

Editorial

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eRegion in eEurope

The idea of eRegion development was first presented by the Slovenia Delegation at the meeting of the Information Society Technologies Committee (DG Information Society) in Brussels on September 20, 2000. It was proposed that regional development exploiting e-technologies may be relevant to the countries preparing for European Union membership. Based on that idea, the Department for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport, sponsored a related meeting in Ljubljana on November 15, 2000. The meeting triggered two workshops in 2001:

The 1st Workshop on the Preparation of Regional ITS Development Projects: Organizational prototype of cross-border Business-to-Business and Business-to-Government eCommerce in Central Europe. Sponsored by the Research and Development Division, Ministry of Education, Budapest, Hungary; March 27-28, 2001.

The 2nd Workshop on the Preparations of Regional ITS Development Projects: Organizational Prototype of Cross Border Business-to-Business and Business-to-Government eCommerce. Sponsored by Intereuropa, Koper & ATNET, Koper, Slovenia; May 31, 2001.

The two workshops lead to the Executive Sellers & Buyers Meeting: Regional Cooperation in eCommerce Development of the 14th Bled e-

Commerce Conference (June 25, 2001, <http://www.bledconference.org>). The purpose of the meeting was to bring together business and government executives involved in cross-border transactions, business process facilitation and simplification as well as eCommerce technology provision. The objectives of the meeting were: to encourage top executives to conduct business electronically, to motivate the use of latest electronic commerce technologies and to prepare proposals for joint cross-border eCommerce projects in the region. The meeting on June 25, 2001 was the first in a series of the business and government executive meetings on cross-border eCommerce development taking place in Slovenia twice a year since then. A list of the Executive Meetings 2001-2005 is below.

From a geographic perspective, an eRegion is defined as an area of some 200-500 kilometers around a point of observation. In the eRegion business and government organizations extensively use eTechnologies for doing business. The eRegion relates to the crossing of the European Transport Corridor No. 5 (Lisbon – Kiev) and No. 10 (Hamburg – Istanbul & Thessalonica). The objective of the Executive Meeting is to contribute to an accelerated cross-border exchange of e-documents between business and government organizations in the emerging eRegion of the neighboring countries. It is assumed that the region may become more competitive by innovative implementation of eTechnologies in business processes.

In the region of the neighboring countries, the Universities Network eBusiness ALADIN – ALpe ADria INitiative was initiated in 2002. It now involves the Universities of Corvinus Budapest, Hungary; Karl-Franzens Graz, Austria; Košice, Slovakia; Maribor, Slovenia; BW München, Germany; Novi Sad, Serbia & Montenegro; Prague, Czech Republic; Rijeka, Croatia; and Trieste, Italy: (<http://www.aladin.units.it>). The ALADIN universities were very

much involved in the preparations of the Executive Meeting. In recent years an increased interest in eRegions is identified. Various initiatives may have different names; they share, however, a focus on e-Technology usage supporting organizations and individuals in the cross-border environment. For example:

The TeleRegions Network (TRN)
<http://www.teleregionsnetwork.org>

NeDAP - Northern eDimension e-Government Action Plan
<http://www.riso.ee/en/nordic>

The Nordic Experience
http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docconf/got-henburg/index.cfm

The Central European Initiative – CEI

<http://www.ceinet.org>
TRACECA – TRANsport Corridor Europe Caucuses Asia, The New Silk Road
<http://www.traceca-org.org>

In Slovenia, several current initiatives are devoted to eRegion development: eInvoicing in eRegion: Slovenia's Project Initiative (November 2005):

<http://ecenter.fov.uni-mb.si/eracuni/pobuda.pdf>

Information Systems Interoperability of Organizations Involved in a Major Disaster Relief in eRegion: Slovenia's Project Initiative (February 2006):

<http://www.elivinglab.org/safe/pobuda.pdf>

ICT-Powered eRegion (Central Europe):

http://ecenter.fov.uni-mb.si/ict-powered_eregion.pdf

Individuals interested in eRegion development and inter eRegions cooperation are encouraged to joint the effort.

Jože Gričar,
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