

6DISS supports IPv6 deployment in Africa

6DISS is a new project within the European Union's 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. Its goal is to be a key enabler of the global introduction of the new version of the Internet Protocol (IPv6) and to remove barriers to IPv6 deployment. It has also the specific purpose to exchange knowledge, experiences and results from previous European projects that have worked on the development and deployment of IPv6. IPv6 is becoming increasingly recognised as essential, not only for solving the shortage of IP addresses in many countries, but also for better supporting emerging applications with requirements for mobility and security.

One of the mechanisms of information transfer is through practical training workshops, one of which was organised in Port Elizabeth in collaboration with the S. African National Research and Education Network (NREN) TENET¹. Attendees comprised the network operators/administrators from commercial ISPs and the tertiary education units' IT departments. The workshop was arranged specifically to exchange information with those responsible for the imminent roll-out of an ambitious IPv6 deployment plan. Presentations were given by 6DISS on general IPv6 aspects (addressing, routing, configuration, management tools, dual stacking of networks, transition mechanisms, etc.), backed up by real experiences and deployment examples. A high level of interest was awakened concerning fostering and increasing the relationship with the EC and the European research community, with the aim of obtaining native IPv6 international connectivity to GÉANT and the OCCAID² project, and to experiment with and deploy more-advanced IPv6 services, such as multicast.

Similar 6DISS workshops are planned during the next 12 months in other regions of Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean countries).

The 6DISS consortium comprises major industrial partners (Cisco and Alcatel), European NRENS from France, Greece, Portugal and Hungary, Universities that are deploying IPv6 on their campuses (University of Southampton and University College London), the Trans European Research and Education Networking Association (TERENA), and Martel (co-ordinator). The project partners have already been involved in building a large-scale pan-European broadband IPv6 testbed for NRENS, national school networks, and in the development of the associated new network services, management tools and applications. Many of the partners are also active in defining IPv6 specifications through the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).

The total investment in the project is approximately €1million, which is co-funded by the European Commission and the partners.

Further information is available from the 6DISS website at <http://www.6diss.org/>

¹ TENET: Tertiary Education Network

² OCCAID: Open Contributors Corporation for Advanced Internet Development. It is a not-for-profit education and internet engineering network opened to the public. With access to the next-generation global IPv6 internet, OCCAID is also an incubator for the development of the IPv6 internet in North America, by assisting its participants and industry partners in their IPv6 migration