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| **Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-17 for Europe (RPM-EUR)**  | P:\SUP\Logos\Post-150th Anniv\ITU-logo-UNblue.jpg |
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| **Bulgaria (Republic of)** |
| REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE BY ENHANCING CROSS-BORDER DIGITAL LITERACY |

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| **Priority area:**Priority setting for Regional Initiatives, related projects and financing mechanisms**Summary:**Nowadays, the information and communication technologies (ICT) have a huge impact on each aspect of our life. Society is experiencing a growing need for the use of large capacities of information in various fields of human activity, which leads to even wider deployment and more effective use of digital technologies. The ICT have a direct impact on the economic and social life of the community, for making business, better health care, safer and more efficient transport solutions, cleaner environment, new media opportunities and easier access to public services and cultural content. The ICT and the Internet are becoming a major factor in building a competitive economy based on knowledge and innovations.An important requirement for the implementation of ICT is obtaining sufficient literacy and usage skills. The skills for using digital technology have become one of the main demands on the labor market. Most vacancies now require basic digital skills. The lack of such skills excludes a lot of citizens from the economy and the digital society, which leads to limitation of the effect of the introduction of ICT in the development of high-tech economy.The use of information by digital technologies and the Internet contributes to the market development on a regional and global level. The existence of areas with underdeveloped ICT infrastructure and lack of the skills to use ICT, as well as, insufficient digital literacy of citizens is a precondition for creating digital fragmentation, isolation from the availability of using electronic services and thereby reducing the quality of life of citizens.**Expected results:**- Ensuring high-speed connectivity in three (3) schools in the country in border/rural areas. It aims at providing connectivity to both the national high-speed networks and cross-border connectivity with schools from neighboring countries to ensure the exchange of educational content and teaching methods, conducting joint training and creating skills for communications.- Provide teachers, trainers and students with different, contemporary technological devices and software for use in educational contexts.- Up-grading trainers and teachers' skills.- Teaching students how to search information online, fact-check and develop adequate skills how to make a distinction between benefits and challenges of the online world.- Encourage teachers to create digital content. Provide guidance to teachers on coding and computer programming tools for elementary schools.- Use available public institutions premises such as postal offices in small/rural communities for providing digital skills training to identified groups.**References:**ITU Resolution 17 (Rev. Dubai, 2014) |

**Proposal**

One way to bridge the digital divide and exclusion of groups of the society from the opportunity to take advantage of ICT, is the implementation of regional initiatives between neighboring countries. In this regard, we propose to launch an initiative to promote digital literacy, skills and e-education, by ensuring a high-speed connectivity to three schools in the country in border/rural areas. The project envisages the provision of connectivity to both the national high-speed networks and cross-border connectivity with schools from neighboring countries to ensure the exchange of educational content and teaching methods, conducting joint training and creating skills for communications.

**Title:** REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE BY ENHANCING CROSS-BORDER DIGITAL LITERACY

**Objectives:** Increase the digital competences and skills as a key precondition for the introduction and the wide-spread use of information and communication technologies (ICT)

**Expected Results:**

* Ensuring high-speed connectivity in three (3) schools in the country in border/rural areas. It aims at providing connectivity to both the national high-speed networks and cross-border connectivity with schools from neighboring countries to ensure the exchange of educational content and teaching methods, conducting joint training and creating skills for communications.
* Provide teachers, trainers and students with different, contemporary technological devices and software for use in educational contexts.
* Up-grading trainers and teachers' skills.
* Teaching students how to search information online, fact-check and develop adequate skills how to make a distinction between benefits and challenges of the online world.
* Encourage teachers to create digital content. Provide guidance to teachers on coding and computer programming tools for elementary schools.
* Use available public institutions premises such as postal offices in small/rural communities for providing digital skills training to identified groups.

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