Activities of Lithuanian Computer Society

Lithuanian Computer Society (the abbreviation, used further in the text, is LIKS) is a voluntary and independently acting social organization of computer and software users, specialists and amateurs in informatics and computer science. LIKS acts according to the Constitution of the Lithuanian Republic, to the Law of social organizations and other laws of the Republic, to the decisions of the Lithuanian Government; LIKS activities are based on the Statute.

The Constituent Congress of the LIKS took place on September 19-21, 1989. Officially LIKS was registrated on January 29, 1990. The headquarters of LIKS are in the capital of Lithuania Vilnius.

The following major objectives and tasks are prescribed by the LIKS Statute: to stimulate the development of informatics, being a promising modern science and an important sector of economy, in Lithuania; to build public and Government opinion on relevant regulation of information resources and IT applications; to take active part in organising training and qualification improvement studies for informatics specialists and users as well as teaching of informatics at secondary schools. In nineteen years of existing the above tasks have not lost their urgency.

The supreme LIKS management body is the Congress which is held every two years. It is the largest-scale event organised by LIKS, where the number of participants typically comes up to three hundred. Computer Days 2007 were held in September 2007 in Panevėžys. Each time LIKS organises its events in different towns of Lithuania in order to attract larger numbers of computer experts and users.

The main events during Computer Days 2007 included:

- **The Thirteenth International Scientific Conference of Computer Experts:** the Conference introduced scientific research results and technological solutions. Nearly sixty scientists from Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, and Belorussia participated in the Conference. The presentations were interesting for both computer scientists and practitioners. The Conference provided a perfect possibility to meet colleagues and to discuss their theoretical and practical solutions. The scientific articles were published in the scientific journal *Informacijos Mokslai*.

- **The Eight Conference on Informatics in School Education:** the participants shared their experience in IT teaching/learning and IT use at school, as well as integrated
teaching know-how. New computer-aided software tools for teaching were introduced and the latest documents on IT implementation into the educational process were discussed. Approximately forty presentations were made at the plenary sessions and sections.

- **A seminar and discussion on information society development**: politicians and IT experts were invited to talk about the situation of information society and knowledge economy development in Lithuania. The participants were introduced to the latest news related to the national IT development.

- **The Tenth Congress of the Lithuanian Computer Society**: the Council and the Management Board presented their activity reports and elections were held. The present LIKS management was elected.

- **Meeting of the ECDL CEOs from the Central and Eastern Europe**: ECDL CEOs from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia, Poland, Bulgaria and Lithuania together with representatives from the ECDL Foundation were presented at this 2 day event discussing possible cooperation.

- **Meeting of the Representatives of the Authorised ECDL Test Centres**: Near 100 representatives from all the ECDL testing centres in Lithuania and Belarus have participated at this half day event.

The participants and sponsors of *Computer Days 2007* included the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Information Society Development Committee under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Centre of Information Technology, Ministry of Education and Science, association Infobalt, Information Technologies Institute (ECDL Lietuva), Microsoft Lietuva, IBM Lietuva, Kaunas University of Technology, Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, and a number of Lithuanian business enterprises.

During the sitting of the newly elected Council, dr. A. Otas was elected the Chairman of LIKS Council, V. Dagys was elected the Deputy Chairman of the Council, and A. Žandaris was elected the Chairman of the Board. The Council and the Board used to have regular joint meetings to discuss the most urgent tasks of LIKS activities.

The Council drafted a plan of activities that included the major guidelines for the term of office:

- overall computer literacy development in Lithuania: implementation of the European computer literacy programme ECDL in the development of national testing infrastructure, participation in drafting and applying strategic documents on computer literacy among the citizens of the country, popularization of computer literacy ideas;
• development of LIKS project „Information society – a society without periphery“, aimed at advocating the importance of computer literacy and the development of information society and promoting the emerging new job possibilities for the citizens;
• development of contacts with universities, colleges, and academic institutes for the purpose of blending the aspirations of science and business sectors and offering them similar opportunities to perform specific jobs and projects;
• development of contacts with secondary schools: participation in organising training courses and seminars for teachers, promotion of Learning section activities, cooperation with the Association of Lithuanian Teachers of Informatics, expertise work in preparing projects and instructions on school computerisation;
• project-related activities: initiation of projects for state, private, and public institutions, coordination of work groups for the implementation of specific projects;
• contacts with public organisations: participation in events of Infobalt Association, programme Window to the Future, and the Knowledge Economy Forum, implementation of joint events and initiatives;
• close liaison with state institutions: Committee of the Development of Information Society under the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Infomation Society Development Committee under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of the Interior; participation in drafting documents on information society development in Lithuania: activities in work groups, expertise of drafted documents, discussions on the documents at the sittings of the Council, involvement of LIKS members into the aforementioned activities;
• promotion of proactive LIKS explanatory and advertising activities: printing scientific and educational articles in Lithuanian and foreign publications, work with the media;
• business relations with foreign organisations of computer experts: international organisations CEPIS, IFIP, ECDL Foundation, ECCAI, IT Star, the national computer expert unions in Belorussia, Bulgaria, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Norway, etc.;
• work with LIKS members: stimulating the activities of LIKS sections, dissemination of urgent information by e-mail, delivering invitations to the events organised by LIKS and other organisations, expedient notification of important events and initiatives.

The members of the Society are involved in the activities of the sections.
**The learning section** was founded in 1991. Its members meet regularly to discuss the problems of IT teaching and implementation into the teaching process, to share experience and ideas, to get to known Lithuanian places and to have an active rest.

**The artificial intelligence section** is a member of the European Coordinating Committee for Artificial Intelligence (ECCAI). Its activities are dedicated to theoretical studies of artificial intelligence, intelligent information systems, etc., and exchange of information by e-mail and at seminars.

**The legal information section** was established in 2001. The activities of the section are related to legal informatics science and teaching. The directions of the section activities are expanding by involving Lithuanian and EU institutions, which are responsible for legal regulation of information technologies, the development of e-government, securing a safe information environment, application of information and communication technologies in the management and evaluation sustainable development process.

The territorial **Panevėžys section** was established in 2001. The members of the section take an active part in the process of information society development in Panevėžys City. A proof of their active work was the event *Computer Days 2007* approved of by Panevėžys City Municipality.

**The Section of ECDL testing centre staff** was established in 2004. The members of the section are dealing with urgent computer literacy testing quality assurance issues.

Lithuanian Computer Society as well as its individual members were seeking active participation in all major events in Lithuania relevant to the profile of LIKS activities. Last year the liaison of Lithuanian Computer Society with other related international and foreign national organisations gathered pace.

- In 2002, LIKS became a full member of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). LIKS representative on IFIP Education Committee TC3 is V. Dagienė. More proactive participation in IFIP events is often prevented by financial problems (the need of travelling to meetings and events held in different continents).
At the events organised by CEPIS and ECDL Foundation, we cooperate with representatives of different computer societies from Europe and discuss methods and possibilities of our activities.

LIKS Intelligence section is a member of European Coordinating Committee for Artificial Intelligence Europos ECCAI.

Since 2003, LIKS has been a member of the Regional ICT Association in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe IT STAR.

We enjoy active cooperation with ICT organisations from Latvia, Poland, Belorussia, and the Ukraine in the field of European computer literacy programme ECDL implementation.

We work hard to promote LIKS activities to the public. The activities of Lithuanian Computer Society are described on www.liks.lt.

Quite a lot of information on LIKS activities can be found on the e-publication Veidrodis for teachers. Articles of LIKS members on information society development issues and our activities have been published in periodicals and other publications, we have spoken on Lithuanian radio and participated in TV programs. An article on LIKS activities was published in the journal Baltic IT&T.