eduVPN – Providing Extra Security and Privacy for Mobile Researchers and Students

With tens of thousands of hotspots in over 100 countries, eduroam has become an invaluable tool for every mobile student and researcher. However, when eduroam is not available or an additional layer of security and privacy is needed, the question how to protect your privacy when using public WiFi becomes an issue.

For end-users, there are other benefits, in particular the user-friendliness of the apps. Inspired by the idea that VPN configuration should be simple on any device, once authenticated through their federated identity, eduVPN users can configure their device, activate or deactivate a VPN in just a few clicks. eduVPN apps for Windows, macOS and Android have been available for some time and, following the successful resolution of some licensing issues, an iOS app became available in March 2019. Native applications are available for all major platforms. In addition to connecting to protected resources at institutions eduVPN also increases security when surfing the web. On selecting a national instance in the apps, which is typically operated by an NREN, the user can route their traffic to the Internet via a VPN to a trusted gateway. The number of national instances used to connect to the Internet is growing, and this is particularly useful when connecting on an unsecured network – for example a public WiFi network where eduroam is not available. As an added benefit the client can use IPv6 and if the network is restricted in some sense, circumvent that.

Last but not least, on these national instances, all current operators have chosen to allow “guest usage”. This permits the user to route their traffic via eduVPN to a gateway to the Internet operated by their own NREN or by a participating NREN in another country. Using this eduroam-inspired approach, eduVPN enables easy, secure and free access to Research and Education networks.

For more information visit: eduVPN.org