

Silesia after Five Years of Modernization – Why You Should Attend ICEE-2010 at SUT

July 18-22, 2010, Gliwice, Poland

**A Message from
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Dear Colleagues,

On July 25-29, 2005, the ICEE-2005 conference was held in Gliwice, Poland, organized by Silesian University of Technology (SUT) and sponsored by iNEER. There were about 400 participants from more than 50 countries. There were numerous memorable moments and important lectures. The conference included a highly successful workshop on problem based learning, important plenary lectures among other on e-learning and modern education technologies topics, as well as standard and special sessions and poster presentations on all major topics concerning engineering education and research. Accompanying persons could attend trips to Pszczyna Castle, Bogucice Fine China Factory and Auschwitz, all participants admired full day excursion to Krakow and Wieliczka salt mine culminating at Zalesie Grange. Several people remember well the concert in Gliwice Cathedral Church, as well as performances by SUT's choir ensembles.

Building on the success of ICEE-2005, SUT will organize ICEE-2010 in Gliwice, Poland on July 18-22, 2010. If ICEE-2005 participants need a reason to return to Gliwice after 5 years, it is this: ICEE/ICEER participants attend the conferences mainly because they want to meet old and new friends and to discuss with them advances in engineering education and research, to present new revolutionary ideas and methods and plan new international cooperation initiatives.

But, it is not only this, of course. SUT, the Silesia region and, indeed, the entire country of Poland have changed considerably during the last 5 years. The university has undergone major transformation of curriculum and study structure – from the predominantly integrated 5-year study to a flexible cycle-based study system resulting from the Bologna process. The change has major impact on curricula and teaching methods. New courses and specializations have appeared at SUT – including biotechnology, bioinformatics and biomedical engineering, new materials, clean energy, information technologies for society, mechatronics and nano-engineering. Web-based education has been extensively promoted at the university, and a new system of Quality and Effectiveness Assurance in Teaching has been developed and implemented. Today, engineering education at SUT is by far more modern and effective when compared with 2005.

These changes are related to the substantial increase of students and teachers academic exchanges with other universities in other countries. Not only has the number of outgoing and

incoming students increased considerably during the last few years, we have also opened new directions of cooperation – such as with Asian countries including Korea, Japan and others, and American universities – with plans on the drawing board for African academic institutions for the near future.

Participation of groups of scientists from Silesian University of Technology in international research initiatives has been also raised to a new level, mainly as a result of Poland's entry into the European Union in 2004, and of better opportunities with respect to participation in European science and development programmes.

It should be stressed also that, along with European Union (EU) accession, enterprises in the Polish regions have become entitled to using special funds aimed at enhancing the capacity and infrastructure in new EU countries and regions. This has at least two major consequences in Gliwice and Silesia today: first, several projects aimed at enhancing human potential have been started, and this has enabled the university to co-finance modernization of teaching facilities and initiatives; secondly, now, construction work can be seen in numerous parts of Silesia and Poland.

In 2010, it will be much easier for ICEE-2010 participants to come by air to Silesia as airports are larger and substantially more comfortable. The motorways system in Poland is under fast development and Gliwice and its surrounding areas comprise some of the best places in Poland and Europe from the communication point of view, as the intersection of two large European motorways A1 and A4 is being located about 3 km from the Silesian University of Technology.

The old churches and beautiful countryside are still here. Old industrial enterprises and monuments – including coal mines and steel works – are also in this region making it extremely interesting from the engineering point of view. In addition, Silesia today is much cleaner than it was a few years ago – due to changes in industry structure, vivid development of environment engineering and clean coal technologies, as well as revitalization of brownfield areas. One of such places in Gliwice – an old closed coal mine – has been transformed into the Higher School of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Design. Together with industrial incubator, technopark and school of entrepreneurship, these initiatives are transforming Gliwice in 2010 into a place for innovations, new technologies, and global cooperation in education, research, manufacturing and business, while still being a friendly and familiar place that will be welcoming to ICEE-2005 participants and new ICEE/iCEER participants alike.

Sincerely,

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