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**Online Open Consultation of the ITU Council Working Group (CWG) on  
«Access to the Internet for Persons with Disabilities and Specific Needs»**

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**Implementation of the Cross-Russia project aimed at teaching senior citizens  
and disabled people computer literacy: the Alphabet of Internet**

The Alphabet of Internet project was originally launched in 2013.

**The Project was developed by:**

PJSC Rostelecom, the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation supported by the Russian Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

The Alphabet of Internet project includes a computer literacy teaching program specially tailored and adapted to suit the needs of elderly people, teaching guidelines and presentations for each lesson. The Alphabet of Internet is designed both for learning in groups under a tutor’s supervision and for self-learning. The teaching program was positively assessed by experts of the Institute for Implementing IT in Education of the Russian Academy of Education.

**Program Specifics:**

The beginner’s course includes 12 chapters. Classes are scheduled taking into account a possibility for learners to get registered on the e-government service portal gosuslugi.ru. For the first time, the official websites of the federal authorities and public initiatives website are featured there. A chapter devoted to information search capabilities taking as an example a Russian search engine Sputnik is included in the teaching program.

According to the outcome of the regional survey of learners taught on training courses under the program (Nizhniy Novgorod region, some 6 thousand respondents), 77.5% of the surveyed trainees believed that a chapter devoted to capabilities presented on the e-government service portal should be definitively

included in the training program, while 45.5% of respondents were potentially willing to make use of public services in the electronic form, with 26% of respondents intended to do so in near future.

### **Teaching under the program:**

Under the Alphabet of Internet project supported by the Russian Pension Fund, training courses attended by trainees were organized for senior citizens in 40 Russian regions. According to information as on December 1, 2015 the total attendance was about 14 thousand people. Another 5 thousand people are estimated to learn the Alphabet of Internet at home privately with relatives. Tutorials are donated to libraries in several Russian regions. In some regions training is organized also by the Russian Pensioners' Union.

### **The portal: [azbukainterneta.ru](http://azbukainterneta.ru)**

As of September 1, 2014 all the materials have been posted for public access on the project website ([azbukainterneta.ru](http://azbukainterneta.ru), [азбукаинтрнета.рф](http://азбукаинтрнета.рф)) specifically created for this purpose. A version designed for people with poor eyesight is also available on the portal. Any user is able to download the tutorial from the project website for his/her private usage. Users can ask questions on the portal concerning the program and project implementation. Some 15 thousand users visit the portal monthly. Over 1 thousand tutors are registered in a special portal area.

### **Project Enhancement:**

Development of an advanced training course under the program was started in 2015.

Currently three advanced computer literacy modules have been issued and published on the portal of the Alphabet of Internet project, designed for senior citizens and disables people who already gained some basic skills:

- Computer Capabilities module contains advice on selecting a home PC, connecting and usage of auxiliary equipment.
- Social Networking module contains a detailed description and advice on using social networks.
- Regional internet service module presents official websites of regional authorities and bodies, social services of organizations and enterprises offering housing maintenance and utility services.

### **Project development for Russian speaking people in the countries where the Russian language is used widely.**

In June 2015 an Alphabet of Internet tutorial was presented in the Russian Center of Science and Culture located in Erevan, supported by the Russian Agency for CIS, compatriots living abroad and humanitarian cooperation and Rostelecom branch in Armenia. The event was attended by representatives of the Russian language public organizations, people of older generations, the Center



management. Tutorial books were also delivered to the library of the Russian Center of Science and Culture located in Erevan, where they are readily available for free access to all visitors of the Center.

### **“Thanks to Internet’2015” All-Russia Contest**

Since April 1 and until October 1, 2015 Rostelecom supported by the Russian Pension Fund conducted the first All-Russia contest among pensioners for personal achievements in mastering computer literacy, called Thanks to Internet’2015. Papers presented for the contest are posted on the project website at [azbukainterneta.ru](http://azbukainterneta.ru) in the “Contest” section, with results announced during the Russian Interactive Week, October 21–23, 2015 in Moscow.

The contest was conducted among retired people and elderly people (aged 50+), studying computer literacy, in order to encourage regions to develop a framework for mass teaching elderly and disabled people computer literacy, for focusing public attention on this matter, creating a positive national content in the Russian segment of Internet, promoting the Alphabet of Internet teaching program as the principle Russian program for teaching the elderly and disabled people computer literacy.

Four nominations were identified:

- gosuslugi.ru portal: a simple tool to solve a complex problem;
- Internet: my friend and assistant;
- Virtual communications;
- A special nomination: The most active region.

Over 2 thousand papers from 78 Russian regions were presented to the contest.

According to the contest outcome, the Contest Commission not only selected three winners in each of the nominations, but also awarded contest participants from Russia and Armenia with 15 special prizes for particularly inspiring works concerning practical usability for pensioners and disabled people of computer literacy and Internet skills.

#### **Top ten most active Russian regions in terms of participation in the Contest are:**

1. Krasnoyarskiy kray: 174 contest participants (10.4%);
2. Rostov region: 141 contest participant (8.4%);
3. Tver region: 111 contest participants (6.6%);
4. Nizhniy Novgorod region: 110 contest participants (6.5%);
5. Saint-Petersburg: 74 contest participants (4.4%);

6. Republic of Bashkortostan: 68 contest participants (4.0%);
7. Moscow region: 60 contest participants (3.6%);
8. Kurgan region: 47 contest participants (2.8%);
9. Samara region: 46 contest participants (2.7%);
10. Republic of Tatarstan: 44 contest participants (2.6%).

78% of the total number of papers presented for the contest was submitted by pensioners who were taught on the special training courses.

**13.8% of the participants was male and 86.2% was women.**

**The average age of contesters was 63.4 years**

**The oldest contest participant was a 92 year old man from Samara region**  
while a number of participants was 88-89 year old.

**Education level: 45.8% of the participants had secondary education, while 54.2% had higher education.**

Elderly people having secondary and higher education are mostly interested in learning computer skills (which is attributed to their intelligence level). Education gained during their active working age enables them to fully percept new knowledge in an older age and pursue an active way of life. Pensioners having higher educations tend to use Internet and computer capabilities more extensively and are willing to move further in mastering relevant skills.