Geneva Internet Platform

SEEDIG

Internet Governance
in South Eastern Europe

A monthly overview of developments and activities related to Internet governance and digital policy in South Eastern Europe and the neighbouring area.

INTERNET GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENTS

Telecommunications infrastructure

193.45.34.2

Romanian operators, organisations to report info on physical infrastructures
The National Authority for Management and Regulation in Communications of **Romania** (ANCOM) launched for public consultation a draft decision on the establishment of a Single Information Point which will contain details about physical infrastructure of private network operators and other entities operating telecom networks. The Single Information Point will enable network operators to report information on the location, route, type, and actual use of physical infrastructures. The providers of public electronic communications networks will be able to access the information in order to efficiently plan and use the physical infrastructure for the installation of high speed electronic communications networks.

Bosnia and Herzegovina launches public consultation on LTE frequency use
The Communications Regulatory Agency (RAK) in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** has launched a public consultation on draft regulations for the use of certain spectrum bands. One regulation concerns the 900MHz, 1800MHz, and 2100MHz bands, defining technical requirements for the implementation of Long Term Evolution (LTE) networks, as a prerequisite for the introduction of 4G. The other covers the 3400MHz–3600MHz and 3600MHz–3800MHz bands, to be used for mobile and fixed communications networks. The scheduled date for finalising 4G mobile licensing plans is December 2017.

Communication networks enhanced across the region
In **Belarus**, MTS Belarus has expanded the coverage of its LTE network in the region of Minsk with two dozen new stations, 15 of which are in the city of Minsk. The network allows broadband connections with a speed of up to 112 Mbps. **Azerbaijan**'s state operator Aztelecom is also working on upgrading its network infrastructure in the country.

Access

Western Balkans closer to lower roaming charges
European Commissioner for Digital economy and society Mariya Gabriel has requested a roadmap to lower roaming charges between the EU and Western Balkans. Meeting EU ambassadors of six Western Balkans countries, Gabriel announced the initiative and stated that the digital integration of the Balkans was her priority. The EU removed roaming charges within the EU and European Economic Area countries earlier this year, but the process had taken ten years to complete. The Commission has not yet announced a potential timeframe for lowering roaming charges in the Balkans.

Greece plans regulation on 'access to open Internet'
The **Hellenic** Telecommunications and Post Commission has announced plans to launch a public consultation, by the beginning of December, on a regulation concerning 'access to the open Internet'. The planned regulation is set to define the framework according to which subscribers are informed of the real Internet speed they benefit from, as well as the indemnities they are entitled to in cases of discrepancies between real speed values and contract values. Other topics to be included in the consultation are the application of traffic management practices, and the provision of specialised services (such as Internet Protocol televisions services).

More Internet users in SEE countries
Recent statistics in certain countries and territories in South Eastern Europe show an increase in Internet penetration rates and number of Internet users. In **Kosovo***, the number of fixed Internet connections increased by 14.86% year-on-year to 257,645 at the end of the second quarter of 2017, while mobile Internet connections increased by 34.98% over the same period to 1.18 million. The number of Slovenians using the Internet increased with 4% in the first quarter of 2017, compared to 2016 figures. In **The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, fixed broadband Internet connections increased with 3.40% in the first quarter of the year, and the number of subscribers via broadband mobile connections (2G/3G/4G) increased with 1%.

New technologies & Convergence

Bulgaria joins cooperation on high-performance computing
Bulgaria has signed the EuroHPC declaration on high-performance computing (HPC) on 13 October. The initiative, launched in March 2017, is aimed at promoting cooperation among states with a view to make HPC infrastructure available in the EU. As Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner in charge of Digital economy and society pointed out, high-performance computing is omnipresent in our daily lives, from personalised medicine, weather forecast, cybersecurity, cars and planes simulation and design. As it is essential to all users, it is important that the EU cooperates in order to develop such computing power. Bulgaria is the tenth signatory of the declaration.

First IoT network to be launched in Croatia
The first **Croatian** Internet of Things (IoT) network will be developed in collaboration between Croatian company IoT Net Adria and global communications service provider Sigfox. The plan is to establish a network of base stations that will cover around 96% of Croatian population. The low-power wireless broadband technology to be used across the IoT network reduces the costs and amount of energy needed to connect IoT devices, and is expected to enhance the use of IoT solutions across the country, in areas such as communications, trade, public services, health, agriculture, traffic, and security.

Development

Media literacy for Kosovo* schools
The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in **Kosovo*** held a two-day media literacy training for teachers in lower secondary schools in in Kosovo*, with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Text materials were available in Albanian, Serbian, and Roma languages. The training is part of a broader initiative, whose next step will see teachers piloting media literacy in their schools and transfering knowledge to their colleagues. The whole process will be assisted by OSCE Mission. The overall aim of the initiative is to help children better adapt to the expanding digital environment, and 'deconstruct complex messages and protect themselves from illicit content'.

E-education and e-class register pilot project in Serbia
The **Serbian** government has launched a pilot project on e-education and e-class register service, as part of the country's broader efforts to enhance digitalisation across the educational system. The pilot project aims to raise the level of digital maturity of schools and promote the digital transformation of education, while providing students, teachers, and parents with faster and easier access to information. The e-class register will function as a national platform for digital record keeping, analysis, and reporting of the school results. The government's objective for the next two years is to improve the communication infrastructure in all Serbian schools.

E-money and virtual currency

Slovenia warns about virtual currency risks
The Financial Stability Board in **Slovenia**, an entity affiliated with the country's central bank, has issued a warning on virtual currencies such as bitcoin. Noting that virtual currencies are not regulated and not guaranteed by the central bank, the Board advises investors to consider whether risks associated with the use of such currencies are in line with their investment goals. The warning also makes reference to Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs), which are not regulated and not controlled in Slovenia. ICO investors are encouraged to invest in amounts that would not leave them too exposed.

Cryptocurrencies move to Ukrainian Parliament
A new law proposal sent to the **Ukrainian** Parliament earlier this month aims to legalise all cryptocurrency transactions in the country. The proposal, drafted by the Ukrainian Blockchain Association, touches on issues such as cryptocurrency, exchanges, transactions, and miners, and proposes the Central Bank as cryptocurrency regulator. There is no reference, however, to Initial Coin Offerings.

Digital signatures

Serbia to increase the usage of electronic signatures
Speaking about a draft law on electronic documents, electronic identification, and trusted services, **Serbian** Minister of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications Rasim Ljajić announced Serbia's plans to increase the usage of qualified electronic signatures. Natural persons will have the possibility to use qualified electronic signatures via their cellphone. Legal entities will be able to use an electronic seal as a way of authenticating their electronic documents. Other provisions of the draft law cover the recognition of the validity of electronic documents, electronic delivery services, and the electronic storage for documentation.

Azerbaijan to introduce free e-signature in 2018
The use of electronic signatures will be free of charge for **Azerbaijani** citizens starting 2018. E-signatures will be integrated into the new Azerbaijani identity cards, to be issued from January 2018. The initial validity of digital signatures integrated in the new identity cards will be for a five years period. The availability of e-signatures will make it easier for citizens to access and use e-government services; there are currently 353 actives e-services in the Electronic Government Portal of Azerbaijan.

Child safety

Child help line established in Bosnia and Herzegovina
With the support of the Bosnian mobile operator m:tel, the New Generation Association has launched the Blue Phone project, which aims to provides advice and support to children in difficult situations, especially in cases of violence and exploitation. The line is free of toll for all calls inside **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, irrespective of the network from which children call. Also, children can send an anonymous e-mail, through the website of the project, www.plavitelefon.ba. The website offers anonymous counseling for a wide range of issues related to children.

Cybersecurity and cybercrime

New attempt for a cybersecurity legal framework in Romania
In **Romania**, the Ministry of Communications and Information Society has launched a public consultation on a draft law on network and information security (NIS). Following previous attempts to adopt a legal framework on cybersecurity (including a law invalidated as unconstitutional), Romanian authorities are now following the lines of the EU NIS Directive. The draft law is aimed at establishing a cooperation framework for ensuring NIS at national level, and defining security requirements for operators of 'essential services' and for providers of 'digital services'. CERT-RO (the country's Computer Emergency Response Team) is designated as the 'competent national NIS authority'.

Cybersecurity law adopted in Ukraine
The **Ukrainian** Parliament has passed a law on 'the basic principles of providing the cybersecurity of Ukraine', which aims to create a national cybersecurity system, composed of entities with responsibilities in providing cybersecurity and related measures. The law defines organisational, administrative, technical, and technological measures for ensuring cybersecurity, to be implemented through public-private cooperation. This cooperation will cover, among others, the creation of a system for the timely detection and neutralisation of cyberthreats, the promotion of digital literacy among citizens, exchange of information, and coordination among computer emergency response teams. The law will enter into force six months after its publication.

Cyberattacks affect SEE countries and beyond
A new ransomware attack – called Bad Rabbit – has been reported as affecting organisations and individual users mostly in Russia, but also in Ukraine, Turkey, and Germany, as well as Bulgaria and Japan. According to Kaspersky Lab, the malware infects computers after the victims download a fake Adobe Flash installer from compromised websites and manually launch the .exe file. In exchange for decrypting the data, the attackers demand 0.05 bitcoin as ransom (around $280). Some 200 targets were reported as being affected. In Ukraine, cyberattacks have been reported against the Odessa Airport and the Kiev Metro, but there does not seem to be unanimous views that these were also caused by Bad Rabbit.

Legal

Bilateral agreements between electronic communications regulators
Earlier this month, the Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services (Ratel) in **Serbia** and the National Media and Infocommunications Authority (NMHH) of **Hungary** signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of electronic communications, with the aim to create the framework for new joint programmes and practical cooperation on a broader range of issues related to electronic communications. Later in the month, the regulatory authorities in **Albania** (Regulatory Body for Electronic and Postal Communications) and **Bosnia and Herzegovina** (Regulatory Agency for Communications) have concluded a cooperation agreement aimed to allow parties to exchange experiences and good practices in the development and implementation of policies and strategies related to electronic communications.
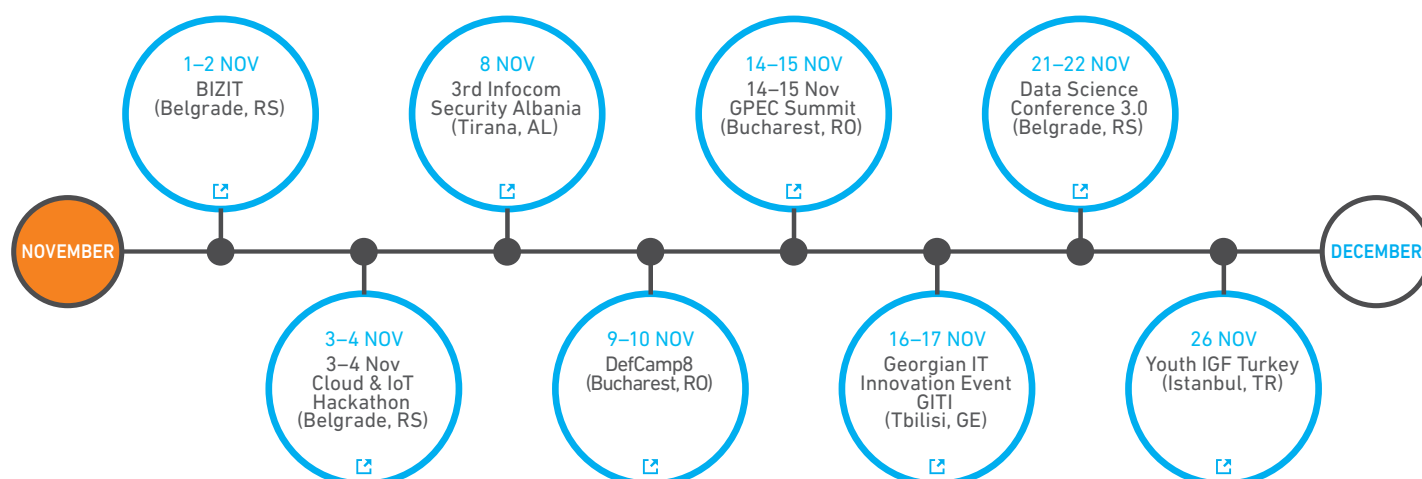
Serbia prepares law on electronic communications
Serbia's government adopted a draft law on electronic communications, aimed at improving the operations of electronic communications providers, strengthening competition on the market, and better protecting users' rights. One of the most important provisions is the introduction of an obligation for mobile operators to register users of prepaid services, as a measure to enable the prevention of electronic communications abuse, such as malicious calls and harassment, false alarms, various forms of fraud, organising terrorist activities, and such. The new law, which is to be fully compliant with the EU's 2009 regulatory framework, will have to pass through the Parliament.

AHEAD IN NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER

1–2 NOV
BIZIT
(Belgrade, RS)

8 NOV
3rd Infocom
Security Albania
(Tirana, AL)

14–15 NOV
14–15 Nov
GPEC Summit
(Bucharest, RO)

21–22 NOV
Data Science
Conference 3.0
(Belgrade, RS)

3–4 NOV
3–4 Nov
Cloud & IoT
Hackathon
(Belgrade, RS)

9–10 NOV
DefCamp8
(Bucharest, RO)

16–17 NOV
Georgian IT
Innovation Event
GITI
(Tbilisi, GE)

26 NOV
Youth IGF Turkey
(Istanbul, TR)

DECEMBER

EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION

Infrastructure and technologies ↗

AI2future | 5–6 October | Zagreb, Croatia↗
Focused on various aspects and policy implications of artificial intelligence (AI), the event addressed a wide range of topics, from automation, machine learning, and deep learning, to disruptions and opportunities that AI system can bring to different sectors. One panel was dedicated to exploring the current state of affairs of AI in Croatia, while other workshops looked at the impact of AI on the future of work, the use of AI in politics and legal systems, and AI applications in transportation and health.

Blockchain & Bitcoin Conference | 12 October | Kyiv, Ukraine↗
The conference was structured in three sections. A section on finance, business and legislation looked at blockchain applications in fintech, government services, business and social projects, and the legislative regulation of cryptocurrencies. The section on developments explored blockchain solutions in practice, and the creation of contracts and services on blockchain, and the third section offered practical experiences related to Initial Coin Offerings.

EE DNS Forum | 12–13 October | Minsk, Belarus↗
The second edition of the Eastern Europe DNS Forum, hosted by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and Hoster.by (the registry for .by), brought together Internet industry experts to discuss topics such as DNS abuse and threats, Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) and IDN e-mail, intellectual property rights in the DNS, and Internet security and its legal aspects.

Internet of Things Conference | 18 October | Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina↗
The conference gathered over 200 participants from different professional areas, along with government representatives. The importance of IoT-based technology was emphasised as crucial for the development of businesses, but primarily for the safety of individuals and the improvement of life quality. It was noted that the focus has to be shifted towards IoT implementation, which requires legislative and educational reforms.

Cybersecurity and cybercrime ↗

Regional Workshop on Guidelines and Indicators to Prevent and Detect Online Crime Proceeds | 4–5 October | Ljubljana, Slovenia↗
Organised by iPROCEEDS, a joint project of the EU and Council of Europe, and the Office for Money Laundering Prevention of the Republic of Slovenia, the workshop revolved around issues such as criminal money flows on the Internet, money laundering threats, and online fraud and other types of cybercrime in the banking and financial sectors. Participants included representatives of public and private entities from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Kosovo*.

Fourth South East European Regional Forum on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime | 30–31 October | Sofia, Bulgaria↗
Organised by the International Cyber Investigation Training Academy, Bulgaria's General Directorate for Combating Organized Crime, and IDC Bulgaria, the forum was dedicated to exploring current cyber threats and ways in which governments and European institutions could most effectively respond to them. Some of the topics discussed included trends in addressing cybersecurity risks, public-private partnerships in fighting cybercrime and strengthening cybersecurity, ensuring security in cloud computing the IoT, blockchain technology and security, and privacy and data protection.

New Global Challenges in Cyber Security | 30–31 October | Bucharest, Romania↗
Organised by Romania's CERT, the conference was dedicated to exploring technical and policy issues related to cybersecurity in Romania, Europe, and beyond, and gathered cyber experts, government representatives, private companies, civil society organisations, and academics. Sessions focused on topics such as the latest cybersecurity challenges and solutions, public-private partnerships in addressing cybersecurity, and privacy considerations.

IGF initiatives ↗

ArmIGF | 2 October | Yerevan, Armenia↗
The third annual Armenian Internet Governance Forum (ArmIGF) was held under the overarching theme 'Internet governance for sustainable and inclusive development'. Around 130 participants from all stakeholder groups gathered to discuss the emerging digital issues in the country, such as information security, the impact of Internet on TV and radio, the rights of people with disabilities, the state of libraries in digital age, and personal data protection. The agenda was shaped on the basis of proposals received from the Armenian Internet community.

Youth IGF-UA Pro & IGF-UA| 5–6 October | Kyiv, Ukraine↗
Youth IGF-UA Pro was dedicated to enhancing the participation of Ukrainian youth in Internet governance processes, and starting the preparations for the first edition of the Youth IGF Ukraine, planned for February 2018. The eighth Ukrainian IGF (IGF-UA) gathered around 150 participants, and focused on cybersecurity, human rights and Internet content blocking, intellectual property rights, the IoT, privacy and data protection, critical internet infrastructures and the domain name system, digital citizenship, and youth engagement.

Slovenian IGF | 17 October | Ljubljana, Slovenia↗
The second annual meeting of the Slovenian IGF (SloIGF) was dedicated to three main topics: open technologies and open societies; countering online extremism while protecting human rights; and privacy and security in the future Internet. The meeting was opened by Milan Brglez, President of the National Assembly, and also welcomed guests from the Internet Society, ICANN, and stakeholders from neighbouring countries. SloIGF also served as a kick-off meeting for SEEDIG 2018, which is planned to be held in Ljubljana, in spring 2018.

Join us in preparing the next issue. Send us↗ updates about Internet governance developments and/or events in your countries. Comments on this issue are also welcome.