



THIRD GENERATION GÉANT PROJECT LAUNCHED TO EXTEND PAN-EUROPEAN RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION CAPABILITIES

National Research and Education Networks interconnect with the GÉANT network to enable faster and closer collaboration for 40 million users

Tomorrow's Internet will be shaped by the networking innovation and advanced user services being introduced as part of the third generation of the successful GÉANT project, officially announced today at its Launch Event in Stockholm, Sweden. The project, which will run to 2013, has recently been awarded funding of €93 million from the European Commission (EC) under the EU's 7th Framework Programme, and a matching amount from Europe's National Research and Education Networks (NRENs).

GÉANT is the dedicated high-bandwidth pan-European network at the core of the project, that provides advanced interconnectivity between Europe's NRENs through 50,000 kilometres of mostly optical fibre. As a result, nearly 40 million research and education users in over 8,000 institutions can have the capability to share vast quantities of data, and collaborate across multiple disciplines throughout Europe and beyond.

Nordic countries connected through NORDUnet

NORDUnet, the joint collaboration between the five Nordic countries Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, connects the Nordic NRENs to GÉANT. "The continuous development of the pan-European network is essential for the Nordic researchers and their ability to participate in and lead international research projects", said Rene Buch, CEO of NORDUnet. "The connection to GÉANT will further the possibilities for efficient collaboration and exchange of huge amounts of data for instance from the LHC at CERN to the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen".

NORDUnet and the Nordic countries also contribute significantly to the various tasks within the GÉANT3 project, within fields as diverse as:

- eduGAIN
- Campus best practises
- Federated identity

Collaboration on a global scale

“The immense data processing capacity and far-reaching links of the GÉANT network ensure that Europe is the central hub of research and education, bringing together the best minds in the world”, said Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media. “The European Commission’s financial investment into the third generation of the GÉANT project benefits Europe’s competitiveness, but is also boosting collaboration between researchers on a global scale. The European Commission is committed to leading the field in the Internet’s evolution, and to enable worldwide research collaboration that tackles some of the societal challenges that we all face, such as climate change, global health problems and energy provision.”

The network of networks

GÉANT and the national networks form the GÉANT Service Area. This “network of networks” offers reliable, seamless and transparent end-to-end connectivity and support services to create the most advanced international research network in the world. The portfolio of services offered includes virtual private networks with reserved bandwidth capacity for specific project requirements, network performance monitoring tools and secure roaming and authorisation services. By investing in the development and innovation of advanced technologies and services to maximise network efficiency and drive the user experience, this third generation of the GÉANT project aims to keep Europe at the forefront of research networking and e-Science, and shape the Internet of the future.

Dai Davies, General Manager of DANTE, the organisation that has built and operates GÉANT on behalf of Europe’s NRENs, commented: “The GÉANT project will build on the major successes of its predecessors and enable European researchers to benefit from dedicated bandwidth and advanced services that make international collaboration seamless and straightforward. Access to information and real-time collaboration across multiple disciplines are at the heart of research, from physics to the arts, and the capabilities and ease of use that the GÉANT project offers will benefit researchers across Europe.”

Enabling the Large Hadron Collider

Notable user projects enabled by GÉANT include the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) which is the largest scientific experiment ever undertaken, and a telemedicine project to bring essential healthcare services to remote parts of South America. GÉANT also played a critical role following the devastating Sichuan earthquake, transferring high-resolution satellite images from the EC’s Joint Research Centre in Italy to those leading the relief effort in China, thereby helping to speed up the reconstruction of infrastructure.

GÉANT extends its reach through links with other world regions including North America, Asia-Pacific (TEIN), Latin America (RedCLARA), Central Asia (CAREN), Mediterranean

(EUMEDCONNECT), China (ORIENT), sub-Saharan Africa (Ubuntunet Alliance), Black Sea region (BSI).

The project will also seek to address the digital divide faced by the research and education community, by working towards stabilising the cost of connectivity and improving network links across Europe.

DANTE

DANTE is a non-profit organisation, coordinator of large-scale projects co-funded by the European Commission, and working in partnership with European National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) to plan, build and operate advanced networks for research and education. Established in 1993, DANTE has been fundamental to the success of pan-European research and education networking. DANTE has built and operates GÉANT, which provides the data communications infrastructure essential to the success of many research projects in Europe. DANTE is involved in worldwide initiatives to interconnect countries in the other regions to one another and to GÉANT. DANTE currently manages projects focussed on the Mediterranean, Asia-Pacific and central Asia regions through the EUMEDCONNECT, TEIN and CAREN projects respectively. For more information, visit www.dante.net.

NORDUnet

NORDUnet is a joint collaboration by the five Nordic National Research and Education Networks in Denmark (Forskningsnettet), Iceland (RHnet), Norway (UNINETT), Sweden (SUNET) and Finland (Funet). It operates a world-class Nordic and international network and e-infrastructure service for the Nordic research and educational community. The five NRENs develop and operate the national research network infrastructures, linking together more than 400 Nordic educational and research institutions with more than 1.200.000 users. NORDUnet and the Nordic NRENS continuously work to develop and offer a range of services that comprise a high capacity e-infrastructure including GRID, Network Operations Center (NOC) and Authentication and Authorization Infrastructure (AAI).

For additional information, please visit www.nordu.net

NORDUnet Press Contacts

René Buch, Managing Director, rene.buch@nordu.net, Mobile: +45 31191400