



Warsaw 01.03.2020

Following our recent conversation concerning

The Pilot project for Satellite Broadband Internet Access for getting Educational Multimedia Content to Unconnected Schools

we would like to ask you to

1. allow the consortium to access information (or provide it in some other way) about primary and secondary schools in **the EU area** that do not have access to a high-speed broadband network, or have only very limited connectivity due to a lack of appropriate telecommunications infrastructure;
2. convey the following information about the project to local authorities (the managing authorities of schools in the area) so they can be advised about the project, and also indicate which schools may be interested in participating in this project.

We would like to underline that all the costs involved in being connected within the project's framework will be fully covered by the project's funds (the project is financed by the European Commission).

In order to start the project, we have to present a preliminary list of schools by March the 10, 2020, at the latest; so we would ask all interested parties to contact us on **+48 601 375 744** or at sat4edu@internet.pl

Please find the SAT4EDU project leaflet enclosed.

Plenipotentiary of SAT4EDU Consortium

Robert Śmietanka

Pilot Project Satellite Broadband Internet Access for getting Educational Multimedia Content to Unconnected Schools

Despite extensive efforts in Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband access for all – meaning citizens, entrepreneurs, public administration, and educational institutions – in the EU there are still so called *white areas*, where no provider of broadband access services currently operates, and no such provider is expected within the near future. Formally, investors in such areas may obtain public support if no NGA access is expected within a three year period, but in many cases these areas may remain permanently white due to the sparse density of housing, and demographic or geographic factors (i.e., small islands, or small villages in the mountains). But even in these areas of digital divide, there are still citizens' rights, and a demand for appropriate education, especially in the area of primary education in schools. This is so even in small schools in remote areas where there is not only insufficient demand for deploying a network (even with the support of public funds), but also not enough to keep its operation rentable for private investors and providers of broadband access. For such schools *satellite access* may be a solution. The viability of such a solution was analysed in the 'Satellite broadband for schools: Feasibility study' report (SMART 2015/0061), published in September 2017. It confirmed that the use of satellite-based access and distribution may be an efficient solution for broadband access, thus providing educational multimedia content to schools that are currently, or in the future, poorly serviced by broadband access.

The European Commission has decided to launch a pilot project that will investigate the practical aspects of satellite access for such schools, and to assess its viability. The pilot project consists of the deployment of satellite broadband access to chosen schools that are in permanently white areas. The project is being implemented by our consortium, SAT4EDU, which consists of SoftCream Software, Foundation APPCO, Foundation EZEV, and PKL; and will be coordinated by SoftCream Software.

The consortium will choose the schools, sign appropriate agreements with them (or their owners/operators/managing local authorities – depending on local circumstances), and provide satellite access. This provision means the installation of hardware (satellite dish and modem/router as needed for a two-way connection), the provision of access through a contract/agreement with the satellite broadband operator, and connections to school equipment (computers, routers, preferably the school's local network).

The cost of connectivity (providing or renting hardware, subscription cost of broadband transmission channel) will be fully covered, by the consortium running the project, for a minimum period of 12 months, up to a maximum of 24 months – depending on the final project setup by the European Commission.

At the end of project, each school will need to decide on whether

- the satellite access is a viable solution for the upcoming years, and if so, the school will need to take over the cost of satellite access;

or

- the satellite access will be terminated as it will no longer be needed due to changes in the local conditions (termination of operation by a given school, deployment of broadband access via other technologies capable of fulfilling these needs etc.)

Konsorcjum SAT4EDU



The school is expected to use the satellite access in its day-to-day educational activities, to cooperate (i.e. by recording the use, benefits, and problems or difficulties) with the consortium in formulating the final report that will contain the results and conclusions, and allow the consortium to monitor and use the transmission logs (registered automatically by the equipment or access provider).

The consortium will support schools with technical services, ensuring continuous and safe access both during the initial configuration and during operational activities. Depending on the needs of a given school it may provide basic training to a person appointed by the school as responsible for the access being provided within the framework of project.

The project framework does not include multimedia or any other educational content – the schools involved in the project will be given full freedom to choose their content according to their educational programmes and preferences, legal obligations etc.