

ECHO PROJECT PRESS RELEASE – FEBRUARY 25TH, 2019

The ECHO project (European network of Cybersecurity centres and competence Hub for innovation and Operations) is one of four Pilot projects, launched by the European Commission, to establish and operate a Cybersecurity Competence Network. Amid keynote presentations from supporting representatives of EU agencies and industry, the project was officially launched at the Conference Hall of the Royal Military Academy of Belgium, on February 25th, 2019.

The ECHO project will deliver an organized and coordinated approach to strengthen proactive cyber defence in the European Union, through effective and efficient multi-sector collaboration. The project already involves 30 partners from the East to the West of Europe, and is actively engaging new partners interested to contribute to the cybersecurity resilience of the EU and in reaching the collaboration goals.

Through the project, the ECHO partners will develop, model and demonstrate a network of cybersecurity research and competence, with a centre of research and competence at the hub. While technology companies struggle with a fragmented view of security requirements across industrial sectors and fragmented national policies for security test and certification, the ECHO project will contribute an adaptive model for information sharing and collaboration among the network of partners and related agencies.

The main goal of the project is to organize and optimize the currently fragmented cybersecurity efforts across the EU. The **Central Competence Hub** will serve as the focal point for the **ECHO Multi-sector Assessment Framework** enabling multi-sector cybersecurity dependencies analysis and management including:

- Development of **cybersecurity technology roadmaps**;
- Creation of an **ECHO Cybersecurity Certification Scheme** aligned with ongoing EU efforts;
- Provision of an **ECHO Early Warning System**;
- Operation of an **ECHO Federation of Cyber Ranges**;
- Delivery of the **ECHO Cyberskills Framework**, with training materials and training events;
- Management of an expanding collection of **Partner Engagements**.

Through a 48-month work plan significant outcomes will contribute to improvements in the state of cybersecurity resilience across the EU. These significant events include:

- Early outcomes from the ECHO Multi-sector Assessment Framework in early 2020, with identifiable opportunities for cross-sectoral cybersecurity improvement;
- Deployment of operational demonstrations of the ECHO Early Warning System and ECHO Federated Cyber Range by mid- 2021, providing value added capabilities to partners and associated organizations.

- Launch of multi-sector scenario demonstrations in mid-2021 involving technology solutions to cybersecurity challenges across primary sectors of Health Care, Maritime Transportation and Energy as a critical infrastructures, and including related sectors;
- Ongoing evolution, improvement and adaptation of project outcomes throughout 2022

The ECHO impact will be far-reaching. ECHO offers sustainable governance for a cybersecurity competence network, increasing the cybersecurity of the Digital Single Market across the EU. ECHO provides multi-centre engagement opportunities for new partners from EU agencies, industries and academia. ECHO's approach will drive the possibilities to ensure resilient capacities to secure the European digital economy, infrastructures, society, and democracy.

Through collaborative information sharing, ECHO will deliver up-to-date knowledge of cybersecurity challenges, potential risks and threats together with forward-looking solution demonstrations that will contribute to improved understanding of the cybersecurity baseline and promote more effective use of the EU's cybersecurity capabilities. Ultimately, ECHO will enhance the stakeholders' capacities with better readiness and improved resilience capabilities.

To make the ECHO vision a concrete reality in Europe, ECHO comprises 30 partners from 15 EU member countries plus Ukraine, representing 13 existing cybersecurity competence centres and comprised of five research institutes in the cybersecurity domain; eleven large enterprises; four SME's; and ten top level universities in cybersecurity including experts in human factors, experts in legal and ethical issues and communication.

The ECHO project is led by the Project Coordinator, Professor Wim Mees of the Royal Military Academy of Belgium. He is supported by a Project Management Board and a set of functional leaders ensuring success of the project. These supporting leaders include a Project Implementation Coordinator (Matteo Merialdo from RHEA Group); a Scientific and Technical Management Coordinator (Dr. Nikolai Stoianov from the Bulgarian Defence Institute); a Multi-sector Innovation and Exploitation Coordinator (Douglas Wiemer from RHEA Group); and a Quality and Data Management Coordinator (Tiago Carvalho from VisionSpace Technologies).

For more information about ECHO, or to contact the project, you are invited to engage through a variety of social media channels:

- ECHO website: www.echonetwork.eu
- Twitter: [@ECHOcybersec](https://twitter.com/ECHOcybersec)
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/echo-cybersecurity-556a6717b/>
- For any information, please write to info@echonetwork.eu