

Final draft of The BLED Declaration: Towards a European approach to the Future Internet

Current Internet: Successes and Challenges

With over a billion users world-wide, the current Internet is a great success – a global integrated communications infrastructure and service platform underpinning the fabric of the European economy and European society in general. However, today's Internet was designed in the 1970s for purposes that bear little resemblance to current and foreseen usage scenarios. Mismatches between original design goals and current utilisation are now beginning to hamper the Internet's potential. A large number of challenges in the realms of technology, business, society and governance have to be overcome if the future development of the Internet is to sustain the networked society of tomorrow.

Future Internet: Vital to continued economic Growth in Europe

In the future, even more users, objects, services and critical information infrastructures will be networked through the Future Internet which will underpin an ever larger share of our modern and global economies. It is therefore time to strengthen and focus European activities on the Future Internet to maintain Europe's competitiveness in the global marketplace.

A significant change is required and the European Internet scientific and economic actors, researchers, industrialists, SMEs, users, service and content providers, now assert the urgent necessity to redesign the Internet, taking a broad multidisciplinary approach, to meet Europe's societal and commercial ambitions.

Future Internet: Addressing the Challenges through European Collaboration and Cooperation

EU member states have already committed, through the renewed Lisbon Agenda and the i2010 initiative, €9.1 billion of funding, as part of a public-private partnership, for ICT research over the duration of FP7. However, we must ensure that, within this, continuous and long term support is given to the design of the Future Internet as a key element of the future networked society. It is of strategic importance for Europe to fully engage in the conception, development and innovation of a Future Internet ensuring the long term growth of the ICT sector, full support to an ICT based economy, and the elimination of the digital divide for all citizens.

The research projects assembled here in Bled represent the first phase of this public-private partnership, a joint investment of over €400 million, that recognises the challenges above and emphasises a concerted and comprehensive process of redesign, based upon novel network, service, trust, security and content technologies together with strong initiatives towards new innovations in societal, governance and service domains, in order to ensure that the Future Internet fulfils its potential.

More specifically, building upon the obligations of our individual project contracts and the goals of the Strategic Agendas of the European Technology Platforms, we confirm our ambitions include:

Fostering Favourable Conditions through Coordinated Action

- Coordinate our efforts to foster cross-disciplinary innovation and creativity.
- Work together through a European Future Internet Assembly of research projects strengthening cross-discipline activity and optimising the impact of our actions.
- Cultivate and foster the skills and knowledge required to develop the Future Internet.
- Create the conditions for the deployment of services and service oriented systems.
- Communicate through open standards for Future Internet technologies and architectures.
- Open the European Future Internet Assembly to new projects and actors over time to widen the coordination and consistency of the action.

Jointly Designing, Developing and Experimenting

- Services and networking architecture for the Future Internet.
- Location independent, interoperable, coherent, consistent, scalable, pervasive, reliable, secure and efficient access to a coordinated set of services.
- Tools supporting collaborative business models and social network applications.
- Technologies ensuring the robustness of the networks and creating trust in the on-line world.

- Approaches and tools to leverage the full potential of the Internet of Things.
- Capabilities for supporting the creation, sharing, locating and delivery of new-media content.

Increasing Awareness at Policy Level

- Raise awareness of the economic, policy and regulatory issues as identified by the newly proposed European Future Internet Assembly, the UN Internet Governance Forum, the OECD and the European regulatory frameworks.
- Contribute to the definition of European positions within global forums and arenas.

Call for European action towards the Future Internet

To help us meet these major challenges, we call on the:

- European Member States to strengthen and coordinate their national R&D efforts and initiatives toward the Future Internet.
- European Commission to stress the vision and amplify the related R&D in order to drive Europe ahead of tomorrow's Internet transformations in the way we work, live, and interact.
- European Member States and the European Commission to support the creation and activities of the European Future Internet Assembly proposed in this declaration.