



**S**tructural  
**F**unds for  
**E**uropean  
**R**egional  
**A**dvancement

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## **SFERA European Conference: Improving the Deployment of Innovative Broadband Networks in European Regions**

SFERA Project (Structural Funds for European Regional Advancements), eris@ (European Regional Information Society Association) and the European Broadband Portal are proud to make public the [SFERA European Conference](#). The event will be held on 9th October 2009 in the Aquitaine, Emilia-Romagna, Hessen & Wielkopolska Common House, located at Avenue de l'Yser 19 - B1040 Brussels. It has the support of the European Commission (DG INFSO), the Integral SatCom Initiative (ISI) and the eMobility European Technology Platform (ETP).

This event offers a strategic view on existing opportunities for fast deployment of advanced access infrastructures, particularly wireless broadband and next generation networks. The expected results are to encourage regional and national players to think strategically about the importance of fast ICT expansion, especially of broadband networks, as a means to achieving productivity gains, and accelerating economic recovery.

SFERA Annual Conference is mainly addressed to regional and national decision-makers, interested in knowing how to formulate appropriate policies for hybrid broadband services, implement strategic plans and develop research related to ICT networks, and identify key objectives for regional development.

With a practical approach, the event will provide scenarios, case studies, and business models to promote discussion around:

- New opportunities of growth for European aided regions through ICT R&D investments
- Efficient use of SF for definition of policies and forward thinking plans for the broadband services
- Establishing successful links between the EU recovery plan and the broadband expansion
- Successful ICT Regional Strategies in SF Programming

The conference will gather the European key decision makers for broadband. It will count with the participation of high representatives from DG INFSO, DG REGIO, the Council of the European Union, National Governments, and European regional authorities, to share the opportunities, initiatives and best practices on broadband extension and structural funds policies.

During the morning session, there will be four slots:

Session 1 – Fast deployment of broadband and next generation ICT networks: a vision for Europe. This slot is focused on the initiatives of the EC and counts with the participation of DG INFSO - Future Networks and Lisbon Strategy and i2010 units, DG REGIO and the Council of the European Union.

Session 2 – Broadband as a means to accelerating economic recovery: sharing experience with industry and other European initiatives. With the objective of promoting best practices and initiative taken at industry level this slot includes the presence of ISI, eris@, the eMobility ETP and Hungaro Digital.

Session 3 – The SFERA FP7 Project Results: Providing Support & Guidance To European Regions. In order to providing support & guidance to European regions, the session 3 dedicates especial attention to

the dissemination of SFERA project main achievements, case studies and progress made during the two years of the project.

Roundtable – Improving the deployment of wireless broadband networks in European regions: the regional perspective. Joining high representatives from Member States and regions, the roundtable will be dedicated to the analysis of national strategies, cases for improving the deployment of wireless broadband networks and the policies, technologies and support given to local projects.

During the afternoon, the ICT-SF Council will meet to hold its final meeting. Main subjects to be discussed will be the following:

- Nomination of the new president and honorary chairman
- Approve the measures under discussion for the future Council sustainability and exploitation strategy
- Present the most relevant findings and recommendations issued by the ICT-SF Council

**The registration for the event is free of charge. To assure your place at the SFERA European event follow this link:**

**[http://www.sferaproject.eu/index.php?option=com\\_artforms&formid=1&Itemid=99999](http://www.sferaproject.eu/index.php?option=com_artforms&formid=1&Itemid=99999)**

**About the SFERA Project:** SFERA project, as a specialist in the relationship between SF and FP7 for R&D, promotes critical actions to develop roadmapping, benchmarking studies and awareness on ICT relevance and provides specific solutions to bridge the digital divide of underserved regions. The consortium is composed by 8 partners: Telecom Castilla la Mancha (TCLM) – Spain, Astrium (ASTR) France, SES-ASTRA (ASTRA) – Luxembourg, Rose Vision (ROSE) – Spain, ASTER S. Cons. p.a. (ASTER) – Italy, Hungarian Association of IT Companies (IVSZ) – Hungary, Romanian Association for Electronic and Software Industry (ARIES) – Romania, and Bulgarian Association of Software Companies (BASSCOM) - Bulgaria.

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**About the ICT Structural Funds Council:** The ICT Structural Funds Council is a group of experts that gives advice and guides Regions on various matters related to a more efficient use of ICT Structural Funds: definition of policies; creation of strategic research and innovation agendas and plans; identification of key objectives for the development of each Region; and support the governments of the regions. Thus, the Council intends to provide a scenario for facilitating and enlarging the successful use and investments of SFs in ICT R&D and innovation.

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**About the European Broadband Portal ([www.broadband-europe.eu](http://www.broadband-europe.eu)):** The European Broadband Portal (EBP) is a follow up action of the European Commission resulting from the Bridging the Broadband Gap Conference (14-15 May 2007, Brussels) which concluded that there was a need to support public authorities in areas under-served by broadband to improve supply and conditions of supply. The development of the EBP has been initiated by the European Commission (DG Information Society & Media) following an open Call for Tender for the supply of a "Web Portal for Exchange of Good Practice for Broadband Deployment". The project commenced in January 2008 and will last for a period of 30 months. The project seeks to create a coherent on-line community of relevant stakeholders, providing them with the tools for effective sharing of experiences and good practices and a participatory environment for seeking common and shared solutions.

**About eris@ ([www.erisa.be](http://www.erisa.be)):** eris@ is the only European regional network association with a critical mass committed to supporting members' regional economic and social development through the tools of the information society and ICT-based innovation, thereby helping their transformation to compete successfully in the knowledge-based economy and to become more inclusive. eris@ believes that inter-regional cooperation and the continuous exchange of experiences are inevitable to successfully reach a fully inclusive digital society. Through eris@'s fruitful environment build upon its member regions from all over Europe, one corporate member, and an efficient executive Board of Directors, you can profit from our network too!