Ladies and gentleman, dear colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you in Ukraine and specifically at our university, the Kiev Polytechnic Institute which is one of the pioneers in R&D networking in our country. The scientists of our university understood in the mid-nineties (90s) the importance of R&D networking and KPI became the first Ukrainian university with a fiber optic campus backbone which had been build with the financial and technical support of the European Union. Our university was one of the founders of the Ukrainian NREN URAN in 1997.

Today the importance of e-Infrastructure is common knowledge and this is one of the reasons why you have assembled here for the CEENGINE workshop. All of us understand that the NRENs without users are useless. NRENs serve their users and are in need of their support. Our workshop is targeted at bridging the gap between the NRENs and their user communities and at converting the users into supporters of the NRENs.

Our Eastern European partners (EaP-countries) have reached the level when it is possible and necessary to unite the activities of our NRENs in order to provide better integration of our user communities between themselves and with the EU counterparts. To this end we propose to discuss an e-Infrastructure initiative which we have named "Project TEPID" (Eastern Partnership countries e-Infrastructures Development). This initiative deals with the further development of e-Infrastructures in Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, cross-border connectivity (including GEANT) to these countries and the introduction of new modern services.

I would like to thank the European Commission for its support of our activities and this workshop in particularity and also to wish you a productive workshop, a good stay in Kiev and success in your future work for the benefits of your scientific communities.

Yuri Yakimenko