2 Words of the President of IAFeS.

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The NETTIES (Networking Entities) conference is organized since 1994, when the first edition took place in Vienna, Austria. The promoter of the conference was EATA – European Association for Telematics Applications. As a continuator of that association, IAFES (International Association for eScience) continued to organise the NETTIES conference.

The past conference, held in 2015 in Tenerife, focused on the relationship between globalisation, internet and big data.

The NETTIES 2016 conference took place between 19-20 May 2016, in Timisoara, Romania, in connection with the first international conference on Smart Learning Ecosystems and Regional Development (SLERD) organised by the association with the same name. The context of the conference was an international one, addressing different issues related to the global economic and social development, with the focus on the importance of education at all levels in that area. When we speak about Smart Cities and Smart Communities, we have to consider factors that are contributing to that. And certainly, Smart Learning is one of that factors.

The NETTIES conference this year attracted researchers and presenters from Greece, Austria, Romania, Spain and Finland, and participants from some other countries. As usually the NETTIES conferences was quite small and intimate, concentrating on quality of presentation and facilitating informal discussions between researchers intending to play an active part in future IAFeS events and initiatives.

In the context of the joint meeting organised by the two associations, IAFeS and ASLERD, there were very interesting debates on the future of learning in our societies, that took to the adoption of the Timisoara Declaration – Better Learning for a Better World through People Centred Smart Learning Ecosystems, that has been signed by the presidents of five different European associations (ASLERD – Association for Smart Learning Ecosystems and regional Development, EADTU – European Association of Distance Teaching Universities, EATEL – European Association of Technology Enhanced Learning, EDEN – European Distance and E-learning Network and IAFeS – International Association for e-Science), as well as by representatives of different municipalities, universities, other associations and individuals with a recognized interest in education and development policies.

This book contains the proceedings of the conference in the hope that readers will be inspired to follow up on the research and ideas within.