Towards a seamless and immersive cyber experience

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Digital agenda [1]

The following months will be decisive for the future of European research as the EU’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Framework Programme for the 2014-2020 period is entering the final stages of preparation. At Huawei, we have been making the case for investments in information and communication technologies as key enablers for any type of business.

The projected growth in mobile data traffic in the coming years will drive a number of ICT evolutions which require further research to translate them into opportunities. Let me highlight one example of how we are contributing to enabling ICT trends at Huawei’s European Research Centre (ERC) in Munich.

As a member of the European research consortium, METIS, we contribute to the 5G radio access technologies of the future. METIS stands for Mobile and wireless communications Enablers for the Twenty-twenty (2020) Information Society.

The European consortium, which is co-funded by the EU, is aimed at laying the foundations for the future 5G system, which will make it possible to achieve higher speed data rates and better reliability than is provided by the current LTE networks. In Munich, we are leading research efforts on the future air interface, which will also allow for more flexible spectrum usage to better handle the data traffic deluge.
We are also looking at other potential ICT solutions driving research priorities in the H2020 Work Programme, such as Telco clouds and end-to-end ICT resource orchestration to optimally locate network and service functions, and corresponding states, in different parts of infrastructure domains and terminals. Multimedia technologies, adapted to the physiological characteristics of the human sight and hearing, to produce a three-dimensional immersive and interactive experience using mobile terminals, are also a part of our research focus.

In addition, we also investigate solutions for the Internet of Things (IoT), exploiting interactions between the Physical World (sensors, actuators, M2M dongles, etc.) and the Cyber (Digital) World, also known as the Web of things (content-aware networking, semantic Web 3.0, sensing cloud, etc.).

In this field, the focus of the ERC’s research is on a cross-domain ‘IoT Middleware’, which would consist of a platform made available to service enablers, allowing them to receive, manage, store and analyse information.

This platform, which involves a seamless transition between cyber space and the physical world, effectively enables machine-to-machine communication and represents an easy way to generate new services, such as Data as a Service (DaaS) and Knowledge as a Service (KaaS). This is one area that deserves special attention in the framework of European research funding.

The role of this type of platform demonstrates the strong convergence between different major ICT trends. Cloud computing, networking and multimedia technologies and the Internet of Things cannot be considered in isolation from each other, and we believe that research into these interlinked areas should rank high on the list of the EU’s priorities in order to convert their potential into tangible benefits for prosumers and service enablers.

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