



# SMEESEC

## **Informed consent procedures and recruitment criteria**

### **Foreword**

You are invited to join a research study of the project SMEESEC. Before deciding on whether you would like or not to participate, please read this document carefully and use whatever time you need to discuss it with your family, friends, legal advisor or anyone else. The decision to join or not the study is only up to you. In this research study, we are investigating/evaluating **the cybersecurity status of your organisation**. Please ask all the questions you may have so you are entirely sure you understand the process, goal, risks and benefits of the research study.

The information and informed consent are in a language and terms understandable by all participants, presented in an accurate and precise way. If not sure about any word or phrase, please ask the contact researcher or any other member of the study to fully understand the meaning of the information. We assure at all times the compliance with the current legislation.

This document informs potential participants about:

- Their voluntary participation
- The nature of the research project
- What risks, benefits, and alternatives are associated with the research study
- What rights they have as research subjects
- How their data will be collected and protected during the project and destroyed at the end

### **Purpose of the project SMEESEC**

The SMEESEC project is a 36-month EU co-funded project that aims to support SMEs on to protect their business services/products and professional/personal-related devices from cyber-security threats. More specifically, SMEESEC will:

- Design and develop high-quality cyber-security solutions attractive to companies and organisations with restricted budget
- Increase protection by focusing on increasing awareness and training for SMEs and their “insiders” – support them with innovative, intelligent tools

- SMESEC security toolkit validated in multiple SMEs environment with diverse products and services
- Consolidating international and European links and harmonising solutions with general standards and directives – promoting cybersecurity policies and models
- Ready to market solutions and immediate market impact

SMESEC's framework will be built on five complementary concepts that form the cycle of cyber-security:

- **Define & Recommend:** An online tool able to offer a complete set of advanced features that can support the SMEs to help them adapt their services/products with the adequate level of cyber protection in mind.
- **Discover & Solve:** The model will provide services and features like vulnerability and penetration tests, preliminary certification, etc. and will guide SMEs on how to add cyber-security protection adjusted to their businesses with easy-to-implement security-related policies and modules/modifications.
- **Protection & Response:** State-of-the-art and commercial heterogeneous security products orchestrated by a unified security monitoring tool will offer high levels of continuous protection against the important types of cyber-attacks. These products will provide solutions like antivirus-antimalware, advanced intrusion detection, anomaly detection, end-point security etc. Also, a smart tool will analyse individuals' behaviour in relation to their IT-devices and automatically decrease cyber-security risk.
- **Extensive validation:** The solutions will be developed in harmony with today's latest standards and will be validated in four different and transversal use cases. Furthermore, an open call organised during the final year of the project will allow SMESEC validate its solution across more SMEs and application areas.
- **Training & Awareness:** During the validation of the final solution, a parallel process will monitor and analyse how users behave and react to the new security policies. This process will provide the necessary input to identify and recommend the appropriate training activities that will help SMEs and connected actors to understand cyber-security and its importance based on the security enhancements provided by SMESEC.

You are invited to join the SMESEC project to take part of the definition of the requirements that the SMESEC platform must fulfil and their consequent evaluation in the context of the four pilots (e-voting, smart cities, industrial IoT and smart grids).

### **Purpose of the exercise**

The primary purpose of this exercise is to evaluate the cybersecurity status of your organisations using high-level and user-friendly questions. The questions provided either fixed answers or an open form for specific information.

### **Exercise procedures**

The questionnaire contains questions and related answers about cybersecurity status and awareness.

You may decline to answer any or all questions, and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

### **Risks**

No risks are foreseen in the research study. Users are only requested to participate by providing feedback about their cybersecurity knowledge and expertise.

### **Benefits**

It is likely participants will not receive any personal benefit from the participation in the research study except learning more about cybersecurity solutions and awareness. Participation of users will provide a substantial contribution to understand how cybersecurity awareness of users can be evaluated and increased thanks to the different tools and process of the SMESEC project. Therefore, although we cannot guarantee participants will personally experience benefits from participating in the research study, others may benefit in the future from the information provided.

### **Privacy and confidentiality**

The responses and feedback from the participants in the questionnaire will be recorded and stored securely. The recorded data will not include any personal identification so it will not be possible to use it for identifying the participants afterwards. We will make sure the information provided in the research study is kept confidential and protected against unauthorised disclosure, tampering or damage. The information will be kept protected in owned data repositories of the organisations conducting the studies, and only authorised users will have access to it and only for specific and clear reasons. The access and use of the data will be logged so the status will always be under control.

Your responses to this research study will be anonymous. Please do not write any identifying information on your survey. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality.

The participant's decision on whether or not give authorisation for the use, storage, and processing of the information provided in the research study is completely voluntary. Therefore, if the participant does not provide the investigators with this authorisation or cancel in the future, the participant will not be able to participate in the study.

### **What will we do with your data?**

The information obtained in the research study will be processed during the definition and evaluation of the SMESEC platform and will be shown in project reports. As aforementioned, the data will be recorded in a privacy-respectful way, making sure it will not be possible to identify the source of information. The results of these studies may be published in scientific journals or conferences and may be used in further studies. No data provided by participants will be handed out to third parties (outside of the consortium of the SMESEC project).

The authorisation for the access, use and processing of the information is valid until the end of the research study unless the participant decides to cancel it before. If a participant decides to cancel the consent, please contact the leading investigator and inform her of the intention of leaving or finalising the research study. Participants have the right not to participate at all or to leave the study at any time. Deciding not to participate or choosing to leave the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

The data provided by the participants will be destroyed at the end of the project or when they cancel their participation in the research study.

### Contact for questions or problems

Please email the project coordinator of SMESEC ([jose.ruizr.external@atos.net](mailto:jose.ruizr.external@atos.net)) if the participant has any question about the study, any problems, unexpected physical or psychological discomforts, any injuries, or think that something unusual or unexpected is happening.

### Voluntary participation

The participation in this study is only possible if the participant freely and independently agrees on this consent to authorise the SMESEC consortium to use the data she provides. If the participant does not wish to do so, please do not participate in this study.

### Consent

Title of the exercise:

Place of the exercise:

I, the undersigned, confirm that:

1.	I am 18 years or older, and I am competent to provide consent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	I have read and understood the information about the SMESEC project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated. I understand it is not mandatory to participate in the research study and, if I choose to participate, I may at any state withdraw my participation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and I will not be penalised for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation of data, etc.) to me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.	If applicable, separate terms of consent for interviews, audio, video or other forms of data collection have been explained and provided to me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.	The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9.	I understand that researchers of SMESEC will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10.	I understand that, subject to the constraints above; no recordings will be replayed in any public forum or made available to any audience other than the current researchers/research team.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.	I understand that my participation is fully anonymous and that no personal details about me will be recorded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.	I have received a copy of this agreement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13.	I agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

I understand that my information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the European data protection laws, regulations and personal data treatment obligations of the GDPR.