



EAPCONNECT: COLLABORATION WITHOUT BORDERS

Providing high-capacity internet and services for research and education in the European Eastern Partnership (EaP) region is a key focus of the EaPConnect project. But EaPConnect also stimulates collaboration between EaP researchers and educators and their peers in Europe. In 2017, the project partnership grew to eighteen NRENs, including six main project beneficiaries. Relationships between them continue to develop and bring new opportunities for cooperation, as six partners explain:



AMRES (Serbia – associate partner)

Miloš Cvetanović, Director

“Opportunities to collaborate, share knowledge and experience are extremely helpful and can significantly ease the learning curve or shorten the time for overcoming issues.

The Armenian and Serbian NRENs collaborated on eduroam service operations and management. ASNET-AM was interested in an easy-to-use solution for analysing and managing usage. AMRES is using such software, so several knowledge-sharing meetings were organised. This later connected with the GÉANT Learning & Development team, resulting in an eduroam workshop hosted by ASNET-AM in conjunction with the international CSIT 2017 conference held in Yerevan.

Participating in events helps AMRES to share knowledge, but also to gather valuable feedback. This information enriches training materials for AMRES member institutions, and is a starting point for future trainings under the GÉANT or EaPConnect umbrellas.

Topics of interest for AMRES for potential cooperation between Serbian R&E institutions and counterparts from peer NRENs are: eduroam, federated identity services, DDoS attack mitigation, digital libraries and clouds.”

ASNET-AM (Armenia – beneficiary partner)

Hrachya Atsatryan, Head - Center for Scientific Computing, National Academy of Sciences

“EaPConnect organised a series of workshops, trainings and site visits to EU associate partners to help ASNET-AM develop sustainable cutting-edge services.

Knowledge transfer from Dutch NREN SURFnet and AMRES was important for us to increase eduroam sustainability and visibility. In 2017 the number of service locations increased from 5 to 29.

In April we participated in a Network Performing Arts Production Workshop, then in October was the ‘Music Without Borders’ concert between Minsk and Tallinn. Knowledge transfer from the Italian NREN GARR helped us to master and implement the LoLa service. Thanks to this service, ASNET-AM made contact with the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra and Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan.

Participation in GARR’s Clouds Workshop in June was crucial for us to deploy an experimental ‘Infrastructure-as-a-Service’ platform. This allows us to increase our level of collaboration with the National Library of Armenia by providing customised VMs for its needs.

Supercomputing and data analytics are interesting topics for the upcoming year.”

Pictures

Left main image; Miloš Cvetanović and the AMRES eduroam team.

Left below images; Hrachya Atsatryan, Sergei Kozlov, Kristina Lillemets, Ramaz Kvatadze.

Above; Georgian musicians Reso Kiknadze and Khatia Koridze rehearsing for ‘Music Without Borders’.

BASNET (Belarus – beneficiary partner)

Sergei Kozlov, Head of network administration sector, UIIP, National Academy of Sciences

“There was a 100% increase of access capacity to GÉANT for BASNET customers in 2017, following an external connectivity upgrade to 10 Gbps in August.

As the result of increased visibility hosting the EaPConnect conference, EaPEC 2017, BASNET received a request from the Belarusian State University’s Center for Particles and High-Energy Physics to increase its access link bandwidth to LHC resources in CERN. This work is planned for 2018.

In 2017, the Belarusian National Technical University provided eduroam to its users with the support of BASNET. Currently BASNET is working on providing it for the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics.

With the support of EaPConnect we installed and tested LoLa devices with the network connection, and involved Belarusian musicians to perform in ‘Music Without Borders’. This positive experience gives us hope for future adventures. We expect that LoLa will be in Slovakia and, with SANET, we will be able to organise a public concert of folk, classical and jazz, with audiences in Minsk and Bratislava.”



Picture
Participants of
GARR's Clouds
Workshop

EENet of HITSA (Estonia – associate partner)

Kristina Lillemets, Director

“We are looking forward to new collaboration possibilities with the EAP countries in future.

Through the ‘Music Without Borders’ concert in Tallin in October, we got wonderful new partners and good national media coverage. Internationally, we showed we are a reliable partner. The biggest benefit is the contacts and experience. I think there will be many more LoLa collaborations and we will be part of it.

We are delighted to support music, arts and humanities, especially when I see how important it is for the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. They have new ideas for using the technology and actively try to get financing. They won a contest with an idea of using LoLa with 5G technology and, although we as an NREN would not want to be replaced by 5G, we wish the best for LoLa technology and its users because we have seen the wonderful things it can do. NRENs should show more support for music and the arts.”

GARR (Italy – associate partner)

**Claudio Allocchio,
Senior Technical Officer**

“We share, thus we create. Projects like EaPConnect are perfect for bringing the GÉANT Community together.

GARR cloud services ensure many features (privacy, security, data portability) through a federated internal approach. The Armenians at GARR's Clouds Workshop understood this powerful paradigm was ‘the solution’ for them. They are progressing fast, and we could include them in a ‘European cloud federated service’, which we are discussing with some NRENs.

With the LoLa collaboration the international links were leased circuits from other companies. This was useful to test LoLa in an environment close to ‘the open internet’, and explore how LoLa could be brought to a wider public. The partners have been proposing new activities; some have already happened other collaborations are getting started.

e-Health is a subject of growing interest. In GARR we support medical research with the same quality of services as for all disciplines. Our model could help EAP countries to approach e-Health.”

GRENA (Georgia – beneficiary partner)

**Ramaz Kvatadze,
Executive Director**

“GRENA supports around 10 Horizon 2020 projects and 80 projects funded by the Georgian National Science Foundation as well as international cooperation in various fields. GRENA is a partner of EC and GNSF projects related to climate modelling, and provides computational resources.

EaPConnect plays an important role in the development of cooperation between the European and EAP NRENs. It was especially useful to include EU NRENs as partners in the project.

The LoLa concert for European ministers and ambassadors was well received by the Georgian officials. This was important for GRENA publicity. We developed contacts with the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre and the Italian NREN, GARR. A proposal involving musicians and NRENs from Estonia, Italy, Armenia and Georgia is being discussed.

GRENA is developing cybersecurity services and close contacts with EU computer security teams (CSIRTs) and the Georgian governmental CSIRT. GRENA will upgrade its Trusted Introducer status from ‘Listed’ to ‘Accredited’, and a Cybersecurity Workshop in June will be important.”

Further information:
www.eapconnect.eu