

Reflections



ALADIN - ALpe ADria INitiative Universities' Network

<http://www.aladin.units.it>

ALADIN - ALpe ADria INitiative Universities' Network - was initiated after a very well supported Business and Government Executive Meeting: Regional Cooperation in eCommerce Development: Business & Government Executive Meeting of the 14th Bled eCommerce Conference: eEverything: eCommerce, eGovernment, eHousehold, eDemocracy on June 25, 2001.

The idea of a cross-border eRegion was encouraged by the presentation "Building A Mega-Portal For Regional Economic Development" by Dr. Sandor Boyson, Chief of Information Strategy, Co-director Supply Chain Management Center, Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland, College Park, United States. The presentation was in Ljubljana, sponsored by the Electronic Commerce Center, Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Maribor and Government Center for Informatics, Republic of Slovenia on March 4, 2002. Representatives of the Universities of Graz, Maribor, Rijeka, and Trieste had a preliminary meeting in the afternoon of the same day.

The name ALADIN was proposed by the representatives of the University in Trieste and quickly accepted at the first formal meeting of a group of professors at the University in Rijeka on September 5, 2002. As a result of the meeting, letters of invitation were mailed to the rectors of the University Graz, Maribor, and Trieste by Dr. Danijel Rukavina, professor and rector, University of Rijeka and Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

The ALADIN Network was formally created by signing a Letter of Intent in Ljubljana, Slovenia on October 23, 2002 by:

- Dr. Paolo Inchingolo, Professor and Deputy Rector, Università degli Studi di Trieste, Italy;
- Dr. Željko Knez, Professor and Acting Rector, Univerza v Mariboru, Slovenia;
- Dr. Pero Lučin, Professor and Vice Rector, Sveučilište u Rijeci, Croatia;
- Dr. Friedrich M. Zimmermann, Professor and Vice Rector, Karl Franzens Universität Graz, Austria.

The Universities desiring to strengthen the friendship and cooperation between themselves, recognizing the importance of developments in electronic commerce and the information economy, have reached the following understandings:

The Universities will create an international network, at the regional level, sharing common ideas and knowledge in teaching and research activities in the field of e-commerce.

The intention of the cooperation is to create mobility of students and professors, promoting common lectures, creating virtual teams of students from different universities and professors lecturing at different universities, in order to harmonize global and international activities of e-commerce.

In order to coordinate cooperative activities, a Steering Committee will be created, and each University will designate two representatives to be responsible for determining the particular directions of cooperation and for ensuring the effectiveness of all cooperation and exchange activities.

On June 5th, 2005 in Bled, Slovenia, a second version of the ALADIN Letter of Intent was cosigned by four additional universities joining the Network: Corvinus University Budapest, Hungary; Technical University Košice, Slovakia; BW University München, Germany; Novi Sad Business School, Serbia and Montenegro (see a copy of the Letter of Intent). After that, the Prague University of Economics, Czech Republic expressed interest in joining ALADIN. Presently nine universities of nine countries are active in ALADIN, recognizing the importance of developments in eIntegration, particularly in eBusiness, eGeomatics, eGovernment, eHealth, eLearning, eLogistics, and in eManagement of Disaster Relief. The effort is about the applications of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the benefits of the European Citizens.

ALADIN is an initiative, not a project. The initiative is enough for creation of ideas, mobilization of goodwill, highlighting of issues, triggering of actions, and more. In next few years we may see research projects created in the ALADIN environment mobilizing the required cooperation and funding. The ALADIN Network is a valuable contributor to eRegion development and open to inter-regional cooperation.