REGIONE TOSCANA
Giunta Regionale

Direzione Generale "Competitività del Sistema Regionale e Sviluppo delle Compentenze"
AREA DI COORDINAMENTO RICERCA
Il Coordinatore

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Oggetto: Letter of endorsement for the FuturICT FET Flagship initiative

To: Prof Dr Dirk Helbing
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Cc: Dr Fosca Giannotti,
Knowledge Discovery and Datamining Lab.
ISTI-CNR
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Cc: Dr Domenico Laforenza,
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Dear Professor Helbing,

I am writing in order to confirm the support of Tuscan Region to the FuturICT Flagship initiative.

In my quality of Research Area Director of the Tuscan Region, I became aware of the FuturICT proposal through contacts and presentations by the Tuscan scientists involved with many international colleagues in the construction of the programme. I appreciated the high scientific qualification , the timeliness and high potential impact on society of the initiative. Never before in human history we felt today's urgency in understanding how our globalized, connected society works. Never before in human history we had the opportunity of measuring society through the big data of human activities that people, through the ICT's, are producing every day. FuturICT is a generous and unique attempt to bind necessity and opportunity together. If successful, it would be a precious gift of the novel interdisciplinary data science, an invaluable knowledge tool for everybody: for social scientists, for policy makers, for ordinary citizens.

The Government of Tuscany has made a precise choice on knowledge as a strategic asset for society: for businesses and public administrations, for decision makers and ordinary citizens. We also see access to and

creation of knowledge as essential for the active participation of people in the public sphere. As a consequence of our approach, a recent regional law has established *Knowledge Acceleration* as one of the 5 strategic pillars for investment by the Regional Government in innovation and research for the coming 8 years, with a focus on big data, social mining and knowledge discovery. Coherently, Regione Toscana is funding PhD fellowships and post-doc positions, with particular attention to inter-disciplinary programmes, such as the Social Data Science track of the PhD in Computer Science of the University of Pisa.

In view of all this, Regione Toscana warmly welcomes FuturICT, perceived as a broad and ambitious scientific programme accompanying the transformation of democratic participation and government in the knowledge society. We believe that the research groups of the Tuscan scientists involved in FuturICT, and their liaisons at regional and global level, will validly contribute to the project.
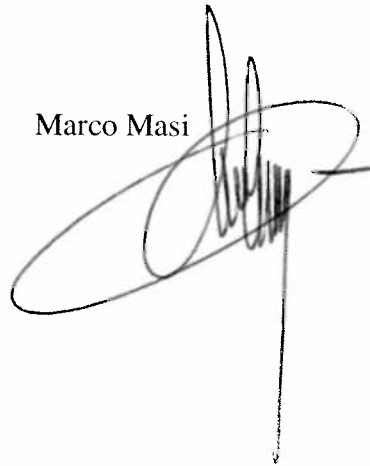
I would like to express the warmest support to FuturICT on behalf of Tuscan Region, and our willingness to help making the proposal stronger and increasing the chances of success. Should FuturICT be co-funded by the EC, we will sustain the project with all our available instruments:
1. Support to research staff of the FuturICT partners (early-stage researchers, postdocs and PhD students)
2. Support to ICT and interdisciplinary master and PhD programmes
3. Support to test-beds, demonstrators, facilities and innovation incubators

Finally, we will support the creation of a Tuscan FuturICT research centre on big data and social mining, and we will sustain the deployment of large-scale social experiments of active participation of citizens as consumer and producer of social knowledge within the ecosystem of selected Tuscan cities and their ongoing strategies aiming at becoming smart sustainable cities.

With my best wishes for the success of FuturICT,
best regards,

Marco Masi

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