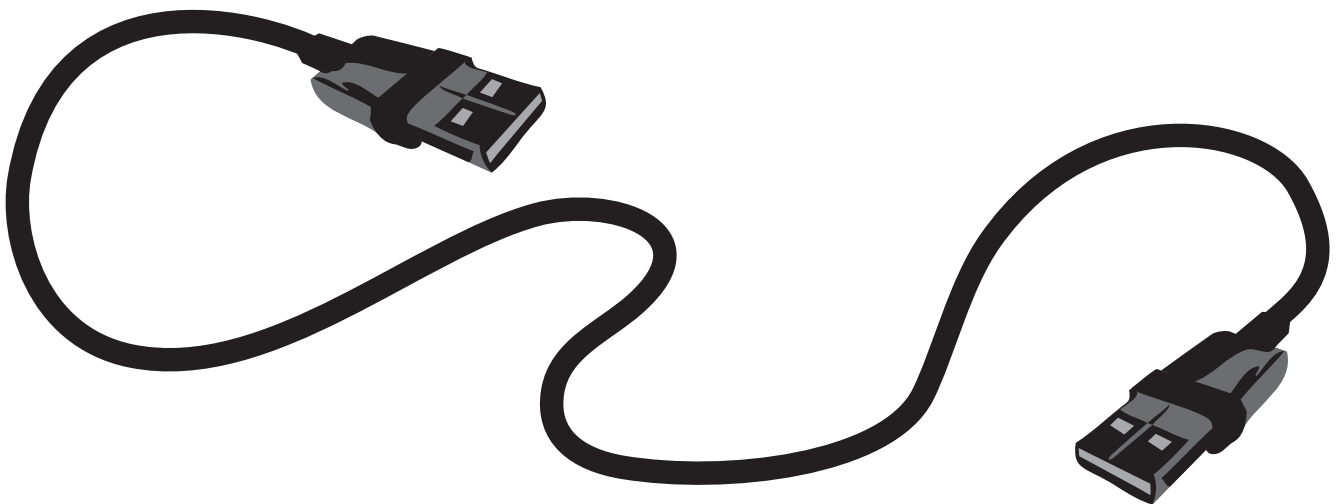# Winnet Sweden
Digital Agenda – *short version*
2013–2015

WINNET

SWEDEN

Preface

Winnet Sweden is one of the signatories – ICT at the service of mankind, that we're sharing the ICT-related political target of *Sweden being the best in the world at utilising all the possibilities and opportunities of digitisation.* We want to be an active partner in the work to achieve the ambitious target in our agenda, detailing that gender equality within ICT should increase significantly leading up to year 2020.

Sweden is facing big challenges when only 5 percent of women are graduating as civil engineers in computer technology. When the number of women choosing to become computer specialists is less in the younger age groups than in the older. When 16 percent of women with pre-college education never having used the internet.

When the biggest differences between the digital activity involvement of men and women are most prevalent in the low income bracket.

Winnet Sweden suggests a partnership platform to support ICT on equal terms, where we, together with other signatories, can accept and address the challenges of the digital agenda.

For references, please see Winnet Sweden Digital Agenda, www.winnet.se or get in contact with our Project Manager Coordinator, see below.

Stockholm, 21st March 2013
Winnet Sweden
The board/ by Project Manager Coordinator
Chatarina Nordström

Summary

Winnet Sweden is one of the signatories of the Swedish digital agenda – ICT at the s 2ervice of mankind. The act of signing this is a voluntary declaration of intent, which means that we share the ICT-related political target of Sweden being the best in the world at utilising all the possibilities and opportunities of digitisation. This strategy document is partly a compilation of basic data presented to the Government, which describes how Winnet intends to contribute in order to reach the target, and partly forms the basis for all strategic efforts of the organisation supporting ICT on equal terms 2013–2015. Winnet is to complement the responsibilities of other parties in the digital agenda and identify needs in line with our target: By coordinating and supporting women's local and regional resource centres, strive towards women claiming their share of the resources in society, that the competencies of women are utilised in society, as well as male and female efforts are treated equally.

During the period of 2013–2015, Winnet is focusing two strategic areas in the digital agenda, where we envisage good opportunities for us to contribute to the implementation: The role of ICT in the social evolution (research and innovation, as well as equality) and Easy and safe to use (digital inclusion and digital competence). In our strategy document we present how we can contribute in these areas and the digital agenda of Winnet Sweden.

Our agenda is focused on establishing a collaboration platform for gender equality within ICT, to help promote digital inclusion, counteract stereotypical assumptions and make use of the capital earmarked for development work in the European structural funds.

The strategy document provides insight into what Winnet Sweden believes needs to change in order to achieve the far reaching goal of the national agenda; ensuring a significant increase of equality within the area of ICT leading up to year 2020. We highlight the importance of basing the work on tried and tested praxis as well as scientific proof, in order to achieve both short-term and long-term results. There is also a short description of the international work Winnet carries out to support gender equality within ICT and an appendix with references to reports published by Winnet, reports that include gendered statistics, best practice examples etc.

Table of contents

1. Introduction and instructions

Winnet Sweden is one of the so called signatories of the Swedish digital agenda – ICT at the service of mankind. Signing this is a voluntary declaration of intent and a voluntary commitment, which involves Winnet sharing the ICT-related political target of Sweden being the best in the world at utilising all the possibilities and opportunities of digitisation and that our organisation shall contribute to achieving this target.

By this declaration of intent, we would like to announce we share the ambition that Sweden should, in the best possible way, utilise the opportunities and possibilities of digitisation, and that we, with the Swedish digital agenda as our starting point, intend to describe in what way we can contribute to the implementation and realisation of the agenda.

This strategy document is partly a compilation of basic data presented to the Government, which describes how Winnet intends to contribute in order to progress the digitisation within Sweden from the digital agenda aspect and partly forms the basis for all strategic efforts of the organisation supporting ICT on equal terms 2013–2015. This strategy should function as support for local and regional resource centres (RC), which are members of Winnet Sweden, and will be updated for the period of 2016-2020 based on the results of 2013–2015.

Winnet Sweden should complement the responsibilities of other parties and identify the need for actions in line with the overall goals of the organisation. By coordinating and supporting women's local and regional RCs, our goals aim to help women claim their share of the societal resources, that the competencies of women are utilised in society and that male and female efforts are treated equally. ICT is not a gender neutral concept, which in turn affects women's involvement in and influence on the digital evolution.

The strategy document provides a background to the commitment of Winnet Sweden in the area of gender equality within ICT (pls see chapter 2) and describes the organisation's priorities from the aspect *of ICT at the service of mankind* (see chapter 3). It contains an outline of the four target areas for the period of 2013–2015 and planned activities within each area (see chapter 4). The last chapter (5) gives a brief description of our international commitment for gender equality ICT. In the appendix, there is a summary of reports from Winnet. Reports that, amongst other things, include best practices, gendered statistics and references to studies in the areas of gender and ICT.

2. Background

2.1 The Winnet resource centres' commitment to ICT on equal terms

Since the 1990's, resource centres have been involved in matters relating to female influence on ICT and societal digitisation. This has partly been done through involvement in various projects and partly through themed resource centres focusing on technology and ICT. The projects have for instance concerned internet access for active members in resource centres, technology and gender pedagogy, ICT education programmes for women and ICT in business networks and E-commerce.

The last few years, Winnet Sweden have intensified their efforts around gender equality in ICT and digital involvement. Back in 2010, the Government tasked the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket) with organising a national conference in partnership with Winnet and putting together a sound basis of a strategy for increased growth through ICT on equal terms. During 2010–2011, we managed project "ICT on equal terms" to mobilise RCs and other parties to support women's involvement in the ICT progression.

The commitment to the digital agenda contributed to the project called "Pedagogy for ICT on equal terms", in which Winnet Sweden have played a part during 2012. The project was coordinated a local RC – Winnet Kristianstad – and highlighted female influence on ICT, access to ICT tools and terms within the ICT sector. The role of the RCs to promoting digital involvement has been reflected at three separate conferences during 2012 – Equal opportunities in the job market, Equal opportunities within innovation, Equal opportunities within rural areas – that have all been organised by Winnet Sweden in collaboration with other parties.

Efforts made throughout the period of 2010–2012 have been possible due to development funding from the national resource centre programme, aiming to raise awareness of conditions and stipulations of women and increase female influence on the regional undertakings for growth. Winnet Sweden welcomes the decision by the Government relating to funding for the 2013–2015 programme. ICT at the service of mankind is linked to all strategic areas of the programme (entrepreneurship and innovative surroundings, professional competence provision and increased labour supply, availability, strategic trans-boundary collaborations and development of rural areas).

Winnet Sweden is participating in the campaign Digidel and welcomes the Government highlighting the role of the civil society in the work with the digital agenda. We base our efforts for gender equality in growth on a so called Quadruple Helix perspective that, contrary to Triple Helix, includes the civil society in a well functioning innovation system. Scientists have also referred to resource centres as a form of innovation system.

We embrace the assignment the Government entrusted the Linné University with; to map voluntary initiatives to increase the digital participation of women and men. It can provide us with knowledge of successful initiatives in order to reach women in groups that risk digital exclusion and initiatives that integrates a gender/equality perspective.

2.2 What needs have been defined by the Winnet resource centres?

The initiatives of resource centres in recent years have, like the resource centre projects from the 1990's and onwards, focused on the need to:

1) **To increase knowledge** in the field of gender, equality and ICT

2) **To challenge the norm**, presumptions and concepts within ICT.

3) **To highlight** the exclusion and inclusion of women in the digital evolution.

4) **To create** a national **platform** for ICT on equal terms.

In Table 1 on page 5, there is a summary of what Winnet Sweden feels need to be changed, our own role in this transformation and the targets of the resource centre programme 2013–2015.[12] In the following chapter (3), the priorities of Winnet Sweden are being presented in relation to ICT at the service of mankind. The strategic areas of our agenda, which are presented in chapter 4, have been drafted with the context of two decades worth of experience in RCs, the national agenda, the European structural funds 2014–2020, as well as scientific research in the field of gender and ICT.

3. The digital agenda and the prioritisations of the resource centres

3.1 ICT at the service of mankind (men and women)

In the digital agenda it is stated that more women are *needed to be part of the decision-making process and participates in the development of the digitisation and corresponding opportunities.* The participation of women is to Winnet Sweden a question of democracy and about technological developments, useful services, designs to suit everybody, a service for citizens, innovation and growth. There are more women needed in ICT as students, scientists, developers, tutors, business owners, innovators and leaders. During the period of 2013–2015 we focus on two strategic areas, where Winnet Sweden can envisage excellent possibilities of contributing to the implementation and realisation of the digital agenda.

- The role of ICT within the social evolution (pls see chapter 3.2)
- Easy and safe to use (pls see chapter 3.3)

The innovation strategy of Winnet Sweden for the period of 2014–2020 refers to a third strategic area in the digital agenda: *Services that create value.* In this strategy document, we would like to highlight two themes in this area relevant to our planned activities during the 2013–2015 period (pls see chapter 4). This is the development in health and social care as well as the results from the state inquiry of measures to increase the ICT-usage in the cottage industry and small business segment.

Digitisation and ICT solutions in health and social care

Winnet Sweden welcomes the digital agenda's focus to create visible and tangible improvements to *healthcare and social care personnel.* There is a need for more user-friendly ICT solutions in health and social care and the health and social care personnel – where the majority are female – have to be involved in the digitisation development to a greater extent than today. Female competence and experience both in the form of health and social care personnel and as patients have to be utilised in order to establish new digital solutions and to adapt existing ICT solutions.

We see a need of a gender equality perspective in various efforts aimed at developing digital solutions for health and social care. The gender equality perspective has to be integrated in a clear way as mentioned in the digital agenda, e.g. in programmes for test beds aiming to develop innovative solutions in health and social care, as well as care for the elderly. More has to be ventured into cross connections between ICT clusters and health and social care clusters and focusing on the gender equality angle. RCs are used to working with models to integrate the gender equality perspective in "cross connected clusters". Another proposal from Winnet Sweden is an increased element of ICT in health and social care education programmes and an increased element of health science in technical ICT training programmes.

Small companies – big opportunities with ICT[21]

Many local and regional RCs are working on encouraging women's enterprise and their work relates to the areas of entrepreneurship and business development in the digital agenda and *ICT's potential to increase the growth, competitiveness and commerce of companies.*

Winnet Sweden would like, same as the state inquiry Small companies - big opportunities with ICT, to focus on the role of ICT in business development. It is important to integrate an ICT perspective in efforts to promote women's enterprise and efforts specifically applicable to business segments where many women own and manage companies, such as health and social care as well as tourism industry. We are of the opinion that better results can be reached with the structural funds 2014–2020 than previous campaign periods by prioritising ventures in business critical ICT, which reach the service industry, and business-enhancing efforts with a gender equality perspective.

There is a need for efforts – e.g. vouchers for business development with ICT – aimed at companies in sectors where many women own and run companies and gender equality integration in the business-enhancing system. The result from regional pilot studies of women's entrepreneurships, managed within the national programme Encourage the entrepreneurship of women, confirms this need.

The state inquiry Small companies – big opportunities with ICT highlights the need for a structure in order to track ICT usage in smaller companies and efforts aimed at increasing the usage. Winnet Sweden believes such a structure could contribute to increased knowledge of the conditions relating to business men and women, as well as the conditions in sectors where many women own and run companies. Gendered statistics is key to track ICT usage in smaller companies, sharing experiences

and supportive methodology relating to ICT focused efforts. We are very willing to contribute with good examples of ICT-related efforts both from Sweden and other EU states, through the members of Winnet Europe.

3.2 The role of ICT in the social evolution

The subcategories of ICT at the service of mankind, which Winnet Sweden is focusing on during the period of 2013–2015, are research, innovation and gender equality.

Research and innovation

Winnet Sweden will contribute to the implementation and realisation of the digital agenda by:

1) *Via Winnet Centre of Excellence® and in collaboration with our network of scientists seek funding to compile Swedish research in the area of gender, ICT, health and social care, in a knowledge overview as well as spreading this knowledge to our members and external parties.*

2) *Encourage our members to seek collaboration opportunities with the science sector with the aim of increasing the knowledge of ICT usage in sectors where many women are active as employees or entrepreneurs, as well as of how women are involved in the development of digital services.*

As previously described, Winnet Sweden feels it is imperative that efforts in ICT and health and social care incorporate the gender equality angle. This is to ensure female influence in the digitisation development and corresponding opportunities, successful implementation of ICT solutions in order to produce innovative digital solutions. We are keen to stimulate more studies in the area of gender, ICT, health and social care and feel it is vital that the knowledge, which already exists in Sweden, is utilised and also makes its mark on various activities, e.g. the programme for test beds as mentioned above. Since the 1980's, Nordic scientists have highlighted concepts such as care rationale and technical rationale. There is also scientific research highlighting the introduction of digital solutions in health and social care from a gender perspective.

Winnet Sweden is interested in inquiries, which analyse design processes and ICT environments from a gender viewpoint. Research shows that the image of women not participating in the development is subject to how we choose to define various concepts and processes in order to develop digital services.

We welcome the Government venture on Needs-driven research for increased gender equality during 2013–2015 via Vinnova and can envisage the opportunities of e.g. the Research Council for work and social studies (FAS) to contribute to studies that increases this knowledge base.

In our innovations strategy, which will be published during the latter part of 2013, we will further highlight the need of research in the areas of e.g. regional gender contracts and ICT clusters.

Through our network of scientists, Winnet Centre of Excellence®, we have the opportunity of stimulating knowledge transfer and advancement of knowledge.

Gender equality

Winnet Sweden will contribute to the implementation and realisation of the digital agenda by:

1) *Arrange a council of relevant parties for ICT on equal terms and seek funds to coordinate a partnership platform.*

2) *Spread knowledge from scientific research in the field of gender and ICT and successful praxis for ICT on equal terms (e.g. methods for making ICT training accessible) via RCs, Winnet Centre of Excellence®, our website as well as Jämställd. nu[33], seminars, conferences and publications.*

   To propose, via the work of RCs for egalitarian regional growth, efforts aimed at gender equality in ICT and to challenge standards, myths and concepts within the frame of e.g. regional digital agendas, action plans for egalitarian regional growth and CEMR declaration.

3) *Encourage our members and provide them with tools to, with the support of the European structure funds for the period of 2014–2020, implement efforts to promote women as active parties in the digital evolution, female innovation in ICT and digital solutions based on the knowledge and experience of women.*

The gendered statistics presented in ICT at the service of mankind and statistics that RCs have compiled indicate the massive challenge we are facing if we are to achieve our ambition of equality in the area of ICT should increase significantly by year 2020. To increase the percentage of women in ICT-related professions, working in the ICT sector and in ICT-orientated education programmes.

During academic year 2010/2011, 7% of the students studying computer technology at the college level were female and 5% of all students in 2011 receiving civil engineer degrees in computer technology were women.

Horizontal gender segregation is a significant obstacle for women's influence, workforce provision in ICT and growth. Forecasts from SCB indicate that the percentage of women with a technical qualifications in roles such as data specialists run the risk of being less than 20% by the year 2030. The number of female data specialists is increasing, but at the same time the percentage of women in the younger age brackets is decreasing. In 2010, the percentage of female data specialists in the age group 25–29 years old was 15%, while the percentage in the age group 40–44 years old was 28%.

Winnet Sweden wants to challenge the norms in order to reduce career hurdles of women within ICT and presumptions about women being more suited to the "soft parts" of ICT (such as communication) and men more suited to the "hard parts" of ICT (such as technology). Norms that stop women having the same influence over the technological evolution, that stop the experience of women from the care sector not being utilised and that also limit women's room to manoeuvre.

Presumptions that make young women being viewed as "deviants" at the college technology programmes, both in relation to the young men at the same education programmes and in relation to "ordinary girls".

The issue of too few young women choosing ICT programmes is often pushed upon the individual rather than focusing one's attention on the pedagogy and the relationship between students and teacher, as well as between young men and women.

We welcome, like the Government's efforts in primary school to support girls' interest in natural science, mathematics and technological subjects, that the college-level technology programme will be based on experiences of both men and women, as well as knowledge of how presumptions steer perceptions of what is female and male. It is important to utilise experiences from different initiatives, e.g. KomTek (municipal technology and entrepreneurial schooling), which has been developed right from the start on gender-aware pedagogy and has received support from the European Social fund.

International studies show that girls are interested in technology, but also that girls are more sceptical than boys to what problems technology can solve. There is a big gap between the Nordic countries and many developing countries, when it comes to girls' interest in choosing a technical profession. Research shows that the gendering of education programmes, professions, jobs and tasks in ICT are vastly different from workplace to workplace, different regions in Sweden and other countries.

Statistics from the vocational college system (Yrkeshögskolan) indicates that non-native women are more likely to make an "untraditional" choice than women born in Sweden. Non-native women are more interested in studying computers/ICT at the same time as prejudice in society about the "immigrant woman" and double discrimination make up hurdles for more women in ICT.

Winnet Sweden feels that, in order to confront the above described challenges, we have to increase collaboration and partnerships between various parties, who work towards ICT on equal terms. Winnet have for a long time been committed to establishing a Swedish partnership platform in the same way as were actively prompted and instigated a European platform (pls see chapter 5).

Within the framework of the work for regional growth, where RCs are one active party, Winnet Sweden would like to participate towards equality integration in the regional digital agendas and in the European structural funds 2014–2020. Both the RCs' follow-up of the structural funds and state enquiries, evaluations and research reports show that the funds have not been used as a tool for egalitarian ICT in Sweden, in the same way as it has been in many other EU member states. We will put questions about ICT on equal terms to the European Social fund where we participate in a group linked to the fund, which is coordinated by the Government Offices (pls see chapter 3.3 and 3.4 below).

We embrace the Government initiative with regional action plans for egalitarian growth 2012–2014 and see these plans as a tool for reaching the targets of the digital agenda. An RC study that has compared the segregation within ICT in the county of Skåne compared to Stockholm based on gendered statistics shows for example that the challenges partly differ from region to region.

Through our network of local and regional RCs we can on one hand implement efforts of our own for ICT on equal terms and on the other hand also try to influence educators, companies and people responsible for regional growth to work with gender equality integration and efforts that are specifically aimed at women.

3.3   Easy and safe to use

The subcategories of ICT at the service of mankind that Winnet Sweden is focusing on during the period of 2013–2015 are digital inclusion and digital competence.

Digital inclusion

Winnet Sweden will contribute to the implementation and realisation of the digital agenda by:

1) *Focusing their attention on the need for studies that illustrate digital inclusion and exclusion from a gender perspective and from gendered statistics for various groups.*

2) *Highlighting the conditions of and the digital participation of various groups (non-native women, young women, unqualified women, female business owners etc) through our network of local and regional RCs, as well as through our participation in the Digidel campaign.*

3) *Using our website, Digidel, our members, workshops and publications to spread good examples of efforts done to lessen women's digital exclusion.*

4) *Bring questions to the table relating to digital inclusion and the need for efforts with a gender/equality perspective in the European Social fund 2014–2020.*

There is a number of factors, which affect digital inclusion, e.g. age, level of education, experience in and access to internet in the workplace and also financial status. Unqualified women are one of the groups that have had the longest time accessing the internet. In 2012, out of women that left school prior to college, 16% had never used the internet. Corresponding number for the men was 8%. Amongst women and men that had post-college education, only 1% had never used the internet. Amongst non-native ladies 11% had never used the internet, while the corresponding number for the men was 2%.

The gap between the income of men and women remains significant, despite the high educational level of women. Low income hampers digital inclusion and many women cannot afford a computer or a tablet. The difference in digital participation between the sexes is also the most significant in the low income bracket. We could see the same pattern in the 1990's, when the women in the families with children were the ones with least amount of access to the computer and this is today true for the tablet.

Single mothers often prioritise her children's access to computers, smartphones and/or tablets.

Winnet Sweden gladly take on board the continuous work of breaking down the gendered statistics, from for instance SCB and .SE for various groups, for the purpose of obtaining more knowledge of the digital participation of women. Through statistics and analysis of how women in different groups use the internet, we can get a better understanding of how digital inclusion can be encouraged. We do for instance need more information about ICT usage in smaller companies owned and run by women (pls see chapter 3.1). What is lacking, as indicated in ICT at the service of mankind, is gendered statistics that illustrate the access to and the usage of ICT for men and women with disabilities.

Through our network of local and regional RCs and in collaboration with other active parties in the civil society, we can bring questions about digital exclusion from a gender/equality perspective to the table, as well

Digital competence

Winnet Sweden will contribute to the implementation and realisation of the digital agenda by:

Collaborating with active parties within non-degree further education and within the civil society to design and implement gender aware efforts that contributes to more women attaining digital skills.

Spreading knowledge of successful praxis for gender aware pedagogy in ICT-related competence development and ICT-related training programmes via our website, Digidel and Jämställ.nu, seminars, conferences and publications. as spreading tried and tested praxis to encourage female inclusion.

Bring topics to the table relating to digital competence from a gender/equality viewpoint in the European Social fund 2014–2020.

Encourage our members to implement and realise projects, with the help of the European structural funds 2014–2020, with the aim of more women obtaining digital skills as well as increasing ICT-usage in companies owned and run by women.

Gendering is reflected in the digital world, where there are differences in how men and women use the internet. The differences in the uses affect the digital competence of men vs women. Education statistics from SCB also indicates that staff training amplifies traditional gender patterns where women to a greater extent undertake further education in the health care sector and men more in technology, manufacturing and various types of computer uses.

Statistics from SCB about civilians' computer usage and internet shows that approx 30% of men and 13% of women have at one time or another done some programming. Amongst non-native persons, 29% of the men had done some programming and 9% of the women. It is also more common for men than women to have experience in installing new equipment; a new printer for example. Women are also less likely than men to feel that they have all the information they require in order to keep up to date on internet safety.

Women must be granted access to both basic digital skills and specialist competence within ICT development. As recognised in a number of state enquiries, in order to achieve results, it is important to focus on the short-comings and changes needed within the education system rather than "the short-comings of women".

There is also a need for raising the competency level in order to strengthen the gender perspective in ICT-related education programmes and the gender awareness of tutors in all forms of adult/further education. There is plenty of know-how and knowledge to pick up on in e.g. training programmes for technology tutors, courses for trainers and studies about gender, learning and ICT.

The follow-up report that the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Tillväxtverket) compiled on the back of Handlingsplanen Jämställd ICT-utveckling för ökad tillväxt shows that only half of the education centres included in this follow-up offer education in gender perspective for teachers, programme managers and research supervisors. If more educators and career advisers obtain competence in gender issues, then more women will gain access to specialist competence and expertise through colleges, vocational colleges, technology and engineering colleges and other vocational training programmes.

Within the RCs we have also identified the need for raising the competence level in vocational sectors where women occupy the majority of jobs. Both within groups where the professionals have good digital competence, such as librarians, and also in groups where digitisation is getting more and more widespread, such as nursery teachers. For Winnet Sweden this is partly about women having the opportunity to grow in their professional roles as well as strengthening their position in the job market, and partly about being able to develop welfare services and the service to citizens. Non-degree further education (such as adult community colleges and libraries etc) plays an important role together with the resource centres so that more women can obtain basic digital skills and to reduce the digital gaps. RCs have since the 1990's arranged a substantial number of courses, seminars and workshops for women relating to ICT questions.

Through our network of local and regional Winnet members and in collaboration with other active parties in the area of non-degree further education we can stimulate the range of gender aware courses, courses specifically aimed at women in groups that risk "digital exclusion" and courses for companies owned and run by women.

4. Digital agenda of Winnet Sweden 2013–2015

Our digital agenda have four strategic areas where we will focus our efforts during the period 2013–2015. Under the headings below, we have described our role, planned activities, (potential) partners and our schedule. Some activities can be found under several different action areas.

Action area: Counteract stereotypical conceptions

Winnet Sweden plays an important role in the counteracting of stereotypical conceptions relating to women and ICT. We should both highlight how digitisation affects the areas where women are working and the obstacles that stop women from accessing male ICT environments.

Action area: Promote digital inclusion

Winnet Sweden plays an important role with promoting digital inclusion and participation of women. We should actively influence policies, programmes and measures aimed at promoting digital skills and also actively implement efforts to raise the level of competence from a gender/equality perspective.

Action area: Structural funds as a tool

Winnet Sweden plays an important role in making the European Structural funds 2014–2020 into a tool for egalitarian ICT. We should actively highlight and monitor topics relating to gender/equality perspective within these funds and also lead strategic projects for egalitarian ICT.

Action area: Partnership platform and empirical research

Winnet Sweden plays an important role in assisting the creation of a national partnership platform for egalitarian ICT and in contributing, through Winnet Centre of Excellence®, with empirical research in the field of gender and ICT. We will arrange a council of active parties in the framework of the national digital agenda and collaborate with individual scientific researchers as well as various institutions.

5. International collaborations

Winnet Sweden and our members have participated in the international cooperation (Interreg) within EU since Sweden became a member of the union. The EU project W.IN.NET (2003–2006) within the framework of Interreg III C resulted in the forming of a European organisation of resource centres (Winnet Europe). One of the themes in W.IN.NET was women and technology, and the project were amongst other things instrumental to a "position paper" relating to the mobilisation of women within ICT, which was submitted to the European Commission.

In the year 2007, Winnet Sweden arranged a Nordic conference together with Winnet Europe and with funding from the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications and one of the themes for this conference was Gender Equality Perspective on Innovation and ICT. The conference

formed the foundation of European Centre of Women and Technology and a joint venture in the capitalisation project Winnet 8 within EU programme Interreg IVC.

Winnet 8 involved eight EU member states and its purpose was to encourage women in innovation, entrepreneurship and technology. The aim is to design action plans for egalitarian regional growth and to influence policy development in the EU. Good examples of actions and efforts have been analysed, such as more women in ICT. The collaboration with Winnet 8 was also the result of a close cooperation between the RCs of the Baltic Sea region.

During 2010-2012 the collaborative work between Winnet and other active parties in the Baltic Sea region has deepened. In the project Jämställd ICT (pls see chapter 2.1), a conference was organised together with SIDA Baltic Sea unit. The conference was about ICT development and the role of RCs in promoting the enterprise of women and innovation within ICT. In 2013 Winnet Sweden have been granted seed funding for Baltic Sea region Partnership Platform for Gender & Economic Growth and a joint venture with Poland in the framework of the Baltic Sea strategy. The initiative is based on the results of Winnet 8 and one of the focuses is on ICT on equal terms.

The experiences from the commitment of Winnet Sweden in international collaborations and ventures will be spread and utilised in the work of the digital agenda in Sweden. Winnet Sweden is expected to, in line with ICT at the service of mankind, contribute to innovative efforts, new arenas and collaborations between different parties. We choose to conclude this strategy document with a quote from a report published by SIDA Baltic Sea unit that we have collaborated with.

"Remember that things described as 'gender neutral' can often be gender-blind; technology is for instance often gender neutral, even though it – often unwittingly – is based on male standards, as technology has been developed by men, from male experiences and aimed at fulfilling male needs."