

Export-oriented development plan
for the information and
communication technology sector
2009-2013

**Estonian Association of Information
Technology and Telecommunications**

March 2009

Compilers

Commissioned and financed by the Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunication (further on ITL), the export-oriented development plan was compiled by the e-Governance Academy Foundation (eGA).

eGA is a non-profit development and analysis centre founded in 2002 with reference to the mutual understanding memorandum between the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Open Society Institute (OSI). The goal of eGA is to assure sustainable development of the information society through training as well as research and cooperation networks, and to become an analysis and competence centre of the ICT area in Europe.

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A brief summary

The main objective of this document is to provide practice guidelines for the ICT sector itself on how to grow significantly over the next few years as well as the sale of products and services of the ICT sector outside of Estonia. According to the estimation of the compilers of the development plan this broader objective can be achieved through actions in two main directions.

First, the potential **cooperation activities** for the company **to improve export-oriented sales aptitude**.

Second, actions necessary for scientific and technological development are presented.

Co-operation in the sector is planned to commence or continue to elaborate new common business models; co-operation with international large-scale enterprises; promotion of joint marketing activities; analysis and monitoring of the economics of e-governance solutions; active utilization of business diplomacy channels, including using the re-purchase of armament program; development of ITL capacity; development of the capacity of participants' government structures and non-governmental institutions, necessary contracts with the government (the issues of re-use of intellectual property of the ICT solutions made for the state; the involvement of state employees to the export projects, solving other legal matters).

With science and development activities as well as the development of technologies, it is important to focus on scientific research in strong trends of the ICT sector, on the application of scientific achievements and to the transition of know-how for creating new technologies, including research/studies on human behaviour, consumption and acceptance of the technology proposed; to cooperate to improve the quality of technology education related to ICT.

In recent years, different ICT field strategies, development plans, and programmes have been applied or designed. A multitude of different documents may cause problems understanding the connections between them. Figure 1 on the next page illustrates the connection of this document to other documents.

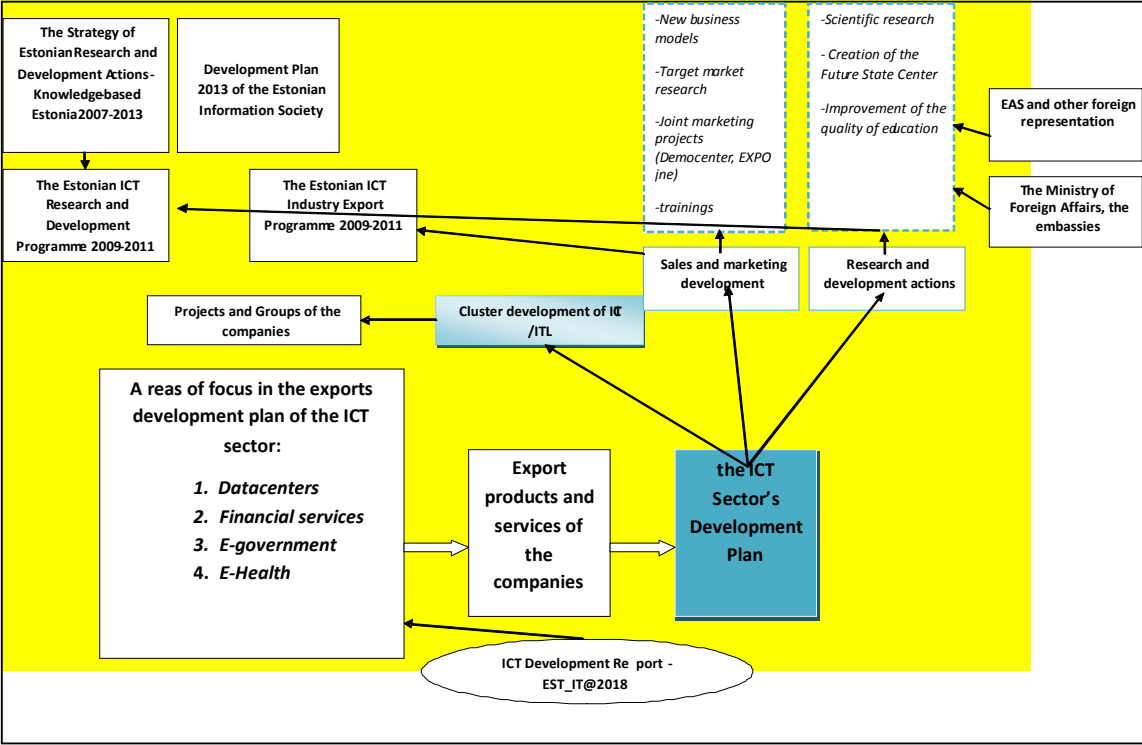
This document is an input for the cluster application prepared by ITL for the ICT sector.

The document does not discuss opportunities to use ICT in the development of the capacity of other sectors of the economy. Future documents should certainly apply a wider approach and observe the ICT sector's connections and its links to other sectors.

Hereinafter, it is also important to analyse the connections in order to satisfy the needs of the domestic market and to successfully compete in foreign markets.

During the meetings and mindmapping sessions held compiling this document, the companies got to know each other, their business models, and to better understand their products and services. And most importantly, they found common challenges and goals.

Figure 1. The connection of the Estonian information and communication technology sector's export-targeted development plan 2009-2013 with other (existing and possible) Estonian ICT strategies, plans and programs.



Introduction

Various studies and reports (ITLi 2007 survey, ICT's EST-IT@2018 development survey, Estonian Development Fund, <http://www.arengufond.ee/about/annualreports/>) state that the Estonian ICT sector is fragmented, and that a lack of highly qualified workers is preventing growth and keeping the ICT service export volume relatively low. Both the ICT sector and representatives of the state believe that it shouldn't carry on the way it used to.

This document deals with the important trends and efforts Estonian ICT companies (in cooperation with partners and public support structures) need to conceive in order to significantly increase sales in the ICT sector outside Estonia in the coming years. Although the sector's development plan is directed primarily at the business sector itself, one of its aims is to help the state identify the activities and directions necessary to create the conditions for the ICT sector's contribution to the realisation of the most favorable development scenarios for the Estonian economy, the *North Star (Põhjatäht*, see the Estonian Development Fund report 2008)¹.

For its part, the state is accelerating and facilitating the processing of all kinds of support actions undertaken by Enterprise Estonia, and Archimedes SA will launch the ICT research and development support program until 2013. We are hoping that the synergies evolving from the interaction of the various processes started (the ICT sector's cluster application, the development survey prepared by ITL) will lead to more effective cooperation in the sector and growth of export aptitude.

The process of compiling this document can be considered as important as the document itself.

During the meetings and mindmapping sessions, the companies got to know each other and their business models, and have found common challenges and goals.

¹ The so-called **North Star scenario**, intended to surmount the inertia of thoughts and create fruitful cooperation models for all participants in economy. In its wake, Estonian companies have significantly improved their standing in the value chain. Altogether, instead of the simpler work, more complex knowledge and technology capacious work has to be done (Development Fund report 2008)

1. The purpose of the development plan

In the beginning of 2009 the EST_IT @ 2018 development survey mapped the areas and blocked out various scenarios of how **information and communication technologies could contribute in the long term** (during the next 10 years) **to economic growth and social development.**

These areas were

- 1) education,
- 2) health care,
- 3) industry,
- 4) energetics,
- 5) financial services,
- 6) ICT security systems.

However, it should be kept in mind that the success of the areas mentioned depends primarily on the corresponding companies and organizations' ability to develop, and assumes orders to the ICT companies.

Therefore, the areas do not necessarily coincide with the preferred following years' export areas of the ICT sector.

The aim of the ICT sector development plan is an agreement in collaboration between the companies of the sector and the support structures for collective action during the coming five years. It focuses on the scope and areas that the partners compiling this document have found important.

The timeframe of the development plan is 5 years. Given the rapid changes taking place in the world economy, it is necessary for ITL to annually review the development plan in order to update and refresh it.

The possible applications of ICT include almost all areas of the economy and everyday life, but the multitude of the development trends cannot be followed with equal success due to the limited resources. Therefore, it was important for the sector to collectively formulate a narrower focus of the development plan: areas with better perspectives, and the main activities for the next two years.

The development plan focuses on raising the ICT sector and thereby the whole export capacity of the Estonian economy through coordinated cooperation between ICT companies, other industries and state institutions.

According to the Development Fund report, the challenge is to establish a group of forefront export companies able to carry and sustain the Estonian economy. We believe that it is equally important to focus on very specific areas within each sector, which, considering present resources, have export perspective at all.

By the estimations of the representatives of the ICT sector, the most export-capable areas in the sector are:

a) the financial telecommunications sector (products and services related to the financial sector as well as ICT solutions and distribution channels).

b) the e-government area (products and services related to electronic governance, cooperation among information systems and electronic identification)

c) e-healthcare sector (products and services related to electronic health care systems as well as products directed at healthcare institutions),

d) datacenters area (services related to data storage and solutions).

Development of **ICT products related to mobile phones** certainly deserves a lot of attention. Also, all other new and emerging initiatives should be welcomed.

The biggest challenges in these areas in turn are related to the following three basic components: human resources, organization, and technologies; and the three competences of their components, the executer's, subscriber's and developer's competence.

2. Background

There are several reasons why the development plan focuses on exports. The intention of the development plan for the ICT sector is to contribute to the increase of the competitiveness of the entire Estonian economy through the strength of the sector. According to the report of the Estonian Development Fund to Riigikogu at the end of 2008 (see <http://www.arengufond.ee/about/annualreports/>), domestic consumption no longer drives the Estonian economy. If we want to restore and maintain economic growth, we must focus on exports.

In the years 2000-2005 high-tech products formed an average 9.6% of Estonia's exports (14.8% in 2005 according to Eurostat). The total volume of exports of high-tech products (IT, telecommunications, electronics, science gadgets, pharmaceuticals, armaments, etc.) in 2005 was EUR 638m, of which in turn nearly 80% were electronics, IT and telecommunications products. In comparison, the export volume of Latvia was EUR 133m, of Lithuania EUR 304m and of Finland EUR 11,701m.

Unfortunately, statistical information about the trends of the last quarters of ICT sector exports is impossible to find. Here we note the need for the collection of comparable statistical indicators, in particular for the further measurement of development.

Today, the Estonian ICT sector has entered its development phase, where the home market has become small. Companies have realized that from offering individual solutions it is necessary to move on to offering products and services. Companies have entered foreign markets with different degrees of success. The national support structures have acquired experience and the ability to support the companies. At the same time, the recession of the world economy in 2008 has made traditional financing hard to come by and significantly reduced the financial opportunities of subscribers.

However, the Estonian ICT companies believe that their products and services are competitive at world markets.

The following provides a brief overview of the recent changes and trends in relation to foreign markets and the associated challenges for the Estonian ICT sector.

3. Development of markets and the related main challenges for the Estonian ICT sector

The global economic crisis that began in 2008 has rendered the normal mechanisms of the market economy unpredictable. The following trends can be highlighted:

- **Protection of domestic markets and other manifestations of protectionism.** Several governments, including those of the EU member states, have expressed the opinion that the products and services of local producers should be preferred. This is not the dominant way of thinking, but certainly a fact that must be taken into consideration at least in the coming years.
- **Focus on efficiency.** Given the lack of funds among economic entities (corporate and government budgets), activities in the coming years will focus on the products and services able to significantly increase productivity and effectiveness in various fields of life. Therefore, in the sales strategies it is important to show not only the long-term growth of effectiveness, but short-term opportunities to cut down operating expenses through ICT solutions.
- **Decrease of orders and purchases.** Due to the shortage of money in the hands of the entities as well as general limitations of the loan capacity of the banks.

Apart from that the fact should be stressed that the Estonian ICT companies in context of the European Union are generally small businesses and do not have large, multi-million euro projects, billion-sized annual sales, nor hundreds of experts in technology. Often for formal reasons, these IT companies lack the opportunity to compete equally in purchasing competitions announced by the European Commission. An appropriate message for our politicians would be to fight for justice at EU level, so that even small and medium-sized businesses could have equal opportunities to compete for the procurements of the EU.

During the preparation of the development plan in March 2009, it was unclear whether the global economic crisis had reached its bottom or if the situation had become even more complicated. However, the Estonian ICT sector hopes to realise great potential for further development in this time of crisis.

There is an **opportunity** for Estonian companies to flexibly position themselves between economically emerging countries and Western countries. Estonian companies can grow with the product markets and market niches. These are characterized by a great need for flexibility and close client relationships, as well as being located geographically close to major logistic hubs. This is where Estonia is situated.

In the case of some of the products and services for which China and India are too far, especially in the current era of rising transportation costs and 'mass personalisation', Estonian companies have to compete with their close neighbors, such as Scandinavia, Central Europe and Russia, and be ahead of them in the competition. Another opportunity for Estonian companies is the recent experience of reforms and introducing ITC solutions for a transitioning society. Estonia's capability

and experience in the field of preventing so-called cyber-attacks could also become an important sales argument.

The following describes the main challenges for the Estonian ICT sector in Spring 2009.

3.1 Human resources

The following factors are of critical importance for the development of the Estonian ICT sector.

The main challenges related to human resource development are labour force mobility in accordance with company requirements, continued increase of the labour force and the quality of education offered. Although the present development plan is not focused on solving these problems, they need the attention of the government, academia and companies.

- a) **The mobility of the labour force is connected with the possibility of recruiting the highly skilled labour force necessary for the sector from outside the EU. An attractive tax environment and work and residence permit system for top specialists also needs to be created.**
- b) **Continued increase of the labour force is related to motivating young people to study subjects related to engineering, design and ICT, after which it is possible to find well-paid jobs.**
- c) **The quality of education** is related to the ICT educational expectations of the labour force market at all levels.

Organisation of joint actions

Estonian ICT companies know from their own experience that entering international markets already is a labor-intensive and expensive activity in which a number of risks are involved. Globally, Estonian ICT companies belong to the small and medium scale enterprises category (SME, up to 300 employees).

Strengthening companies' export potential, the challenges are the following:

- a) **Necessary cooperation for entering foreign markets and joint realisation of export projects**, including
 - Development of joint business models
 - Creation of business-wide export oriented sales organisations

- Promotion of joint marketing

b) Cooperation with the public sector and its support structures in order to improve export capacity, including

- Creating the clusters necessary to develop capability
- Extensive use of support structures and sales channels of the public sector
- Active use of various international cooperation networks to market Estonia as an innovative ICT solutions producer

3.2 Technologies

Estonian companies have the capability to introduce and apply all the relevant technologies used in the ICT sector. Maintaining these capabilities is important to ensure broad customer services.

At the same time, to raise future competitiveness and stand out against the products in the world market, it is important to **constantly be active in research and development**. The existence of a critical mass of professionals in some fields of technology in Estonia (e.g. P2P technology) could become an opportunity.

For the cooperation of scientific institutions with companies it is important to make use of the resources targeted at EU T&A, as well as both of national and European Union's Seventh Framework Program.

Realising the growth of the export-based ICT sector has been obstructed by the fundamental problems in the Estonian economy. This includes a rapid increase in loans for domestic consumption based on foreign loans and a high proportion of public procurement in the ICT sector. Structural changes are time-consuming, and initiation and implementation will take several years. However, we can see opportunities for faster, and most importantly given the present economic situation, economically resourceful actions. Active, export-oriented joint action could help companies belonging to ICT clusters reach broader markets and global value chains. They will be able to successfully compete on the basis of innovative products and services, with the best people and best technology used to create them.

The following offers an action plan for 2009-2013, which is based on the collective discussions of the Estonian ICT sector representatives that took place December 2008 - February 2009 (see Appendix 1, which provides detailed discussion results).

The Action Plan is focussed on the export capable areas of the sector enumerated on page 8.

4. Activities for 2009-2013

Outlook of the Action Plan

It is not possible to predict all the needs and possibilities that the changing economic climate could bring over the next five years at once. While compiling the development plan, it was agreed that the development plan will be a living document which will be reviewed each year by ITL, and will be adjusted in accordance with real-life needs.

Actions described in the development plan are the activities which have been deemed rational to begin immediately, in 2009 and 2010.

The aim

The main objective of the activities is the development of a cluster of ICT businesses and the strengthening of export capacity through joint activities.

The operations' main implementer is the IT union, in cooperation with the companies of the sector, but there are also highlighted possibilities of foundations supporting the cooperation.

According to the estimations of the drafters of the Action Plan, the main question is not a matter of determining whether the companies located in Estonia outsource or sell their own products and services. **The critical question is, the potential capacity of "adding/added value" products and services the country is able to create, and to what extent the country is able to sell them in the world markets.** Also, the document does not strictly enact if the exported article has to be a service, a product or a know-how.

Pointing out the activities, the emphasis is on achieving a competitive advantage through **co-operation, especially production and marketing of ICT-solutions.**

4.1. The most important cooperative activities to increase export-oriented sales

4.1.1. Development of the cluster of ICT companies

Estonian ICT companies have realised the necessity of cooperation to be successful in terms of product development and working on the export markets. As a precursor to developing the cluster initiative, Estonian ICT companies have made collective study tours (such as to Singapore) in order to understand the successful cluster initiative of other countries. The cluster initiative is a "roof" action for other, later described actions.

Action: To increase the cooperation of companies and scientific institutions of the Estonian ICT sector and the development and export turnover of new products and

services, using the cluster action of EAS.

To be conducted by ITL, EAS

4.1.2. New, joint business model development

Activities: During the creation of models various action plans will be discussed to realise the potential projects. The action, the division of labor and financing in case of participation in possible projects will be agreed upon. Such preparation will ensure fast mobilization of resources for competitive, rapid (co)submissions in a short period of time by the Estonian companies.

To be conducted by companies

4.1.3. Cooperation with international large-scale enterprises

Activities: Identifying international ICT operational models at large international markets, as well as their interest and conditions to involve Estonian ICT companies and their products in international sales structures. As the next step, the Estonian ICT companies that are interested, if necessary, must (also) take their products to software and / or hardware platforms of international large-scale enterprises. International companies will provide their testing environments.

To be conducted by companies, Democenter

4.1.4. Joint marketing promotion

To introduce and market the products of the companies under a (common) eEstonia, it is sensible to promote the marketing:

4.1.4.1. eEstonia product catalogue

Activities: Creation of an on-line catalogue, which includes all the major ICT products made in Estonia, contacts of the sellers, references, demos, etc. Companies are responsible for updating the contents of the catalogue, the technical solution must be copied to the catalogue on CD / DVD disc.

To be conducted by ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.4.2. Participation at speciality fairs

Participation in fairs assume added value to all parties and good preparation preceding participation.

Activities: Creation of an Action Plan with participation plan of the exhibit and joint delegations.

To be conducted by ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.4.3. Creation of a point of contact for ICT solutions

The point of contact receives queries, clarifies wishes and directs them to the respective companies.

Activities: Creation of a point of contact. May act together with the demo centre or a business-engineered joint sales organisation. Also ensures that the eEstonia product catalogue is up-to-date and functional.

To be conducted by ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.4.4. Development of a common demonstration centre

The demonstration centre created at Ülemiste City is a good example of the cooperation of Estonian ICT-businesses and has earned a lot of positive feedback.

Activities: The development of the demonstration centre and business expansion (marketing of the products of eEstonia, functions of the contact point and other possible future visions), preparation and execution of development plan.

To be conducted by ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.4.5. Creation of an export-oriented joint sales organisation

It may be more effective to create a common, foreign-oriented sales organisation of the sector, which represents all its members, in order to ensure better sales of ICT products.

Action: Analysis of the organisation's business plan and possible organisation founders, clarification of cooperation capability and interest.

To be conducted by ITL, companies

marketing

4.1.5. Analysis and monitoring of the economics of e-Governance solutions

To support sales and demonstrate the effectiveness of the solutions offered, it is appropriate to analyze and monitor the best practices and economics of the use of e-Governance solutions. This will provide additional selling arguments for exporting products and a review for the state institutions regarding the actual outcome and cost of the projects.

Activities: Performance and monitoring of analysis on behalf of an independent analysis centre (e-Governance Academy or EGA), which is not related to the state and the companies. Creation of best practice analysis, description, and publication in different languages.

To be conducted by MKM, EAS, EGA analysis centre.

4.1.6 Introduction of unused sales channels

4.1.6.1. Active introduction of the channels of business diplomacy

36 economics diplomats have been at the service of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since March 2009. Their main tasks are to promote business affairs, clarify the export options and provide help to Estonian companies.

Activities: Creation of the system of information exchange between the companies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ensure the existence of information materials in Estonian embassies, organisation of business seminars in cooperation with the organisation during visits of government officials.

To be conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.6.2. The use of the program of armaments repurchases

As Estonia is stocking its armaments, typically the country selling armaments has the duty of reciprocal purchases from Estonia. EAS is dealing with the information regarding repurchasing. (A similar obligation will arise when Estonia joins the European Space Agency.)

Activity: Informing companies about the seminar regarding the program of repurchasing. Changing the contacts of the interested parties

To be conducted by EAS, companies.

4.1.6.3. Utilising the training of the e-Governance Academy

Each year the e-Governance Academy (EGA) trains more than 300 higher officials of predominantly state and local authorities from developing countries, usually supported by Development Cooperation Programme financing from the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The trainees have a continuing interest in obtaining more information about purchasing the products of e-Governance.

Activities: In cooperation with EGA, a functioning system of information exchanges about the participants and their interests will be created. The existence of primary business contacts will be ensured during the stay of the trainees in Estonia.

Executer: OR, ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.7. Active use of the support programs of EAS

EAS has opened up a whole range of different support actions, which are also suitable for ICT companies.

Activities: organisation of EAS programmer information days for the companies of ICT sector. Nomination of the contact person(s) behalf of EAS for the ICT sector enterprises, in order to better support the orientation of the provided supporting actions. Development of fast-track types of services to realise typical urgent requests (market research, promoting contacts, etc.)

To be conducted by ITL, businesses, EAS

4.1.8. Development of the capacity of ITL

In the present situation of export capacity and turnover of Estonian ICT companies, taking into account the negative world economic situation, it is not possible to finance all actions by the companies. ITL as an organisation requires more capability than the human and financial resources currently available allow.

Activities: Creation of the development plan and structure of ITL, analysis of action areas, coordination of the project regarding the extension of action capability

To be conducted by ITL staff and members, EAS

4.1.9. Development of the capacity of governmental structures and non-governmental institutions of the participants

The realisation of the present development plan sets duties for a number of public, state-established and non-governmental organisations: EAS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, EGA, and others. The Development Plan sets new challenges for their ability to realise their new tasks in a difficult economic situation.

Activities: Analysis of developing the capacity of EAS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, creation and execution of an action plan.

To be conducted by the EAS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, EGA in cooperation with ITL

4.1.10. The necessary agreements with the State

A number of issues falling in the so-called grey area have to be agreed upon between the state and enterprises.

4.1.10.1. Issues of (re-)use of Intellectual property (IP) of the ICT solutions for the state.

Action: To solve the question of who has the right to use and re-use the created IP, for both domestic and export purposes.

4.1.10.2. Involvement of state employees in export projects.

Specialists of state institutions are often the best reference for e-projects. The competence of their entity is also necessary when similar solutions are offered to government institutions of other countries.

Action: To resolve the issue of how to involve these professionals transparently and motivationally in preparation for and realisation of export-oriented offers.

To be conducted by ITL, companies, MKM, and other ministries

4.1.11. Organisation of legal space

To ensure better cooperation between the State and enterprises, and to increase the capacity of export and innovation of the companies, there is a need to develop the legal space. This includes state purchases, intellectual property issues, export capacity and other issues with the state.

Action: Ongoing meetings of the representatives of the ICT sector and the state to develop legal space issues.

Executer. ITL, MKM, the Ministry of Justice

4.2. Research and Development Actions

Research and development actions play an important role in the sustainable operation of the ICT sector. We can look at the research and development actions from three perspectives: research in technology, implementation of new technology to create newer technology and social studies of human behaviour, consumption and acceptance of the technology. They are accompanied by cooperation with ICT-related technology education to improve the quality of education. Given the orientation of the development plan towards the products of ICT for export, the document examines the activities from the effectuation of the export point of view, without underestimating all other related activities (import of foreign professors and the establishment of working groups, development of new competencies in universities, development of infrastructure at universities, and so on.)

4.2.1. Technological scientific research

Activities: Presentation of research results to ICT companies, creating interest in commercialisation of the research. Offers of ideas for research theses according to need.

To be conducted by UT, TTU, Tehnopol, Tartu Science Park, EAS, ITL, companies

4.2.2. Implementation of scientific achievements to create new technology

Activities: Offers of ideas for research theses, according to demand. To lead the creation of possible spin-off companies. Financing of applied research in cooperation with the companies.

To be conducted by UT, TTU, Tehnopol, Tartu Science Park, EAS, ITL, companies

4.2.3. The choice and financing of preferable ICT scientific- and development directions.

The ICT R & D programme launch is designed to support ICT research and development. Under this program, it is appropriate to identify and prefinance the development of ICT technologies with the view to large developmental potential in Estonia.

Action: Selection of preferable development directions, compilation and implementation of the actions.

To be conducted by ITL, SA Archimedes, UT, TTU, companies

4.2.4. Research regarding human behaviour, consumption and acceptance of technology and creation of the Future State Centre

Studies regarding human behaviour, consumption and acceptance of technology allow companies to better adapt their products based on consumers' expectations within various cultural and educational contexts. This will therefore make them more competitive in world markets.

Activities: A systematic ordering of studies, analysis of the results and distributing information to the companies

To be conducted by MKM, EAS, ITL

4.2.5. Creating the "Future State Centre "

The role of e-Governance solutions is increasing in the fields of public administration and public services. It is therefore appropriate to establish a " Future State Centre ", which will examine the possible scenarios and solutions in the development of public administration and public services through new ways and new channels. Such studies will allow companies to create competitive, forward-thinking products for the global market.

Activities: Considering EGA as a world-class e-government competence centre in Estonia, it is sensible for EGA to create the centre. This includes the start-up, study, analysis and sharing of results with companies.

To be conducted by MKM, HTM, Archimedes, EGA, companies

4.2.6. Cooperation with ICT to improve the quality of technology-related education

Many of the Estonian ICT companies have a good day-to-day cooperation with the schools giving ICT education and have given significant financial support towards the enhancement of ICT teaching.

Activities: Cooperation with universities and technical colleges to improve the quality of education. Feedback improvement, organisation of practical training, investment in specific programs and improvement of the quality of teaching staff, creation of specific infrastructure, laboratories and test environments.

To be conducted by educational institutions, HTM, Archimedes, companies

Conclusion

The present document deals with important trends and efforts that Estonian ICT companies have to make in cooperation with their partners and state support structures. This is in order to significantly increase the sales of the products and services of ICT outside Estonia in the forthcoming years.

The critical feature of success will be the cooperation between all parties to increase export capacity. Only through joint- and goal-oriented actions can the Estonian ICT sector's products and services be brought to the global market.

Despite the crisis of the global economy, the need for products that make the economy more efficient and safe is growing. There are many options for this. Also, through the internet and mobile phones, countries wish to offer more of their public services to their citizens.

In cooperation with universities and developmental institutions, there needs to be constant input in creating and developing new technologies. That is the basis of the capacity for competitiveness of the sector.

Today, Estonia has all the important components to perform successfully in export markets – people with knowledge, intelligent entrepreneurs, the interest of the state and structured support procedures. To be successful, these preconditions should be realised in an export capacity by joint and planned actions.

More important than the present document has been the process of compiling it – discussions, learning and living. The process has convinced us that Estonian ICT companies, universities and state support structures are flexible and capable to adapt, and are ready for new challenges in a globally competitive environment.