ALLIANCE FOR RESILIENCE: CYBERSECURITY SYNERGIES IN EUROPE'S DIGITAL FUTURE – CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

6th November 2025, Carina Ioana NITA

Leading Partners of SECUR-EU, INTERSOC, CYBERFORT, CYBERGUARD and CYBERSTAND Consortia, organized the Cybersecurity Conference, in the framework of the EU-funded initiatives under the Digital Europe Programme. The Conference titled: *"Alliance for Resilience: Cybersecurity Synergies in Europe's Digital Future"* **was held on 4th November 2025, from 09.00 – 17.00, in Ayia Napa Marina, Cyprus and Hybrid.**

The CYBERSECURITY Conference aimed to consolidate efforts and to create Synergies between Projects, with a particular focus on strengthening European Cooperation on CRA Compliance, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Cyber Resilience, and advanced Security Operations Centers (SOC) development. High-level Representatives of the participating Consortia, European and National Institutions, Industry Leaders and Cybersecurity Experts provided unique and important perspectives. The Participants had the opportunity to discuss and engage with High-Level Speakers representing key organizations such as: The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), European Cybersecurity Competence Centre (ECCC), National Standardization Organization (ASRO), CEN-CENELEC, European Cyber Security Organization (ECSO), and European Digital SME Alliance.

Over 120 Participants took part in the Cybersecurity Conference, about 60 being SMEs representatives and more than 60 joining in person, making it a highly engaging and successful event. The Agenda of the Conference highlighted high-impact discussions on cybersecurity, digital trust, Cyber Resilience Act (CRA) Implementation, Human Factor in cybersecurity, and collaboration across Europe. The Participants engaged in practical ways to strengthen the SME resilience and achieve cybersecurity compliance.

The event opened with a warm and inspiring Opening Ceremony, where Mr. George NIANIOS – CEO – CLONE SYSTEMS and Dr. Mihai PAUN – Founder – I-ENERGYLINK extended their heartfelt thanks to all participants— both those attending in person and those joining online.

Mr. Razvan GAVRILA - Head of Sector, Technology and Product Security - ENISA joined as Keynote Speaker focusing on **Shaping Europe's Cybersecurity Vision**. He highlighted ENISA's mission of powering the EU's CRA, emphasizing its goal of creating a safer and more trustworthy Digital Single Market through secure products. ENISA serves as both a technical hub and a facilitator, ensuring the effective implementation of the CRA across the European Union. The core mission is to Provide Expertise & Guidance, to support Key Actors (European Commission, MSAs, CSIRTs), to Drive Harmonization (Standards & Certification), and to Enable Effective Market Surveillance & Reporting.

Cybersecurity Projects (**SECUR-EU, INTERSOC, CYBERFORT, CYBERGUARD, and the joint collaboration CYBERSTAND.EU**) were showcased during the Conference. Each project highlighted innovative solutions, strategic collaborations, and forward-looking approaches aimed at strengthening Europe's cyber resilience and fostering a safer digital environment.

Moreover, the topic: **From Academic Research to Market Innovation: Open Data as a Catalyst for Cybersecurity Solutions,** was represented by Mr. Charalampos BRATSAS - Professor, Chairman of OKFHN - IHU, and by Mr. Panagiotis KATSAROS - Full Professor – AUTH. Their intervention focused on the growing role of the Artificial Intelligence and its impact on cybersecurity, noting that AI is expected to increase both the frequency and sophistication of cyber threats. For the effective use of AI in cyber operations training of AI models on quality data is crucial. Moreover, they underlined that advanced AI applications demand significant expertise, infrastructure, time, and financial resources, which could lead to a digital divide between systems capable of adapting to AI-driven threats and those left more exposed and vulnerable.

Mr, Nicholas FERGUSON - CYBERSTAND.EU Coordinator focused on **strengthening collaboration among EU cybersecurity initiatives to enhance Europe's overall digital resilience**. He highlighted how the CYBERSTAND.EU Project engages and supports European experts in cybersecurity standardisation — particularly in the context of the CRA.

During the CRA **Executive Roundtable: Business Impact & Implementation Strategies**, which was Moderated by Mrs. Mihaela CURCA - Project Manager – DNSC, Speakers discussed the practical challenges and strategies for implementing the EU CRA, focusing on its impact on businesses, compliance processes, and cybersecurity readiness across sectors.

Mrs. Alina TARALUNGA - Program Officer – ECCC as Keynote Speaker addressed the topic - **Coordinating Europe's Cyber Defense Architecture**. She highlighted the ECCC's mission to strengthen EU cybersecurity capabilities, support innovation, and enhance collaboration between public, private, and research sectors. Mrs. TARALUNGA also outlined how ECCC projects contribute to critical infrastructure protection, policy alignment, and capacity building, reinforcing Europe's overall cyber resilience and strategic autonomy.

Furthermore, the Conference featured an **Open Discussion focused on harmonizing regulatory frameworks to advance the Digital Single Market,** moderated by Mr. Vasilis PSYRRAS - Associate DPO & Project Manager - ELIAS NEOCLEOUS. Speakers such as Mrs. Cristina POPA - Standardisation Manager ASRO - Member of CEN-CENELEC, Mr. Roberto CASCELLA - CTO – ECSO and Mr. Alexander OSWALD - ICT Manager – COLUMBIA discussed the vital role of standards in harmonizing Europe's Digital Single Market. They highlighted how harmonized standards act as a bridge between policy, technology, and law, enabling consistent cybersecurity requirements across EU Member States. The discussion also highlighted how national standardization bodies like ASRO support industry and SMEs in achieving compliance and strengthening digital resilience across Europe through providing baselines derived from harmonized standards, with templates, documentation sets, and open-source tooling, guidance, mappings.

As KeyNote Speaker, Mr. Sterica FUDULEA - First Vice-President SME Romania Member of European DIGITAL SME Alliance addressed the topic of **Empowering European SMEs in the Digital Security Landscape.** He pointed out the digital transformation of SMEs in Romania and across Europe. He highlighted how digitalization, IoT technologies, and artificial intelligence are reshaping how SMEs operate, sell, and connect with customers. Mr. FUDULEA emphasized the importance of fair access to digital markets, a well-functioning EU Single Market, and better access to information about European programmes supporting SMEs. He also addressed the challenges SMEs face in adopting AI and cybersecurity regulations, noting that limited resources and expertise must be considered when designing policies to help them integrate new technologies effectively and securely.

The objectives of Session 1 were as follows: to showcase ongoing cybersecurity initiatives at national and European levels, highlighting their goals, impacts, and lessons learned; and to provide an overview of the CRA, its scope, and the actions organizations needed to take to comply with its technical and legal obligations. Moreover, the topic "How SMEs Can Drive Cyber Innovation through CRA Compliance" offered key and important insights.

The key objectives of Session 2 were the following: to Discuss strategies to build scalable, collaborative, and resilient SOCs across Europe; to Present initiatives and training programs aimed at improving cybersecurity awareness and capabilities within SMEs; to Foster cooperation between government, industry, and academic stakeholders to improve threat detection, and response. An important key topic was to introduce practical solutions, frameworks, and case studies that enhance SOC performance and SME cyber resilience; and to identify opportunities for long-term collaboration at national and EU levels to strengthen collective cybersecurity readiness.

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