

CEENet Tartu Declaration

Tartu, Estonia

31st of May 1997

The Central and Eastern European Networking Association (CEENet), in cooperation with the Estonian Educational and Research Network (EENet) and the Computing Centre of the Tartu University, has organized its 1st Networking Policy Workshop in Tartu, Estonia, May 29th- 31st, 1997, sponsored by NATO. 56 participants from 19 countries, representing governments, parliaments, networking organizations and scientific institutions, discussed the challenges of the information society for the academic community and their networks. The situation of national networks and information infrastructures, of research and technological development as well as of training and education in the CEENet countries were analyzed in the context of European and global developments.

A major goal of CEENet is to coordinate the work of individual research, academic and educational networks at the international level. The national networks are different from commercial service providers because they offer specialized services to the research and education community of which they are part. They also promote the introduction and validation of new services by making use of technological developments in advance of their commercial exploitation.

The primary objectives of the workshop were to:

- a. identify major problems and issues whose possible solutions will lead to coherent, consistent and sustainable development of the national academic and research networks and networking in general
- b. recognize the principal parameters and attributes of national networks in building a democratic and technologically advanced society and
- c. enumerate the list of priorities and goals, as well as a set of strategies, which will produce a common aggregation of policies implementable on both national and international level

To stress the specific role of the academic community and its networks within the global information infrastructure the participants of the CEENet Workshop on Networking Policy adopted on 31 May 1997 in Tartu, Estonia, the following :

"CEENet Tartu Declaration"

The Challenge

The Information Age is about people and not just about technology. In this the academic community has a special responsibility and a special role to play. It has to be at the forefront of the creation of the information society both as a driving force and as a testbed. Education, research and technological development is crucial and is carried out increasingly on a global scale. Networking is one necessary and essential precondition which will enable CEENet countries to leapfrog into the next century. To fulfil its task the academic community needs the tools to communicate and to network independently and freely without any frontiers.

The Situation

In the CEENet countries there is typically an awareness of the challenges of the information age, a political will and a lot of enthusiasm to develop networks and services. It is evident that most of the CEENet countries have achieved significant results in the establishment and development of their national networks for the research, academic and education community. All countries have similar interests, needs and driving forces towards the information society. At the same time this region is characterized by different levels of political, social and economic transformation among the countries. There are differences in the legal frameworks, in the quality of the physical infrastructure, in the connectivity of the networks, in the level of liberalization of telecommunication networks and services, in administrative structures, in the training and education systems. In order to avoid the widening of these gaps efforts have to be made to enable all CEENet countries to participate in global networking for education, research and technological development on an equal basis.

The Goals, Ways and Principles

By taking into consideration the realities in the CEENet countries, the goals of CEENet are

- to stimulate the development of information infrastructure, content and services
- to support frameworks and structures which enable the academic community to fulfil its task and
- to promote best practices and the exchange of expertise and experiences among national institutions

To achieve these goals CEENet upholds the principles of

- openness of networks
- pervasiveness of infrastructure
- universal access
- global connectivity

- cross-border cooperation
- affordable prices and
- no censorship

While recognizing that financial resources are crucial, CEENet stresses also that innovative ideas and creativity will be even more important to reach its objectives.

The Problems

The main problems in the CEENet countries are, inter alia and with differences from country to country,

- lack of awareness among political decision makers
- inadequate support for network initiatives
- lack of coordination among different national actors
- fragmentation of efforts
- inadequate training facilities
- shortage of personnel, material and infrastructure resources
- high tariffs for national and international circuits
- misunderstanding of the role of individual research, academic and educational networks by Public Networks Operators (PNOs)
- continuing monopolies

Recommendations

Taking into account the worldwide discussion on the global information society, and in particular documents adopted by G7, the European Union, including the EU-CEEC Information Society Forum, as well as by other governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with networking and education, research and technological development, the participants of the CEENet workshop adopt the following recommendations:

1. In the field of Policy CEENet recommends that

- governments should recognize the importance of education, research and technological development and create a friendly environment for these activities
- governments should create clear, stable and flexible legal frameworks for liberalized telecommunication, intellectual property rights, data protection, information security and others which guarantee the rights and freedoms of the academic community to fulfil its duty in a responsible way
- governments should pay special attention to activities aimed at reducing international tariffs for the research, academic and education community
- governments and the academic community should cooperate to develop national

policies and long term strategies in networking related to education, research and technological development

- national networks should ensure that their own government organizations understand these issues and support the individual research, academic and educational network's role

2. In the field of Networks CEENet recommends that

- national research, academic and educational networks should prepare implementation strategies concerning infrastructure, quality and quantity of services, universal access, the use of international standards and should define acceptable user policies
- national research, academic and educational network organisations should coordinate their efforts to avoid fragmentation and to concentrate resources for effective use of infrastructure
- local, regional and inter-regional networks should be encouraged to interconnect
- each country should establish or agree upon a coordinated participation in international matters

3. In the field of Funding CEENet recommends that

- the role of national funding authorities should be to provide adequate financial means for the setting up and continuous development of national research, academic and educational networks, new technologies and new services
- national network organizations should look for additional funding both in the public and private sector at the national and the international level
- national network organizations should join efforts, campaigns and lobbying to minimize circuit costs and to reduce tariffs

4. In the field of Education and Training CEENet recommends that

- national research, academic and educational institutions should disseminate the knowledge of network technology and network use to a broader public and create a broad range of innovative training programmes which would vary from the training of trainers to the training of the general public to enable people to exploit networks and participate actively in the information society
- national research, academic and educational networks should encourage and support the use of global networking at all levels of education, in particular in schools

5. In the field of Public-Private Partnership CEENet recommends that

- national research, academic and educational networks should develop innovative forms of cooperation with industry and private sector groups to implement pilot projects, telematics applications and content oriented new services
- national research, academic and educational networks should promote the establishment of a national interchange point in each country

6. In the field of International Cooperation CEENet recommends that

- national research, academic and educational networks should look for a close international cooperation, both within CEENet and with other institutions and organisations
- efforts should be undertaken to promote cooperation among all international governmental and non-governmental organisations who are supporting international networking on all levels

CEENet now hopes to see these recommendations implemented in the interest of the research, academic and education community and the wider information society.

The CEENet Tartu Declaration was drafted by a committee who started to work on May 30 in the afternoon and finished in the early morning hours on May 31, 1997. The members of the Committee were Hans-Peter Axmann, Borys Czernijewski, Howard Davies, Peter Druga, Wolfgang Kleinwaechter, Emanuel Ondracek and Oliver B. Popov. In the process of final revision of the Declaration, the Committee was joined by Anne Villems and Jacek Gajewski.

The image shows seven handwritten signatures in black ink, arranged in two columns. The signatures are: Hans-Peter Axmann (top left), Borys Czernijewski (top right), Howard Davies (middle left), Peter Druga (middle right), Wolfgang Kleinwaechter (bottom left), Emanuel Ondracek (bottom right), and Oliver B. Popov (bottom right, below Ondracek).

The signatures by the members of the Editorial Committee on the original draft of the CEENet Tartu Declaration.