NCC BULGARIA: PERIODIC REPORT (M01-M12)

Work Package 3: NCC Bulgaria			
Activities			
Task No	Task Name	Implemented	**Justification**
T3.1	NCC Management	Yes	The management and coordination of NCC-Bulgaria was performed. The work has been planned in detail and monitored, team appointed (including champions), results regularly analysed. Regular meetings of the NCC management team (twice per month), internal thematic groups meetings (every week) and all-hands meetings (twice per year) were organized. Regular communications with EuroCC2/CASTIEL2, Ministry of Education and Science in Bulgaria and NCC Bulgaria Advisory Board were conducted. We participated in the EuroCC2 kick-off meeting, f2f WPL meeting in Berlin, and in all online WPL meetings and webinars. NCC Bulgaria Roadmap (2023-2025) was developed and presented The project deliverables and the quarterly technical progress and financial reports were prepared and submitted to the project coordinator on time. Work on sustainability. (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management Team.)
T3.2	Training and Skills Development	Yes	Various trainings, consultations and preparation of training materials were organized. In the period M1-M12 we conducted 28 training events with more than 300 participants. Nine best practice training guides were developed, published and distributed and a lot of training materials were distributed to registered users. The participation of Bulgarian HPC experts and users participated in 30 training workshops, seminars and courses organized by CASTIEL2 and other NCCs which were very useful. (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team, training champions and training experts.)
T3.3	Service to and Interaction with Industry	Yes	Interactions with 55 SMEs, companies, associations, clusters done, 17 Memoranda for collaboration signed. The adopted sector-based approach is executed through meetings with representatives of industry chambers and associations, leading to concrete discussions with perspective SME/Big Industry partners about the necessary administrative steps and competences for successful PoC. Consultations to 10 companies were given. Two PoCs were finalized.4 projects with SME were initiated and 2 were finalised. Three industrial success stories were released. Training events for end-users from 6 companies were conducted. The training event for 15 potential HPC users from a large pharmaceutical company was followed by several meetings and formulating new projects. Regular contacts with CASTIEL2 WP4 and participation in Industrial WG meetings were performed. HPC (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team, industry champions and experts.)
T3.4	Services to and Interaction with	Yes	Services for academia and public administration are provided. Technical and scientific expertise, consulting services, computational tools and modern facilities are provided at the appropriate level for academia. During the

	Academia and Public Administration		period, 10 thematic consultations for end-users and application developers in Climatology, Computational Chemistry, DCH, Computer Algebra, Bioinformatics and Drug design and others were given. Services delivered to 20 research organizations; Help to proposals preparation - seven projects funded by NSF Bulgaria in December 2023. Two success stories were prepared and published. The access to supercomputers was facilitated – several seminar presentations and guided tours to the new supercomputer HEMUS located at IICT were given. The NCC Bulgaria organized and conducted five thematic HPC workshops for academic where the NCC Bulgaria services, success stories and use cases were presented. Discussions and consultations for public administration were organized and conducted (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of e-Government and several state agencies.) (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team and experts.)
T3.5	Service Portfolio and Competence Management, Additional Services	Yes	We integrated the services developed within the other tasks and general services identified within this task into a comprehensive NCC service portfolio. Also, we continue to maintain the competence mapping, adding new competences. We updated the NCC Bulgaria portal configuration to allow access to services and competences. Information about the available services and conditions of their use was distributed to potential users. With some companies with greater potential, specific discussions and consultations were conducted in order to define goals and tasks for future cooperation. The D1.19 List of NCC Bulgaria Services was prepared and submitted. Participation in the meetings of Competence & Networking WG, organized by CASTIEL2. Participation in the events organized by EuroCC2, CASTIEL2, other NCCs and CoEs, as well as several national level meetings. Some of the initially advertised services are now being used, including by industrial/SME users. (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team, competence champions and senior experts.)
T3.6	Collaboration	Yes	Interactions with within EuroCC2 and CASTIEL2 and general collaboration with the EuroHPC ecosystem, e.g., the Centres of Excellence, the EDIHs and more, as well as with HPC related national networks are implemented: • Participation in 33 meetings/events/workshops (CASTIEL2), 20 events (NCCs) 5 events (CoEs) • National collaborations: EDIH Zagore, EDIH Trakia, CoEs (OP SESG), large national RIs projects The NCC Bulgaria continues and extends the collaborations with other NCCs –we organized online workshops / meetings with NCC Estonia, NCC Serbia, NCC Poland, NCC Romania, UK, and exchange of materials (NCC Sweden). NCC Poland and NCC Romania participated with presentations at the HPC User Forum, Sofia, 16 of November 2023. Meetings with Bulgarian team of CoE Combustion and EDIH Zagore and EDIH Trakia were organized. Events organised by CASTIEL2 and other NCCs were announced through our web portal and distributed via e-mail and, thus, well participated. (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team and experts.)
T3.7	Awareness Creation and Communication	Yes	Updating and maintaining the main web portal of NCC Bulgaria (60+ news articles posted) and solid social media presence on LinkedIn and X were ensured (63 posts). 12 blog posts, 5 success stories are developed and posted during the year. Two issues of the NCC Bulgaria newsletter

			were prepared and distributed. Various promotional materials: banners, posters, flyer, brochure (available for downloading from the portal) were developed and used in the various events. NCC Bulgaria organised 8 dissemination events with 300+ participants, including five thematic workshops, HPC User Forum, and many seminars and webinars. NCC Bulgaria was presented at 14 external events (audience 500+ reached) including 6 conferences held in Bulgaria, Open Doors events, Night of Scientists, EU Day of entrepreneurship, National Information Day of Open Science, etc. This task also supports Tasks 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 in their activities: distributing information to users groups, ensuring tailored dissemination materials to industry, academia and public administration, etc. (Done by NCC Bulgaria Management team, communication champions and experts.)
Next steps:			The KPIs for the reporting period (M1-M12) are achieved and overachieved. Next steps: T3.1: Management of NCC-Bulgaria; work on NCC sustainability plan T3.2: Training and workshops focused on solving problems with HPC; twinning and mentoring activities with other NCCs; work on certification T3.3: Leverage established connections and signed memoranda to implement projects with members of interested industry bodies; proceed with currently envisaged collaborations T3.4: Work with underrepresented communities in HPC; target projects with municipalities T3.5: Improving the weak spots and leveraging the strongest competences; explore synergies with EuroCC2 partners T3.6: Focus on NCCs collaborations, deepen the regional collaborations, expand work with CoEs and EDIHs T3.7: Expand dissemination activities; collect and present success stories, target wider audience