

BERLIN DECLARATION

(revised 29 March 2002)

Following an intensive two-day conference organised by the British Council to consider key factors in the emerging Information Society in Europe the delegates of TISA2 agreed a joint statement reflecting their shared vision and concerns about the impact that universal access to the benefits of the Information Society could have for all citizens of Europe and beyond...

“Acknowledging the sovereign responsibility of governments to set policies and priorities and the role of the European Union in the development in pan-Europe policy, we call on all stakeholders and policy makers to reflect on and implement the following principles and actions in the progress towards the Information Society:

PRINCIPLES

- The successful Information Society will enhance democracy and citizenship, support economic and social development, encourage lifelong learning and enhance rather than inhibit cultural and linguistic diversity
- To be successful this will demand that all citizens have equal access to the benefits of that Information Society - inclusive, not exclusive
- Therefore all Governments should have policies and programmes that give momentum to progress without inhibiting economic development, ensuring universal access to technological resources.
- Inequalities of access must not be a barrier to those who are unable to provide those resources for themselves
- Barrier-free skills training should be available to everyone so that all are able to use the technological resources effectively
- Access to lifelong learning must be the right of every citizen
- Networking must enable open participation for everyone and is an essential foundation to partnership and co-operation of individuals, communities and organisations

ACTIONS

National and federal governments should

- Prepare national information policies for the co-ordination and development of all relevant resources stressing the importance of open and accessible systems that encourage democratic influence
- Create suitable network infrastructure to support the development of the national information policy in the Information Society, clarifying the future role of broadband services within that infrastructure
- This network infrastructure should draw together all information-creating agencies especially the traditional memory institutions (museums, archives and libraries) to encourage information sharing and the creation of joint resources.
- Develop funding programmes to support those institutions to create new resources and provide effective access to them
- Support the delivery of ICT skills to all citizens, ensuring that nobody is excluded through lack of money or opportunity
- Work jointly with the EU, other governments and other organisations to ensure that common standards and policies enable the exchange and sharing of content
- Take positive action to promote to everyone the value of digital networks to their lives
- Support the training and development of the human resource base that is necessary to develop a viable market for services or products within the Information Society

- Recognise the growing impact of complex information systems on society and raise awareness of the importance to authenticity, reliability and quality in content and services
- Take measures to protect information infrastructures and content from threats
- Take a broad view of the impact of the evolving Information Society by involving experts from fields such as sociology and the behavioural sciences

Berlin
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