

Message from the SEE ICT Private Sector

This document attempts to draw attention of the governments to a Private ICT Sector view on the development of Information Society in South Eastern Europe. The presented proposals and recommendations correspond to the discussions during the 2nd SEE ICT Forum that took place on Wednesday 18 April in Belgrade, Serbia. The Forum was attended by representatives of the national and regional ICT companies and associations. Through this document the SEE ICT Forum demonstrates its commitment to serve as the principle contact point between the regional ICT community and SEE governments (SEECF) as well as the facilitator of the dialog between the private sector and the local governments on ICT issues and related reforms, ICT business development and investments.

The following proposals and recommendations will be brought to the attention of the governments gathered at the Ministerial Conference scheduled for 21-22 June 2007 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- Governments need to focus more on the opportunities for the prosperous economic and social development enabled by the strong and vibrant national ICT sector. Establishment of a central government authority with extended responsibilities for the implementation and coordination of ICT policies and projects should be of national interest and will bring SEE countries closer to the EU i2010 Program and Lisbon Agenda.;
- Adoption and effective implementation of a Telecom Law in accordance with the EU Electronic Communications framework as a tool for stimulating Private Sector investment. The liberalization of the ICT market will also require better and more effective regulation especially in relation to Broadband infrastructure
- Improved communication, sharing of best ICT practices and promotion of initiatives between SEE governments; support for the establishment of the SEE eGovernance Center;
- Promotion and raise of public awareness of the ICT benefits, improved education with ICT-related skills, support policies for the use of ICT tools, especially by SME's and public sector, to enhance productivity, efficiency, quality and competitiveness;
Adoption of a suitable legal framework for Public Private Partnerships (PPP), to provide clear legal basis for PPP transparency of procedures and project implementation ; establishment of a Competence Center for PPP in each SEE country providing public sector training and consulting on management and implementation of PPP projects
- Improvement of eGovernance competencies based on the international experience and adoption of national eGovernance Strategies for immediate introduction of the effective e-government services for citizens and businesses;
Support the development of the local ICT industry in order to stop brain drain, support local talent, attract investment and create more employment. Active involvement of local ICT companies in public projects and substantial increase of public investments in ICTs will contribute to the national ICT capacity. Provide public data access to private sector developing ICT content and services (e.g roads, maps, directions, weather info for applications used when crossing borders).