

A Future Internet for which future?

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It is quite paradoxical that, to a large extent, the “Future Internet” is explored today without exploring what the future of our societies might be...

If it is today well acknowledged that the world has profoundly changed during the last decades, it has to be acknowledged too that the world will probably profoundly change in the next decades in order to avoid major risks of breakdown.

Industrial, emerging and developing countries will therefore need to agree, sooner or later, on an alternative way forward based on a true sustainable development, more sustainable economic and financial models, more equally shared resources. What is at stake if of course, ultimately, the wellbeing of all citizens of the world, to be measured by new indexes going beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product).

Therefore, designing the Internet of the future is not only a question of technological developments, of user-centric approaches, of socio-economics issues. And even if it is not easy to predict the future, it doesn't mean we can't prepare for it!

The PARADISO FIRE project, defined in early 2007 and selected at ICT Call 1, has already advocated and explored this probable paradigm shift in global societal developments through the “PARADISO reference document”. It thus appeared quite visionary and timely when the present economic and financial crisis expanded during the year 2008, which is probably one of the reasons of the important project impact.

The PARADISO2 project, selected at ICT Call 4 will build on the assets and achievements of the PARADISO and will be:

- more focused: while “PARADISO1” was encompassing the ICT sector at large, PARADISO2 will specifically focus on the Future Internet,
- more concrete: the two facets of the problem (“how should societies evolve” and “which FI can be suited to these societies”) will be further explored, the exploration going beyond paperwork, including functional and technological specification and recommendations concerning research to be developed in the framework of EU-funded programmes.

In that sense, the PARADISO2 project should offer a true opportunity to put Europe at the forefront of international developments, at a time when the EU has the ambition to be a leader in this field, with the launch of the “FI ppp”.

The PARADISO2 project counts on the involvement of a unique multidisciplinary high-level expert panel composed of around 25 representatives, at the highest level, of leading institutions, companies, research institutes, and NGOs from Europe and all over the world.

This contribution at the FI in Nice will be a key opportunity, at the very start of the project (it should officially start on April 1, 2010) to introduce PARADISO vision and roadmap to the main stakeholders of the Future Internet in Europe and propose them to be fully informed of, and associated to project developments so that each of them can take the best advantage of expected outputs.