

Brussels, 20 February 2008

Connecting the European Union & Asia: Internet for global research

The European Union is investing in EU-Asia research cooperation. The European Commission will provide a further €12 million for the Asia wide Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN). TEIN currently enables 10 countries in Asia and Pacific to use large-scale internet connection to carry out research projects globally. With the new budget and an additional €6million coming from Asian partners, TEIN will be able to operate until 2011 with improved capacity in a greater number of countries.

"TEIN reduces the digital divide between the less developed countries in Asia and Europe and enables them to take part in global research projects," stressed Benita Ferrero-Waldner, European Union Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy. "This Commission support to research internet networks not only facilitates collaboration of scientists on a global scale but by providing access to modern online applications like e-learning and videoconference progress to different sectors like medicine, education, meteorology can be made. Furthermore, it ensures tangible benefits not just for researchers but for the wider population."

"We have already seen significant global collaboration in the areas of climate change, radio astronomy and meteorology, bringing together the best minds around the world to tackle the global challenges that we are facing. Together with Europe's partners, we are aiming to make global scientific collaboration seamless and straightforward and abolish distance as a barrier to working together." commented Viviane Reding European Union Commissioner for the Information Society and Media.

TEIN is a regional research and education network in Asia created on a similar concept as the GÉANT2 network in Europe. The pan-European GÉANT2 is the world's most advanced international research and education network, which links over 30 million students and scientists through internet connection at fast bandwidth speeds. To promote research cooperation worldwide and help to bridge the digital divide in less developed countries, GÉANT2 links the European research and education network to the regional networks in Latin America, Africa, Middle East and South East Asia.

First large-scale Asia-Pacific network for research and education

The original idea to create a Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) was proposed at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit in 2000. Since 2004 the EC has taken the lead, providing funding for the second, and now the third phase of the network. It currently operates in 10 Asia-Pacific countries, and more countries from South Asia will be able to join in the new phase.

With the increased funding of €12 million until the end of 2011, TEIN will continue to provide large-scale internet connection for research and education through the development of the regional network in Asia and its link to the European GÉANT2. Four thousand research and education institutions with about 30 million end-users in the Asian countries are benefiting from the TEIN network. Thanks to that, scientists in The Philippines are now able to forecast typhoons with the assistance of German researchers, patients in Vietnam can receive surgery with remote consultation of Australian doctors and a number of students are being trained by using e-learning applications.

The story of TEIN:

October 2000	TEIN initiative launched at ASEM 3 Summit
September 2003	EC announces €10 million funding for TEIN2 network
May 2004	First phase of TEIN2 is launched
January 2005	TEIN2 network becomes operational
February 2008	EC announces € 12 million funding for TEIN3
October 2008	TEIN3 network will become operational

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regional-cooperation/infrastructure-networks/index_en.htm

www.tein2.net

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