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INNOVATIVE ICT – NETWORKING IN THE BALTIC SEA REGION

Swedish Institute Annual Contact Seminar **Innovative ICT – Networking in the Baltic Sea Region**

Why is it important to be a successful ICT nation? In the same way as the industrial revolution helped increase prosperity in the 20th century, information technology and the Internet are helping to improve competitiveness in the 21st century. Constructive use of the Internet throughout a society will naturally support economic, democratic and climate-improving development. The Internet can be seen as a tool to get what we want, not as a technology that sets limitations on our actions.

The Swedish Institute Baltic Sea Region Exchange Program (Visby Program) hereby invites you to the seminar “Innovative ICT – Networking in the Baltic Sea Region” in Stockholm, Sweden 27-29 October 2010. The seminar is arranged in cooperation with The Royal Technology Forum of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA).

The seminar will include participants and presentations from among others Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and Ukraine. It will also strengthen the contact network between not only institutions of higher education and research, NGOs and the business sector, but also with governmental agencies and public decision makers. Primary topics are:

- ICT and new media
- ICT and democracy, legislation and regulations
- ICT and innovations
- ICT in the Baltic Sea Region – Implementation and future prospects

ICT and new media

ICT has changed the media field radically in the last 10 years. Newspapers reach their readers not only through printed media, but much information also distributes via the Internet and mobile devices. An example of how ICT has changed the media landscape is that the revenue from ads now is higher from the Internet than from newspapers and television (for the Swedish market). Most TV channels co-produce material for traditional TV broadcasts, but also increasingly offer a wide range of supplements via the Internet. Some of the public debate has moved from traditional political forums like meetings and debates to the electronic world. Readers can nowadays usually comment on articles directly on websites. Many politicians are active on social media like blogs and Facebook. This trend will continue.

ICT and democracy, legislation and regulations

ICT offers potential for multi-channel spread public service announcements and political messages. But the development of laws and regulations for the physical world over the past 100 years do not necessarily reflect the rapid advance of ICT. How will society deal with the negative consequences of access to public information, but still protect the individual citizen's privacy? And will we continue to see more direct democracy, for examples via local referendums on the Internet?

ICT and innovations

ICT enables simplification and efficiency. With ICT, new products and services can be launched at international markets without huge initial costs. Similarly, consumers can more easily find information to contact suppliers and get ideas from outside. Will we see a booming service market on the internet in the future? By using innovative ICT services, we also have a lower environmental impact by reducing travel and physical meetings.

The aim of the seminar is to establish contacts and networks within the field of ICT. The seminar is open to researchers, doctoral students, decision makers and representatives from universities, the business sector, governmental agencies and NGOs from Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, Russia and Ukraine. Participation in this seminar will provide you with a great opportunity to establish valuable professional contacts on research, business and innovative ICT solutions.

The seminar will include:

- Presentations by participants on new projects or experiences within ICT in the Baltic Sea Region
- Lectures with key note speakers on *ICT and new media*, *ICT and democracy, legislation and regulation*, and *ICT and innovation*
- Time for networking
- Information on funding possibilities from the Swedish Institute
- Thematic study visit

Practical information

The seminar is free of charge and for participants from Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine the Swedish Institute will cover accommodation at a hotel in central Stockholm. Travel grant may be applied for. The seminar starts October 27th 17.00, local time with a small reception for foreign participants. This will include presentations on project co-operation in the region. Participants will also have time to meet with the SI Visby Program staff. October 28th is a full-time program day including an evening reception. On October 29th there will be a half-day thematic study visit, which will last until around 14.00.

Application for the seminar is made online through [this link](#). Deadline for applying is September 15th. Due to limited capacity, a selection of participants will be made. Confirmation on participation will be emailed to applicants around September 20th.

Kind regards,

Staff of the Swedish Institute

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