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❖ **Important message: AIECA 2010 to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan in November, 2010**

The government of Azerbaijan and in particular the [Ministry of Youth and Sport](#) has agreed to co-fund the Fifth international conference of the Eastern European and Central Asian Business Incubators and Technology Parks Network: **Advancing Innovation in ECA 2010: Fostering Youth Entrepreneurship and Incubation Infrastructure.**

The local co-organizer is the [Caspian Investment Centre](#), which is briefly presented in the current issue of the newsletter. The two day event will be held provisionally on November 24th – 27th, 2010. The exact dates and more detailed information about the event will be published on [ECAbit.org](#) soon.

Effective membership in ECAbit network for 2010 (paid membership fee) provides free accommodation and access to the event for one participant per member.

❖ **International Highlights**



Russian Youth Educational Forum "Seliger-2010"

Tambov region represented by many young innovators and a team of experts
Lake Seliger, Russia, 1-28.7.2010

The Innovative Session of the [Youth Educational Forum "Seliger"](#) held between the 10th and 19th of July, every year increases its importance for the Forum. This year almost 3500 young inventors and innovators participated in this session. For the first time Tambov region was represented not only by young innovators, but also by a whole team of experts.

At the invitation of one of the organizers of the session - [ONEXIM Group](#) and initiated by the management company [Tambov Innovative Business Incubator NGO "Regional Centre of Management and Culture"](#), 10 experts from Tambov region participated in the organization of the educational process and the assessment of projects.

The experts of Tambov Innovative Business Incubator's management company and different representatives of three large universities – Tambov State University, Tambov Technical State University and Michurinsk State Agrarian

University – composed a friendly and highly competent team of professionals under the leadership of director TIBI **Olga Lapteva**. Readers might remember Ms. Lapteva as the main organizer of [AIECA 2008](#) in Tambov.

The Tambov region team of experts coordinated educational activities for over 1100 participants - about 30% of the total number of participants. These lecturers conducted studies on various topics such as:

- The commercialization of scientific and technical activities
- Marketing of innovative products and business
- “Step by step: development of innovative projects”
- Management of intellectual property and innovative projects
- Financing of innovations
- The project team and the proper presentation of the innovative projects

The Tambov region experts supported participants of innovation contests on the development of innovative projects and provided the expertise for the jury to pick a winner from the following contests:

- "Sun City - Skolkovo", organized by the [Innovation Bureau "Expert"](#) (there were over 500 applications)
- The contest of the ["National Agency for Entrepreneurship Technological Support" \(INTECH\)](#) and the "Academy of Management and Market" (AMM) (there were 123 teams who participated in this contest)
- Assessing projects for the "Energy Efficient Cities" business game was very interesting as well. A team called "Partners", composed of representatives of [Lukoil](#), [SUEK](#), [RusHydro](#) and other companies, prepared an excellent presentation of its city and won unanimously.

The Tambov delegation played an important role in assessing the 124 business plans submitted to the contest, evaluating each idea in a professional and responsible manner. At the

same time the experts were engaged in studying as well – they visited 58 lectures and 9 VIP-speaker lectures on a large set of interesting topics such as:

- Strategic information technology
- Russia in the modern world
- Strategies and management for leading innovative companies
- 10 common mistakes when creating an online business
- GRID in science and business

The speakers list included many prominent members of Russias political and economic world like:

- **Andrei Sharov**, Director of the Department of Small and Medium Enterprises [Ministry of Economic Development of Russia](#)
- **Ivan Bortnik**, General Director of the [Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises](#)
- **Sergei Borisov**, president of [“ОПОРА РОССИИ”](#)
- **Mikhail Prokhorov**, president of the private investment fund [ONEXIM Group](#).

The experience and knowledge obtained by the members of the Tambov expert team will allow them to efficiently search, select and promote innovation projects of young Tambov innovators on a high professional level in Russia and abroad.

Turkey’s Small And Medium Enterprises To Benefit From New World Bank Financing

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved a US\$500 million loan for the [Second Access to Finance for Small and Medium Enterprises](#) (SMEs) project for Turkey. The project’s main development objective is to broaden and deepen the access of Turkish small and medium enterprises to medium- and long-

term finance, with a view to ultimately help expand productive activities and job creation.

The Second Access to Finance for Small and Medium Enterprises project will be implemented by [Turkish Kalkınma Bank](#) (US\$100 million), [Ziraat Bank](#) (US\$200 million), and [Vakıf Bank](#) (US\$200 million) as borrowers, with a government guarantee, and will provide medium- and long-term working capital and investment finance to small and medium enterprises in Turkey.

“Small and medium enterprises are the engine of the Turkish economy,” said **Ulrich Zachau, Country Director for Turkey** on the occasion of the loan approval. “Continued access to finance for SMEs is crucial for growth and jobs, especially in the aftermath of the global economic crisis. The loan provides such crucial financing for SMEs, who face access to finance as the biggest obstacle to their growth. In addition to providing SME financing, the project is also designed to help develop the market for commercial credit to SMEs over the long term – as domestic banks are ultimately expected to expand their lending business to SMEs.”

The World Bank credit line will complement existing credit facilities provided by the World Bank, and seeks to build on the success of the current Access to Finance for SMEs Project (SME I) – a financial intermediation loan currently being successfully implemented by [Halkbank](#) and [Türkiye Sinai Kalkınma Bankası \(TSKB\)](#). The project was approved by the Bank in June 2007 (US\$250 million equivalent), with two Additional Financings provided to Halkbank in December 2008 (US\$200 million equivalent) and December 2009 (US\$250 million equivalent), bringing the total loan amount to US\$700 million equivalent.

The lending instrument for the Second Access to Finance of SMEs Project is an IBRD Flexible Loan at 6 months LIBOR for US Dollars plus variable spread with a 25 year maturity, including 10 year grace period, commitment linked and with level repayment pattern for Türkiye Kalkınma and Ziraat Banks; and an IBRD Flexible Loan at 6 months LIBOR for US Dollars plus variable spread with a 29.5 year

maturity, including 6 year grace period, commitment linked and with level repayment pattern for Vakıfbank. The Loan is guaranteed by the [Turkish Treasury](#).

❖ News from members

ECAbit’s new member AITT at the “Moldova Business Week 2010”

AITT organized the International Conference “Innovative Networks - a new formula for regional development”

Chisinau, Rep. of Moldova, 22.–25.7.10

In our last edition we were happy to welcome a new network member – the [Agency for Innovation and Technology Transfer](#) (AITT) from the Republic of Moldova. It is with great interest, that we further observe AITT’s development and activities in this month’s issue. Between the 22nd and 25th of June 2010 AITT participated in the 6th edition of the International Investment Forum and Exhibition of Investment Projects in the context of the [“Moldova Business Week 2010”](#), organized by the Moldovan Government and the Moldovan Investment and Export Promotion Organisation, in partnership with the [Vienna Economic Forum](#).

In this context on the 24th of June 2010, AITT organized, in cooperation with the Moldovan Ministry of Economy, the **International Conference “Innovative Networks - a new formula for regional development”**, with main objectives to identify the organizational and operational experience of national and international innovative networks and the role and opportunities offered by these networks in the process of innovation and technology transfer.

The event was attended by foreign experts, representatives of local public bodies, academia and business.

Moderator of the conference was Mr. **Sergiu Porcescu**, Head of the Department of European

Integration and International Cooperation of the [Academy of Sciences of Moldova](#), which in his words of welcome stressed the role of innovation in socio-economic development of all countries, including Moldova and the importance of the event in identifying the successful models of creation and operation of the innovative of networks.

The Vice President of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova **Dr. Ion Tiginyanu** underlined the role of science and innovation in the country's rapid integration into the European Community, expressing hope that the meeting will contribute to further development of innovative networks in our country and to the creation of new partnerships for sustainable attracting of investment in the economy of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr. **Sergiu Ciobanu**, Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Moldova, presented the theme: [“The Government’s Policy in the development of in innovation and technology transfer networks”](#) and stressed the importance of research and innovation as key factor in the economic development and dialogue between the Government and ASM, which consequently will stimulate innovation and technology transfer, creation of innovative networks, linked to the activities of the Republic of Moldova that aim to bring the Republic of Moldova closer to the European Community standards.

In his presentation [“Innovative Networking in Republic of Moldova”](#) the Director of the Agency for Innovation and Technology Transfer, Mr. **Ghenadie Cernei**, spoke about the innovation process in the Republic of Moldova, about the efforts and sparse successes achieved in innovative networking, focusing on the purpose of the conference question, which was to identify and generalize the experience of European countries, to consider the recommendations of the experts present at the conference in order for AITT to become an active player in the creation and development of innovative networks in Moldova.

The conference was also attended by foreign experts who presented the experience of organization and operation of innovative

networks, the experience of creating technology parks, business incubators and technology transfer networks, with case studies and success stories. During the conference these speakers emphasized not only on the positive sides of the networks, but outlined some negative aspects as well and furthermore focused on identifying possible ways of resolving these problems.

In his presentation [“Issues of cross-network cooperation”](#), Mr. **Todor Yalamov**, Coordinator of the ECAbit Network from Bulgaria, focused on various prerequisites needed for the establishment of an effective network and highlighted quite a few common challenges to network management, such as the sequencing of institutionalization, issues of competition, managing cross-network participation and cooperation etc. Mr. Yalamov corroborated his theses with a profound analysis of the World Bank [ECAbit Network](#) and other networks like the [Enterprise Europe Network](#), the [Center for International Private Enterprise \(CIPE\)](#), [Bertelsmann](#) etc.

Mr. **Steffen Preissler** from Germany, Head of the department for Innovative Transfer Systems at the [Fraunhofer Centre for Central and Eastern Europe](#), lectured on [“Innovation Networks in Germany and the Role of Fraunhofer in Innovation Networks”](#). In his presentation Mr. Preissler mainly focused on the role of Fraunhofer-Society in the German research system, the function and contribution of innovation networks in fostering technology transfer and underlined the better performance of knowledge based industries within clusters and networks with examples of Fraunhofer innovation clusters.

Ms. **Elena Serdiuk**, Executive Director of the National Technologic Transfer Network (NTTN) from Ukraine, introduced the [“History, concept and methodology of NTTN”](#). Furthermore Ms. Serdiuk explained the mission, vision and structure of NTTN consistent with the main objectives of the conference to identify the organizational and operational experience of national and international innovative networks from an Ukrainian point of view.

Similarly Mr. **Pavel Habarta**, Director of the [TIC-CKD Incubator](#) from the Czech Republic, presented two case studies on “Innovation Infrastructure in the Zlin Region” and “Technology Innovation Centre CKD Prague” in his lecture [“Regional Innovation Network in the Zlin Region”](#). Mr. Habarta shared the experiences of TIC in the field of management of business incubators and S&T parks, support of technology transfer between universities and industry and establishment of clusters, organization of events in connection with innovation and intellectual property etc.

At the end of the International Conference the participants set the following proposals:

1. To enhance the Government's role in supporting the creation and development of innovative networks
2. To facilitate the international collaboration in order to use the experience of European countries that have already obtained remarkable achievements in this field

External partners expressed willingness to cooperate with the Republic of Moldova in the context of innovative networks, such as EEN, ECAbit, InfoDev, etc. and showed interest in initiating joint projects within European programs.

ARC FUND Policy Brief

Broadband Internet Access: Toward Country-Specific Policies

On July, 5th 2010, the ECAbit Coordinating Office - [Applied Research and Communications Fund](#) presented its conclusions and recommendations toward the national and European policies on broadband development during a discussion on [Digital Agenda for Europe](#), organized by the [European Commission Representation in Bulgaria](#). This policy brief is part of [e-Bulgaria 2020 initiative](#), which aims at providing analysis on state-of-the-art and future developments in information society in Bulgaria. Public policies toward broadband development must be focused on the specifics of individual countries through establishing mechanisms for

monitoring and evaluation of these specifics, in addition to existing methods for collection and comparative analysis of macro-statistical indicators that are universal for all member states. The effectiveness of public policies in this area is largely dependent on the availability of timely and reliable data on current state-of-the-art and the attitudes of individuals and businesses toward using the innovative opportunities that broadband offer. European policies in this area (including the Digital Agenda for Europe) are based on standard structural indicators for the use and penetration of information and communication technologies in business and the population and on a limited number of internationally comparable data based on specialized studies. The main indicators are based on the economic, political, and technological developments in EU15. This leads to prioritizing only selected characteristics and often underestimating the specifics of new member states that are key to their economic growth, technological progress, and social development.

The recent studies on the use and penetration of broadband internet in the European Union underlined that some of the new EU member states show entirely different patterns in choosing broadband technologies. Compared to older member states, the deployment of fixed broadband lines in Romania, Bulgaria and Lithuania (and to a lesser extent in Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) is much more based on fiber access.

According to a study on the broadband deployment in Bulgaria carried out in Q1 2010 by the Applied Research and Communications Fund, 91.5% of the population lives in areas with at least one ISP, which offers broadband internet (providing a connection faster than 1 Mbps priced at BGN 30 per month). The considerable fragmentation of broadband internet market contributes to a higher competition and the latter could explain the fact that prices for providing broadband fixed lines in Bulgaria are among the lowest in the EU. As a result, Bulgaria and Portugal are forerunners in the EU in terms of their share of broadband lines

(about 60% compared to an average of 23% for EU27), offering access at 10+Mbps speed.

The development of specific technological and business models in deployment of broadband technologies and services and the wide use of these models in areas with varying urbanization, economic, and social characteristics facilitate the subsequent transfer of these models to other countries. Most of the major ISPs in Bulgaria have their own R&D units operating in two main areas – a) technological development and upgrade of infrastructure and b) convergence and the introduction of bundled services. These ISPs are often early adopters of new innovative technologies in Europe.

For more information please access the [Full text](#).

Draft Law about Free IT zones

Tbilisi, Georgia, 18.07.2010

The representative of project [Business Incubation Initiative Georgia](#) (BII), **Vazha Goginashvili**, participated in development of the draft law about creation of information technology free zones in Georgia. The law development process has been initiated by the [Ministry of Finance of Georgia](#). BII endeavors to incorporate international good practices and experience in the law.

There are three key objectives the law intends to achieve:

1. Attract foreign investments in IT sphere and boost creation of new, qualified workplaces, contributing to economic development.
2. Foster development of IT sector by means of new technologies' entry in the country and spillover effects.
3. Develop IT education sector by creating demand for qualified workforce in the country.

The law envisions **tax free zones** for information technology companies as well as creation of venture, educational and infrastructure funds for development of local IT business, education and infrastructure.

Suggested, that international companies, opening offices or production lines in Georgia, will have to employ Georgian citizens to fill more than 70% of their staff.

The draft law is planned to be considered by Georgian Parliament during autumn session.

Students from the Dauphine University - Paris visited YES Foundation

Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, 07.07.2010

On July 7th, group of students from the [Dauphine University - Paris](#) visited [YES Foundation](#) in Skopje, in order to get an insight into the work of a business incubator, the services the Incubator offers, the companies-tenants, the work conditions and atmosphere.

The visit was organized by the [American College – Skopje](#), as a partner in the multilateral research project "CERECA", which is held by the University from Paris. The aim of this visit was to introduce the role of the YES Foundation supporting the entrepreneurship and self-employment among young people in our country.

The students showed great interest in the work of the Incubator, asked a lot of questions and were pleasantly surprised by the positive atmosphere of the Incubator.

As an appreciation of the cooperation in the project, American College gave a certificate of gratitude to the host – YES Foundation.

TeleSkin represents Serbia at EEVA

The European Commission has selected a tenant of Belgrade's Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties to represent the country at the SME Opening Event and the European Enterprise Award Ceremony

Brussels, Belgium, 25.05.2010

This initiative - a pan-European campaign organized and led by the European Commission

in close cooperation with 37 participating countries - is meant to inform on the support available at EU and national, regional and local level for micro, small, and medium-sized businesses; to give recognition to entrepreneurs for their contribution to Europe's welfare, jobs, innovation, and competitiveness; and to promote the entrepreneurial spirit among European citizens.

The Director of TeleSkin, which has developed a system for early diagnosis of skin melanoma, Sava Marinkovic, says: "We are very excited to participate and to show a small part of the great potential in Serbia in innovation and entrepreneurship. Serbia has some of the best scientific and medical minds here and combining them with good entrepreneurial leadership can make a large difference. The [Business-Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties Belgrade](#) has really helped us accelerate and we hope to take Healthcare in Serbia to the next level."

Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties Belgrade organized training sessions on Business Administration

Belgrade, Serbia, May 2010

Within the project „Business Skills Development in Function of Local Development“, supported by the Dutch organization [SPARK](#), and within the Programme Job Creation through support to the SME Sector, the Business Technology Incubator of Technical Faculties Belgrade organized a new series of training „How to start your own business “and specialized training in „Marketing“, „Management“ and „Protection of the Intellectual Property“, during may.

With the support of the Business Incubator Center Yumco, Vranje also represented a part of this project. Further trainings on „How to start your own business“ for start up firms or potential tenants of the Vranje incubator were

also organized at the Business Incubator Center Yumco.

❖ In Focus

Caspian Investment Centre – an introduction

In this month's issue, we are pleased to introduce our network member from Azerbaijan - the [Caspian Investment Centre](#) (CIC) to other members and affiliates of the ECabit network.

CIC was established in May 2003. The main mission of the company is the development of small and medium entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan and assistance to the formation of a entrepreneurial and information-based business environment, the gathering of new ideas and establishment of partnership networks. Another goal is to broaden the spectrum of products and services on offer on the Azerbaijani market and to implement measures to stimulate the economic activities of foreign companies in Azerbaijan. CIC is focused on contributing to the economic development of the country by promoting entrepreneurship, attracting foreign investors and donors to the country, supporting the new start-ups with useful consultations and advices, etc.

CIC is a member of the [American Chamber of Commerce in Azerbaijan](#) (AmCham) and the [German-Azerbaijani Business Association](#) (DAWF) and a consultant to the Business Advisory Services (BAS) Program.

CIC is a full-service company offering exhibition, franchise support, public relations, publishing, advertising, marketing etc. It has executed a broad number of PR activities during business forums, organizing pavilions in order to promote the country and its investment opportunities. CIC has gained a lot of event management experience as well, implementing different projects for the government and for private organizations and embassies. Some of them are:

- **Azerbaijan Pavilion:** at the 11th Oil and Gas Show 2004. CIC and BP Azerbaijan, as the general sponsor, were the initiators and organizers of the first Azerbaijan Pavilion.
- **Azerbaijan Pavilion:** 14-16 June 2005, within the framework of the International Economic Forum during the official visit of President Aliyev to St. Petersburg.
- **Program for Development of Entrepreneurship and the Non-oil Sector of Azerbaijan** - prepared and introduced to the Presidential Administration in February 2008. The program aims at the development of three major sectors: business incubation, franchising and nanotechnologies.

CIC is also the founder of the [Azerbaijan Franchise Association](#) (AFA) which was established in 2007 to support and promote entrepreneurship through franchising, and prepare projects based on new franchise concepts. Furthermore AFA is to foster the development of a new entrepreneurial culture in the country. The association closely cooperates with Russian, Ukrainian, German, Turkish, Greek and Baltic franchise associations. AFA serves as a resource center for both current and prospective franchisors and franchisees, as well as for media and the public. “Hotel Express” and “Countdown” are franchise concepts that were brought to Azerbaijan through franchising by CIC.

Currently CIC mainly works on launching new business incubators (also virtual ones) innovation centers, and technology parks with the following objectives: promoting the development of a knowledge-based economy in the country, fostering sustainable economic development and macroeconomic stability, increasing competitiveness and business dynamics, reducing unemployment by creating new jobs and promoting innovation, assisting the government with social projects in the field of poverty reduction, creating enterprise culture and skills, advancing women entrepreneurship and minority inclusion.

Being a co-funder of the “Joint Venture Action Azerbaijan”, CIC specialized to serve

professional communication needs for world famous companies like bmi, OMV, Nabucco International, and currently works for European Commission as well.

The President of CIC **Elshan Musayev** is also the founder and owner of “[The Azeri Times](#)” - an English language newspaper that has already been in print for 12 years.

“Although CIC has not been a member of the network for a long time, it will be pleased to contribute its experience to the prosperity and development of ECAbit”, says Mr. Musayev.

❖ Funding Opportunities

Lafarge Invention Awards 2010



As a world leader in building materials, [Lafarge](#) is strongly committed to promoting ever more sustainable construction methods and devotes more than 50% of its annual research budget to sustainable construction issues. Lafarge has a long history of working in partnership with outside experts on these subjects. This is why the [Lafarge Invention Awards 2010](#) have been launched to reward inventive European R&D projects related to building materials (aggregates, cement, concrete and gypsum) and that contribute to sustainable construction.

These projects should involve a new product, industrial process, construction method or service, based on an invention less than 5 years old. Researchers, entrepreneurs, inventors, academics or members of a research team have until **October 15, 2010** to submit their entries.

A panel made up of Lafarge executives and renowned economic and scientific experts will select 3 winners from 10 finalists. Each winner will receive a prize of €20,000 and will benefit from Lafarge support to set up an action plan to develop his/her project.

To participate, please visit www.lafarge-inventionawards.com and submit any inquiries to: inventionawards@lafarge.com

Technical Assistance and Information Exchange - TAIEX

In this month's issue we would like to inform network members on the financing possibilities offered by TAIEX – its assistance covers most of the ECA region countries.

[TAIEX](#) is the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument managed by the [Directorate-General Enlargement of the European Commission](#). TAIEX supports partner countries with regard to the approximation, application and enforcement of EU legislation. It is largely demand driven and facilitates the delivery of appropriate tailor-made expertise to address issues at short notice.

TAIEX' main tasks are:

- To provide short term technical assistance and advice on the transposition of EU legislation into the national legislation of beneficiary countries and on the subsequent administration, implementation and enforcement of such legislation.
- To bring [ENPI](#) partner countries closer to the European Union, through increased economic integration and a deepening of political cooperation by sharing the experience gained during the enlargement process.
- To provide technical training and peer assistance to partners and stakeholders of the beneficiary countries.
- To be an information broker by gathering and making available information.
- To provide database tools for facilitating and monitoring the approximation progress as well as to identify further technical assistance needs.
- Technical assistance through the TAIEX instrument comes in many different forms and across a wide range of areas. Partner administrations can benefit from TAIEX's flexibility to help meet wider training needs in EU legislation by reaching a significant number of officials. At the same time, it is

important to retain an awareness of and be responsive to more targeted requests. In this regard, the expert and study visit format, depending entirely on requests received from beneficiary partners, provides a complementary institution building service.

- As with other TAIEX training formats, experts and study visits are designed to provide short term assistance to beneficiary countries on the approximation and implementation of EU legislation. Study visits are visits made by a limited number of officials of the beneficiary countries to Member State administrations. They give an opportunity to the beneficiaries to work alongside Member State officials to discuss legislation, experience first-hand administrative procedures and infrastructure and see examples of best practices.
- Expert missions on the other hand involve usually one or two Member State experts travelling to beneficiary partner countries. They provide an opportunity to discuss draft legislation, present examples of best practices and lend assistance where requested. The preferred format is working sessions involving an exchange of knowledge between the beneficiary countries and the experts.

The TAIEX mandate to provide assistance covers the following groups of beneficiary countries:

- Croatia, Turkey, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined in UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999);
- Turkish Cypriot community in the northern part of Cyprus;
- Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine and Russia

❖ Events

ICT 2010 – Brussels Expo 27-29 September 2010

[ICT 2010](#) is organised by the European Commission and hosted by the Belgian Presidency of the European Union.

This biennial event has become a unique gathering point for researchers, business people, investors, and high level policy makers in the field of digital innovation. The [conference](#) will focus on policy priorities such as [Europe's Digital Agenda](#) and the 2011-2012 financial programme (€2.8 billion) of the [European Union for funding research and innovation in ICT](#). Join ICT 2010 to discover the latest research trends in information and communication technologies, meet potential research and business partners, and visit our 10.000 m² exhibition of Europe's latest cutting edge ICT research.

Key themes for the 2010 conference are:

Powering our sustainable future: the potential of digital solutions to promote sustainable growth in a low carbon economy.

The human face of the digital age: the continuing constructive role of ICT in the daily life of citizens and the importance of public participation in the innovation process.

ICT 2010 will also host dozens of networking sessions designed to facilitate contacts between researchers and innovators, engineers and investors from all fields of digital innovation.

Baltic Dynamics 2010 – 15th Annual Conference on Innovation 15-17 September, Riga, Latvia

The [Baltic Dynamics Conference](#) is an initiative of the Baltic Association of Science/Technology Parks and Innovation Centres - [BASTIC](#) - and has been held annually since its inception in 1996. The conference venue is rotated between the Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In 2010, it is Latvia's turn again and the conference will be held in the country's capital Riga, the largest city in the Baltic States.

In recent years it is not only the three Baltic States that have shown dynamic development in the fields of innovation and entrepreneurship. "Innovation links" between the countries around the Baltic Sea have been established and successful economic initiatives developed.

The conference organisers invite all involved with the dynamic innovation and entrepreneurship development - leaders of innovative companies, managers of science/technology parks and business incubators, public authorities responsible for innovation in the region, venture capital organisations, etc. - to present and discuss initiatives to make innovation strategies and policies happen.

The following **topics** will be under discussion:

- Sustainable Development of Innovation System on a National, Regional and Local level
- Education and Research as Components of Innovation System
- Technology Transfer as a Catalyst for Efficient Knowledge Flow from Knowledge Creators to Business
- Instruments to Support Added Value Production (Science/Technology Parks, Technology/Innovation Centres, Business Incubators, Technology Oriented Business Support Programmes, Science Communication, Financing Innovation, etc.)
- The Role of Cooperation (Associations, Networks, Clusters, etc.) in the Development of Innovation System

The following **pre-conference workshops and/or meetings** are planned:

- Cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) - project [BSR InnoReg](#) (Interreg)
- Soft landing programme for SMEs in BSR - project [SMEDGE](#) (Interreg)
- EEN Network on technology transfer - project EEN Latvia (CIP)

- How to evaluate efficiency of research systems in small countries - project [ERA-PRISM](#) (FP7)
- [SPICE Group](#) Workshop

Members are welcome to register through the [online registration form](#).

ICT & Automation in industry at International Fair Plovdiv 2010

29-30 September, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

[Enterprise Europe Network – Bulgaria](#) is organizing a technology and business matchmaking event in the sphere of ICT and automation during the autumn exhibition program of International Fair Plovdiv, Bulgaria. The event will be held on 29 and 30 September, at the [International Fair Plovdiv](#) fairground.

The two-day event will feature a **seminar day** (29 September) targeting clusters and associations. The program of the seminar day will be focused on :

- Presentations and discussions on financing opportunities for clusters and associations
- Best praxis in management of clusters and associations
- Interaction among cluster constituent companies and organizations
- Opportunities for cluster networking and international cooperation

The second day will be dedicated to [pre-scheduled bilateral meetings](#) between companies and organizations. Participants in the technology and business matchmaking event will be able to meet potential European cooperation partners, promote their service and products, as well as find technologies and products they would like to implement. During the pre-arranged business meetings on 30 September 2010, companies, research teams and representatives of academic institutions will have the opportunity to directly contact a pre-requested company or organization.

Participation in the event is free of charge.

Deadlines:

- 13 September 2010 – registration and profile submission
- 17 September 2010 – meeting selection

Participants:

ICT and automation clusters and associations, companies, academic and research institutes as well as companies and R&D teams interested in the latest developments in the event focus spheres.

Investor Readiness Training at Timișoara Software Business Incubator

10-11 November, Timisoara, Romania

[Timișoara Software Business Incubator](#), will host this November 10th-11th an Investor Readiness training.

The training will be led by [Peter Hiscocks](#) - entrepreneur, business angel and Fellow in Entrepreneurship at [Judge Business School of Cambridge University](#) in United Kingdom.

The event is opened to representatives of startups from the technology field, relatively advanced in the process of developing products and services potentially interesting for early stage (from business angels, seed funds or other venture capital organizations).

The training structure is focused on a practical approach. The first day will schedule presentations, discussions and conceptual clarification relative to the early stage investment processes and the way the innovative companies should prepare themselves in order to successfully attract potential investments.

During the second day of the event, the participants will be assisted by the trainer and a number of 3-6 invited experts (business angels, VCs, bankers or representatives of EU innovation granting programs) in drafting their company's investment application. In the end of the day, the participants will have the opportunity to simulate a pitching session experience, presenting their investment request to the participating invited experts and receiving valuable feedback.

The training is organized within the [Achieve More](#), an [Europa Innova](#) project, to which Timișoara Software Business Incubator is associated.

Registration for the 20 available places at this training will be opened at the beginning of September. As you are probably expecting, the

working language of this event will be English. No translation will be available. Those interested can request additional information or can express their participation intention contacting Andrei Deheleanu, at deheleanu@itincubator.ro

Contact us! Share your news, opinion and vision for incubation development in Eastern Europe and Central Asia!

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