



XI Bled forum Declaration on the Future of Information Society and Challenges for Good Governance

Approved in Bled, Slovenia, 12 March 2010

We, the participants of XI Bled Forum on Europe, call upon the United Nations, European Council, the European Union Presidency, Council of the EU, European Commission, European Parliament, decision makers in the region South Eastern Europe, NGOs and other actors to actively seek and develop ways to support the further development of inclusive information society, particularly in meeting the challenges for good governance.

Recognising the importance of information and communication technologies in establishing and ensuring open and competitive economies as well as their crucial role in empowering citizens and fighting against poverty;

Recognising the global context of the development of information society which necessitates the transcendence of narrow national horizons;

Recognising that knowledge and innovation are not only important means for tackling the global economic crisis but are predominantly a key factor for sustainable economic growth;

Acknowledging the European Commission's proposal *Europe 2020: A Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, which not only strives to hasten the exit from the economic crisis but also to provide the building blocks for growth that will be sustainable in the future;

Acknowledging the Ministerial *declaration on e-Government of Malmö 2009*, in which EU ministers responsible for e-Government declared that public administrations should "enable and support the creation of seamless cross-border e-Government services whilst increasing the trustworthiness, security and interoperability of e-Government services and system in the Single Market";

Acknowledging the crucial role of information and communication technologies for attaining a higher quality of life, achieving greater social and political inclusion and improving competitiveness;

Acknowledging that the improvement of public services is one of the important elements of good governance which can be achieved by the use of information and communication technologies;



Recognizing that the development of information society can contribute to establishment of a common space within the South East European region as well as in the EU, where science and innovation cross borders and contributes to the development of good governance answering the specific needs of citizens and societies.

With the aim of effective response to the future challenges we:

1. Call upon the decision makers in the EU and the SEE countries to mobilize potentials of the SEE region not only to respond and tackle consequences of the economic crisis but also to further long-term and sustainable growth and development of the SEE region as well as the EU;
2. Call upon the decision makers to establish conditions for the use of foresight which can provide an efficient and effective means for formulating novel policy proposals for the development of information society, particularly for meeting the challenges of good governance, by enabling cooperation and exchange of views among experts from diverse scientific fields, the general public, representatives of NGOs, private sector and decision makers thus creating new ideas and strategies, identifying future challenges and formulating responses to them;
3. Call for the development of new policies, based upon new paradigms and new models for growth which acknowledge and address new global challenges such as demographic trends, issues of mobility, migrations, urbanization, security, climate change, energy efficiency, poverty and growing government expenditures;
4. Call for the continuous political support of all stakeholders for the development of information society in all its dimensions such as e-Government, e-Democracy, e-Business, e-Education, e-Research, e-Culture, e-Health, e-Justice, e-Security, stable funding of science and research, cooperation between governments, civil society and private sector at the national and international level.
5. Call upon all stakeholders to put emphasis on interoperability not only on the national level but also on the regional level which could serve as an important element of cross-border cooperation among the SEE countries and facilitate faster development of information society and improve governance in the region;
6. Call for the actions for the removing of administrative, financial and other barriers for formulating and implementing pilot projects in the field of science and innovation through which the potential for broader cooperation among SEE countries and the EU can be realized;



7. Call upon the institutions of the EU to support initiatives and projects of the SEE region for developing information society and meeting the challenges for good governance which can facilitate a cultural shift to a cooperative knowledge based governance and substantially speed up the European integration processes of the SEE countries ;
8. Call upon all the stakeholders to utilize cloud computing in e-Governance that can deliver continuous cost reduction, establish a more efficient and greener ICT infrastructure and enable increased citizen interaction;
9. Call upon all policy and decision makers to recognize and exploit the potential of social networking for good and democratic governance by incorporating them into public processes, e-Government services and tools and thus making them more efficient, transparent, user-centred and inclusive;
10. Call upon the institutions of the EU and governments of SEE countries to establish clear legal framework as well as technological provision which will ensure the protection of personal data, consumer protection and protection of privacy and thereby build trust in e-Governance;
11. Call upon all the decision makers to recognise and support science as the key element which can provide new ways of thinking and new solutions that can contribute to the further development of democratic, transparent and inclusive societies .

In light of the above considerations, we have gathered at the 11th Bled Forum on Europe and now call on all institutions and individuals addressed in the preamble to take decisive steps towards responding to the global, European, regional and local challenges regarding the development of information society and establishing good governance and thereby provide the basis for a proper response to the challenges of the Future.

Bled Forum on Europe, 11th - 12th March 2010, Bled, Slovenia