



ALIPRO NATIONAL REPORT

CYPRUS

**Overview of national research programmes on mobile telecommunications
in Cyprus**

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

ALIPRO objective

ALIPRO aims at supporting the alignment of the NMS and ACC countries' national and regional research programmes with the European IST research in the area of mobile technologies, applications, and services.

Purpose of the document

The purpose of this document is to present the findings of ALIPRO project for the work carried out in Cyprus. It comprises an overview on mobile IST situation and a description of Cyprus national R&D programme together with its evaluation and conclusions drawn. This document is meant for all stakeholders, institutions and individuals, active in the field of mobility and its relation with research.

The mobile sector in Cyprus

Cyprus issued a second GSM licence in October 2003. Along with the issuing of the second GSM licence a decision was made by the Ministry of Communications and Works that the new entrant and the incumbent should be given the right to establish and operate 3G networks and offer relevant services within a period of 10 years from the date the GSM licences were issued. Both the new telecommunications mobile operators have announced plans to introduce 3G services in 2005. The 3G networks which are being build make mobile services more user-friendly and mobile browsing more practical. Mobile browsing is now the area with the strongest potential for growth in mobile services, as voice has become a commodity and SMS traffic levels are reaching an upper limit.

Mobile telephony is experiencing huge growth lately surpassing the penetration of fixed telephony. CYTA the incumbent organisation followed a strategy of continuously expanding the mobile telephony network to improve quality and at the same time to offer new services. Network infrastructure has been extended to the point that geographically it covers

approximately 95% of the government controlled area while population wise the coverage exceeds 99%.

Regulatory background

Cyprus has adopted two primary laws in 2004 – the Law on Electronic Communications and the modification of the 2002 Law on Radiocommunications – to transpose the new European Union regulatory framework (NRF) in Electronic Communications. In Cyprus there are mainly two institutions responsible for the regulation of the sector: the Ministry of Communications and Works and the Commissioner for the regulation of the electronic communications and postal services (OCTPR).

Cyprus Research Strategy

The Research Promotion Foundation (RPF), founded in 1996, was established at the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, to promote the development of scientific and technological research in Cyprus due to the fundamental importance of research in contemporary societies. Therefore by default, RPF reflects the national research strategy. Eventhough the Foundation is a relatively newly established organisation it has developed a wide range of activities. Among RPF's main activities is the development of national competitive programs for financing of research projects and support of research activities. Moreover, RPF has developed several activities to facilitate the creation of networks between Cypriot and foreign scientists. Most of these activities relate to the involvement of Cypriot scientists in European research programmes, the cooperation with international organisations supporting research activities and the preparation and implementation of bilateral agreements between Cyprus and other countries in the in the field of research and technological development.

Cyprus Research Programme

The national research programme in Cyprus is of a comprehensive nature and scope. Still it can absorb every mobility related project that can fulfil the necessary selection criteria. The

programme is called RPF's FP 2003-2005, is managed by the Research Promotion Foundation (RPF) and is mostly financed by the government of Cyprus. The preliminary budget concerning RPF's financial contribution to scientific research, which will be given by the Government amounts to 20 million Euros, however, the total budget is expected to exceed 34.5 million Euros taking into account participant's contributions. Duration of the programme is three years.

The programme supports the research activities of local research institutes and promotes scientific collaboration between local and foreign research institutes as well as between academia and industry. The programme consists of six so-called Actions. From these, mainly the Action called "Information Society" will be analysed and evaluated by ALIPRO. This Action absorbs mostly mobility related proposals and fits very closely to ALIPRO's objectives. The thematic priorities of this Action are telecommunications, software development and applications of information technologies. The objective is to promote research activities that seek to develop next generation technologies of a knowledge-based society. Great emphasis is placed upon the application of new technologies in telecommunications, e.g. optical technologies and wireless communication systems, and on the implementation of interdisciplinary scientific projects that apply information technologies and telecommunications to areas such as education, health service, commerce, etc. The budget for the "Thematic Actions Programme" is 2.9 million Euros and for the "Information Society" Action is 1.2 million Euros.

Since there are opportunities to submit mobility related proposals to other programmes and Actions within RPF's FP 2003-2005 the whole programme is presented in section 3 of this document.

Programme evaluation

The stability of the programme development should be taken for granted as the evolution of the programme and the participation statistics show, which give better results each time.

Continuity and constancy of funding is backed by the government and its determination to level R&D activities in Cyprus with EU standards.

The projects enjoy financial efficiency and flexibility. The programme allows combinations of grants and at the same time it is not required to provide financial guarantees or to have project co-financing parties if support is less than 100%. The funding type is simple and is restricted to project grants to the budget given at the beginning, middle and end of the project, according to the achieved results. The funding capacity of the programme is also good and adequate considering Cyprus size.

The programme employs simplified evaluation, reporting, monitoring and financial procedures and generally is free of bureaucratic burdens. Transparency prevails throughout all phases of the programme and the program is open to both local and foreign researchers, especially from Europe. The programme has an efficient communication policy and is fully known by the research circles in Cyprus.

Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation of RPF's FP 2003-2005, following ALIPRO's methodology, showed that it incorporates a lot of processes, practices, or systems that are performed exceptionally well and which contribute to high performance and efficiency of the programme. It is also seen that RPF's FP 2003-2005 is designed in such a way which allows for full integration within ERA and as such can serve as a role model for many NMS and ACC.

Still, some additions and improvements directly and indirectly related to mobility can be incorporated. At a national level, research strategies and plans with clearly set development goals regarding mobility are necessary. There is also a need to gradually increase the national R&D budget in the following years. At the programme level, mobility could be addressed explicitly. For example an Action “Mobile technologies, applications, and services” can be developed. Furthermore, there is no data available to the percentage of management cost versus general project cost. This could be remodelled so that a figure can be identified which could be controlled to some desirable level. In addition an appropriate mechanism so that management and administrative cost of the programme is identifiable can be introduced.