, Greece under the auspices of Hellenic Ministry of Transport and Communications, Stability Pact for SEE, UNECE, UNDP and INA Academy.

⁹ All public, school and special libraries will be equipped with library information systems. Governments will introduce Domestic Programs for Digitalization of Libraries with the emphasis on the domestic and regional cooperation and interconnectivity.

- b. Programs of digitalization of the cultural and historic heritage will commence by 2009¹⁰.
5. e-Participation and e-Democracy;
- a. All decisions that require public discussion, as well as their drafts, will be available for online discussion by 2009;
 - b. There will be a significant increase in participation of citizens and business, as a part of e-Government services, by 2009.
 - c. Action Plans for implementation of ICT in electoral process and implementation of electronic vote will be adopted by 2012.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

1. Implementation of the eAgenda+ priority areas:

- a.) Single SEE Information Space;
- b.) Innovation and Investment in ICT Research and Education, and
- c.) Inclusive Information Society

Shall be facilitated through the platform provided by the Electronic South Eastern Europe Initiative Working Group. Hence, the participants are represented by e-Envoys and Appointed Senior Policy Officials nominated by the respective authorities. Overall direction and leadership is provided by a Chairperson chosen among the participants, while Sarajevo based Secretariat¹¹ hosted by UNDP provides advisory function, technical coordination and logistic support.

2. Based on priority areas identified in eSEE Agenda Plus, the eSEE Working Group under the guidance of eSEE Chair and with assistance of the Secretariat of the Initiative, shall draft project proposals conducive to the benefit of the SEE region. With assistance of the Office of Coordinator of the Stability Pact and supporting organizations, the eSEE Working Group shall identify donors and seek funding opportunities to implement such projects.

3. In case the need should arise for specific technical expertise, Taskforces shall be established, according to the same organizational model used in case of "bSEE" Broadband Taskforce. Taskforces will operate with the degree of autonomy conducive to successful implementation, under the chapeau of eSEE Initiative and with guidance of eSEE Agenda Plus as the generic Action Plan for Information Society Development in South Eastern Europe.

4. In the process of implementation of the eSEE Agenda Plus, the participants shall make provisions for collaborative actions and build strong partnership with the EU. Hence, all reforms will be implemented within the framework of harmonization with Acquis Communautaire with respect to all the respective commitments and obligations of the participants with the EU. In this process, the participants shall aspire to establish the mechanism for conducting Regulatory Impact Assessment.

5. The participants shall encourage the institutions, businesses and authorities to learn from the experiences in the EU.

6. Aiming to improve regional cooperation, the participants shall build domestic and regional capacities to link professionals, business and institutions across the region and EU.

7. The participants will support creating eGovernance Center for South East Europe in cooperation with the private sector in order to provide the training support for conducting e-Government agendas.

8. Under the auspices of eSEE Initiative, and with the mission and content of activities approved by eSEE Initiative working group, Stability Pact Business Advisory Council (BAC) Private Sector ICT Forum will promote participation of the private sector companies in implementation of eSEE Agenda Plus.

9. In order to secure continuous implementation of the objectives of eSEE Agenda Plus, the participants shall carry on annual domestic benchmarking of an agreed subset of indicators used by EU for the i2010 initiative..

¹⁰ Series of studies and research will be performed and programs of digitalization of the cultural and historic heritage will be started by 2009. Programs will be institutionalized as long-term, continuous effort of participants on providing non-discriminatory access, storing into memory and distribution of its heritage and know-how from the field of culture through information society technologies

¹¹ Henceforth Center for Coordination of Stability Pact ICT Initiatives in SEE

10. The participants are determined to continue thorough implementation of those eSEE Agenda items that were not implemented prior to the signing of eSEE Agenda Plus, at the earliest convenience, and not later than end 2007.

APPENDIX 1: THE SET OF BASIC EGOVERNMENT SERVICES

At least the following services will be introduced by 2011:

No.	G2B	G2C	G2G
1.	Tax payment: registration, payment and analysis;	Job search;	Treasury and programmatic budgeting;
2.	Environment and construction permits; obtaining a license;	Social benefits: unemployment, child supplement, health care payments, students supplement;	Support systems for implementation of EU funds;
3.	Electronic cadastre and related registers of ownership;	Personal documents: ID, passport or driving permit;	Integrated control of borders;
4.	Healthcare and pension: payments and examinations;	Car registration: new, second hand or imported;	
5.	Enterprise registration;	Public libraries: review of catalogue and ordering;	
6.	Company income registration;	Certificates: birth, death and marriage records;	
7.	VAT;	Admission to higher education institutions;	
8.	Customs declarations;	Residence registration: in case of change of address;	
9.	Single Window for one-time filing all required information on a foreign trade transaction		
10.	Public procurement;		
11.	Registry of mortgages of legal persons.		
12.	Submitting of statistical data to the State Statistical System (including harmonization with EUROSTAT requirements)		

With regards to implementation of these services, special attention will be paid to improvement of accessibility of services by citizens. Standardized interfaces and portals for citizens will be introduced in "one-stop-shop" manner.

APPENDIX 2: CENTRAL EGOVERNMENT SYSTEMS AND PORTAL

The participants will introduce e-Government systems to their own daily business processes as the positive stimulating example. At least the following issues will be addressed, by 2010:

- 1) Comprehensive reengineering and administrative regulation of their internal processes in order to make e-Government support organizationally possible;
- 2) Making their internal business processes more efficient through introduction of basic Government to Government - G2G communication systems and services;
- 3) Development and introduction of integrated Document and File Management System for their bodies and institutions;
- 4) Introducing e-Government portal on the Internet that allows two-way communication with the citizens and businesses;
- 5) Building a Single Window system for international trade, which involves all control agencies and businesses active in international trade, and allows for filing all required information only once. Investigating possibilities for harmonizing the flow of information among Single Windows in the region, with Europe and Single Windows around the world on the basis of international standards for trade information interchange
- 6) Supporting their decision-making processes through implementation of a tailored Group Decision Support System(s), including Electronic Meeting System for support to their sessions;
- 7) Developing the internal capacities for proper usage, maintenance and further development of e-Government systems and services;
- 8) Publishing regulations on-line.