Armenia and Georgia connect to GÉANT and join the global research and education community

Researchers and students across Georgia and Armenia are now able to participate in collaborative work with their peers in Europe and other parts of the world thanks to two direct internet links to the pan-European GÉANT network recently implemented through the EU-funded EaPConnect project.

EaPConnect aims to create a world-class regional research and education (R&E) network in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, and connect it to the European network. It is in line with the recently revised European Neighbourhood policy that aims for increased interconnectivity and economic development for the European Union and its neighbours.

 "The project will further contribute to Europe being a hub for global research and education collaboration", said DG NEAR Director for Neighbourhood East Lawrence Meredith. "EaPConnect is bridging the digital divide and bringing people together. We are proud to support the integration of Armenia and Georgia into the global landscape".

"Armenia has a long history of achievements in scientific research. Connecting to the GÉANT network will bring positive outcomes to our pool of talents and projects while contributing to advance European and global science'' said Dr Hrachya Astsatryan, head of the Center for Scientific Computing at the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia.

Steve Cotter, CEO of GÉANT, commented: "We are proud to welcome two new members to the European research and education community and expand to over 40 connected local networks. GRENA and ASNET-AM are already established partners of global scientific institutions such as CERN in nuclear research and physics and the European research community looks forward to extending their collaboration with their Georgian and Armenian colleagues.''

"The Georgian research community has a strong interest in European technologies and scientific values. I believe that scientists working in high-energy physics, medicine, meteorology, climate change, seismology and computational biology will greatly benefit from the established network and implemented service,'' said Dr Ramaz Kvatadze, Executive Director of GRENA.

Background

GRENA and ASNET-AM, the Georgian and Armenian R&E networks, have been connecting scientists, students and academics in their countries for over two decades. Two 1Gbps links to the GÉANT network now enable over 50 universities and scientific institutions locally to join a 50 million-user community and collaborate with their peers across borders.

Next to join the GÉANT network is Azerbaijan, which has started contract negotiations to connect their national network, AzScienceNet, to GÉANT. There is also a tender under way to link the Belarus network, UIIP NASB, to the pan-European network. All Eastern Partnership countries are expected to be fully connected to GÉANT by the end of 2016.

About GÉANT
GÉANT is Europe's leading collaboration on network and related e-infrastructure and services for the benefit of research and education, contributing to Europe's economic growth and competitiveness. The organisation develops, delivers and promotes advanced network and associated e-infrastructure services, and supports innovation and knowledge-sharing amongst its members, partners and the wider research and education networking community.
To learn more, visit www.geant.org or follow us on Twitter @GEANTnews

About EaPConnect:
The Eastern Partnership Connect (EaPConnect) project sets out to create a regional research and education (R&E) network in Eastern Europe and the Southern Caucasus. This will interconnect the national R&E networks (NRENs) in six Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries and integrate them into the pan-European GÉANT network. The partner countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The overall objective of EaPConnect is to decrease the digital divide, improve intra-regional connectivity and facilitate participation of local scientists, students and academics in global R&E collaborations.
By interconnecting the R&E communities across the region and with their European counterparts, EaPConnect will create a gateway for talented individuals in the EaP countries to be truly global players. EaPConnect is managed by networking organisation GÉANT in collaboration with the NRENs in the six partner countries. The European Commission is contributing 95% (€13m) towards the cost of the EaPConnect project. For more information please visit www.eapconnect.eu or follow us on Twitter @EaPConnect_News

About ASNET-AM
The Academic Scientific Research Computer Network of Armenia (ASNET-AM) is the National Research and Education Network (NREN) of Armenia. Created in 1994 and having over 20 years of experience in Networking and Information Technologies, ASNET-AM provides vairuous networking solutions to the Academic, Scientific, Research, Educational, Cultural and other organizations of Armenia, which are engaged in scientific and educational activity.
The structure and policy of ASNET-AM operation was developed and implemented by the Institute for Informatics and Automation Problems (IIAP) of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NAS RA). ASNET-AM is a beneficiary partner of the EU-funded EaPConnect project.
To learn more, visit https://asnet.am

About GRENA
GRENA is the Georgian Research and Educational Networking Association. It was registered in Tbilisi, Georgia under the Georgian law on July 26, 1999. GRENA has acquired experience in advanced networking technologies such as fibre-optic and wireless. GRENA is running Cisco Regional Networking Academy, Distance Learning Centre, GRID distributed computing facility incorporated in the European GRID Infrastructure and Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT). Development of projects is being carried out in cooperation with universities with the support of European Commission, NATO Science Programme, Open Society - Georgia Foundation and International Science & Technology Centre. GRENA is a beneficiary partner of the EU-funded EaPConnect project.
To learn more, visit http://grena.ge/eng/main

About DG NEAR
The mission of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) is to take forward the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, as well as coordinating relations with EEA-EFTA countries insofar as Commission policies are concerned. DG NEAR works closely with the European External Action Service and the line DGs in charge of thematic priorities. By implementing assistance actions in Europe's eastern and southern neighbourhood, DG NEAR supports reform and democratic consolidation, and strengthens the prosperity, stability and security around Europe. To learn more, visit http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/about/directorate-general/index_en.htm

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