

## Press release

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***Informatica 08 – Start of a series of conferences: panel discussion about Internet criminality***

### **How vulnerable is today's Information Society?**

***Informatica08, the “Swiss national year of informatics“, emphasizes the central role played by computers in our society. The conference series «Vulnerability of the Information Society» – organized by Empa together with the Risk Dialogue Foundation – casts a critical look at the interdependence between computers, IT systems and the Internet. The series will start on Thursday March 6, 2008 with a panel discussion at the ETH Zurich on the subject of internet-criminality.***

Network hacking, phishing, Computer viruses and other purposeful manipulations: The Information Society is exposed to various attacks. Organized crime also targets the Internet for its specific aims. Even if greater security awareness in e-banking increases, dangers are often played down. Whoever does not want to become a victim must learn the tricks of the crooks. Therefore, the first conference in the series of «Vulnerability of the Information Society», organized by Empa and the Risk Dialogue Foundation will address topic of Internet crime. «In business and in our private lives, we already depend as much on the internet and our cellular phones as we do on electrical current supply. In a slowly creeping process, digital networks create new critical infrastructures which increasingly become targets for attacks by criminals», says Empa-researcher Lorenz Hilty, co-organizer of the conference series. «We want to achieve with these conferences a greater awareness and prompt discussions in our society of the dangers arising from the interdependence of Internet and personal computers – that is before greater damages occur. In addition to criminal attacks, technological susceptibility and the almost irreversible spread of personal or false information on the Internet are also among the risks to be considered».

The opening session will take place on Thursday March 6, 2008 from 6.15 pm to 9.15 pm in the Audimax of the ETH Zürich, Rämistrasse 101, in co-operation with Information Security Society Switzerland (ISSS) and supported by ZISC and Swiss Security Day. At the further five meetings between March and November 2008, well known experts will e.g. shed some light on such questions as the impact on our culture of creating digital archives, examine the limits of data protection and data security and point out chances and risks of future intelligence implants.

The conference series is directed to the broad public as well as to specialists and the media who are interested in the subject of chances and risks of the Information Society. The attendees are invited to present questions and comments throughout the conferences.

The evenings will be rounded off with an Aperero and an opportunity for further detailed discussions and forming new contacts. Free entry, but because of the limited space reservations are required. Registration and further information see under [www.risiko-dialog.ch/verletzlichkeit](http://www.risiko-dialog.ch/verletzlichkeit). The series is financially supported by Zurich Schweiz, and followed in the media by Netzwoche.

### **Swiss national year of informatics – informatica08**

The Swiss national year of informatics – informatica08 is a project for the promotion of computer science in Switzerland. This initiative is sponsored by the umbrella organization of the Federation of Swiss Computer Science and Telecom Associations ICT Switzerland and its various members. Also taking part are the Swiss Trade Association of Computer Science, Communication and Organization Technology (SWICO), as well as the Swiss Academy of Technical Sciences (SATW).

Large nation-wide meetings, regional events, as well as media and information campaigns in all language regions, will make the broad public conscious of the central meaning and role of computer science for the future development of economics and society. At the same time the initiative wants to arouse the interest of young people, and in particular also of young women, in computer science as an exciting and attractive scientific and vocational field.

### **Further information**

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