

JOURNAL OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Preface

This special issue of the *Journal of Telecommunications and Information Technology* contains selected papers from the conference organized in the frames of the Sixth Framework Program Project *Academic Internet Television Network Showcases: the Best of Good Practice Activities* – ATVN-EU-GP (<http://www.atvn-eu-gp.pl>). A consortium of eight partners: the National Institute of Telecommunications (Poland), the ICM, Warsaw University (Poland), Sofia University (Bulgaria), the Institute of Fundamental Technological Research, Polish Academy of Sciences (Poland), the Centre for Administration and Operations, the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic), Starptautiska Lietiskas Optikas Biedriba (Latvia), the Technical University of Kosice (Slovakia) and Lviv Centre for Scientific, Technical and Economic Information (Ukraine), initiated the implementation of this project. The main goal of the project was to stimulate, encourage and facilitate the participation of teams from the new member states (NMS), the associated candidate countries (ACC) and the newly independent states (NIS) in research projects and activities in the areas of information society technologies (IST), such as: e-business, e-government, e-learning and e-health. The project aimed at identifying, exploiting and further improving the good IST practices in order to use them as showcases for strengthening the IST RTD activities in these countries. Its strategic objectives were also to stimulate, encourage and facilitate the participation of organization from these countries in future IST research and good practice projects and to increase their innovations and competitiveness in the European business and industry. The main focus was put on promotion of research competencies and establishment and reinforcement of networks of research organizations from the NMS and the ACC with organizations from the other member states. The ATVN-EU-GP conference was among the main instruments for achieving this. The conference, held in Pułtusk, Poland, in December 2005, gave the unique opportunity for presentation of the twelve selected in the first stage of open contest best practice projects within the four mentioned IST areas. During the conference the four best projects have been selected in the second stage of the contest (one in each selected area). The best of "Good Practices Projects" were prize-winning by production of audio/video programs, which will be and placed on the new multimedia on-demand library as a beginning of the archive (<http://www.atvn.pl/atvn-eu-gp/index1.php>) showcases the best of good practices projects from EU.

This issue, titled *European IST research enlargement*, includes a selection of nine interesting and valuable papers, presented at the conference. All selected papers have their origin from

some EC RTD projects and international co-operation and networking. Although the call for papers was in the four mentioned above IST areas, most of the contributions are presenting research and development outcomes that cross the thin boundaries between these areas.

The e-business section contains two papers. The first one, *MUMMY – mobile knowledge management*, presents the achievements of the MUMMY project which aimed to research and develop means to improve the efficiency of mobile business processes through mobile and personalized knowledge management. The authors come from Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague and ZGDV – Computer Graphics Center, Darmstadt. MUMMY aimed to research and develop means to improve the efficiency of mobile business processes through mobile, personalized knowledge management. The project resulted in a set of integrated components forming the MUMMY system. The system can be used by companies for providing telemedicine and e-learning services as well.

The second paper in this section, *Empowering the mobile worker by wearable computing – wearIT@work*, deals mostly with the IST priority area e-work. The paper presents some early achievements of the wearIT@work project, the largest project world-wide in wearable computing.

The intention of wearIT@work is to explore some applications of computer systems embedded in clothes in various industrial environments. The research is based on the user-centred design approach and scenario definitions which are to be validated. The project aims to deliver a new technology having a long-term impact on the organization of individual and collaborative work and creating new ways to organize work.

The e-government section contains four papers. The first one, *EWD-P as an example of a “The Best of Good Practice” project*, presents the features of an electronic document exchange systems developed by the Polish company Rodan Systems SA. It could facilitate the decision-making process of the Polish government related to a great number of legislative issues and cases on an EU level. The EWD-P system integrates intelligent workflow management functionality aiming at supporting a complex flow of documents at the Polish state administration.

The paper *Innovative approach to identity management solution development for e-government at EU level* presents some achievements of the Sixth Framework RTD Integrated Project GUIDE. The project consortium includes partners from Bulgaria, Estonia and Hungary. The project aims at developing an open identity management architecture for e-government solutions in Europe. The paper presents the interdisciplinary perspective of the problem, bringing together internationally recognized expertise in technology, institutional, policy, socio-economic, legal and ethical research. It analyses the specific needs of the EU based upon the social, ethical and legislative differences regarding privacy and data protection. The project seeks to overcome the fragmentation of existing identity management initiatives.

The next two papers in this section deal with research and development projects and initiatives related to integration of people with special needs into the information society. This papers cover a variety of research and development areas, including e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion, e-health, etc. The paper *A way of integrating deaf, hearing- and speech-impaired people into modern communication society* puts in its focus the concept of the Relay Center Austria, which is a service and competence centre, for deaf, hearing- and speech-impaired people. The paper considers the issues both from organizational and business perspective.

The paper *Inclusion of sign language users via information and communication technology* analyses the differences between the sign and spoken languages and some adequate technical solutions appropriate for wider use of sign languages. Some intellectual, scientific, organizational, and political barriers for the necessary developments are discussed as well.

The e-health section contains two papers. The first one *Implementation of information security management system in the small healthcare organization* presents the outcomes of a subproject developed in the frames of the DIGI-Q course, part of the project “Quality and On-line Confidence in SMEs e-Business Processes” funded by the EC. The paper deals with topics of methodology for data protection, audit and certification, system, risk assessment and risk management, and their implementation in small healthcare organizations.

The next *A roadmap towards healthcare information systems interoperability in Greece* presents results of a comprehensive assessment, concerning the situation in the area in e-health in Greece and defined recommendations for a successful implementation of a national e-health system.

The e-learning section contains only one paper *Comparative analysis of models and platforms for the e-learning portals*. Author analyses the existing models and platforms for e-learning in terms of performance, user oriented services, data management, portal adaptors and web-infrastructure, etc. Some useful guidelines are also available, revealing the advantages and disadvantages of compared systems and giving recommendations for customers in making a choice among these platforms.

The guest editor would like to thank here all the authors for their contributions and the reviewers for their hard work in preparing their submissions, reviewing, and revising the papers on time.

Roumen Nikolov
Guest Editor