

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

Infrastructure



In **Slovenia**, telecommunications company Telekom Slovenije announced the deployment of the first voice-over-Long Term Evolution (VoLTE) technology in the country. The technology enables customers to make voice calls using the company's 4G LTE network, and several advantages are expected, such as the simultaneous use of voice and data transmission, faster call setup, improved sound quality, and less battery consumption. The firm also reported that voice-over-WiFi (VoWiFi) technology is in its final stages of testing.

In **Montenegro**, telecommunications network operator Telenor has started a project of modernising its radio network in every municipality in the country, with a view to replace existing elements with latest generation equipment. Telenor also plans to develop a 4G network in Montenegro, to provide users with improved service quality, faster Internet access, and up to six times faster data transfer.

In **Romania**, electronic communications services provider Vodafone has lost the case against ANCOM, the national telecom regulatory body, over the regulator's decision to impose a fine of 100.000 EUR on the company for not abiding to roaming regulations. The Court of Appeal deemed as illegal Vodafone's practice of not applying the maximum financial ceiling for the consumption of mobile Internet data while in roaming, and also demanded restitution to the affected customers. Its legal basis stems from Regulation (EU) No. 531/2012, which imposes a financial ceiling for data roaming services, beyond which access is blocked automatically.

Authorities in **Moldova** dismantled an international SIM-box scam ring operating out of the Eastern European country's capital. The illegal organisation, run by Moldavian, Lithuanian, Dutch, and US nationals, re-directed transnational Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) GSM traffic by tapping into the national telecom network. Police apprehended two suspects and confiscated SIM boxes used for signal hijacking purposes, several hundred SIM cards, as well as instruction manuals and ledgers. Efforts are underway to identify their accomplices overseas. Earlier this year, Moldova's telecom regulatory authority (ANCRETI) launched a public consultation on combating unauthorised call termination.

Cybersecurity and cybercrime



SHARE Foundation, a **Serbia**-based non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection of rights and freedoms in the digital environment, has officially registered the first Serbian private center for the prevention of security risks in information and communication systems (or computer emergency response team - CERT). This CERT will perform the following tasks: monitor cyber incidents at national level, provide warnings and advices related to ICT systems, continuously work on risk analysis, and raise awareness among citizens, businesses, and authorities related to information security.

In **Romania**, the Ministry of Communications and Information Society launched a public consultation on the transposition of the EU Directive on Network and Information Security. Interested stakeholders are invited to share their views on questions such as: Should there be one or several competent authorities for network and information security? What authority should receive notifications of security incidents and identify essential services? What institutions should establish the technical and organisational measures that operators of essential services and providers of digital services should take in order to ensure network and information security? The Directive needs to be transposed into national legislation by May 2018. Romania has tried before to promote a law on cybersecurity, but this was declared unconstitutional in 2015.

Child safety online



The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications of **Serbia** launched a media campaign regarding child safety on the Internet and the promotion of digital literacy. The campaign started with educational videos in which public figures sent messages about the safe use of the Internet, and continued with videos about both the greatest dangers and the best uses of the Internet. The campaign aims to inform the public about the possibility of reporting harmful content to the National Contact Center for Child Safety on the Internet.

The same ministry, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Interior, Save the Children, and Microsoft, have launched the *IT Karavan* campaign, aimed at educating children about the benefits and risks of using digital technologies. The campaign includes a mobile platform and interactive presentations covering issues such as the safe use of the Internet, security risks associated with social networks, and the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in education. The campaign is part of a wider programme for the development of the information society, conducted by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications under the motto *Smart and Safe*.



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Capacity
development



In **Serbia**, the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications launched a programme aimed at increasing digital literacy among the country's rural population. The project, enacted in collaboration with Microsoft, is expected to provide free WiFi access in 40 primary and secondary schools, in a bid to improve educational processes and offer adequate training to the future workforce. As of 20 March, several teaching institutions in Northern and Southern Serbia have benefitted from the programme, with plans for further expansion by the end of June. This policy comes in the backdrop of the *Battle for Knowledge* initiative, launched earlier this year in which the EU-aspiring state intends to promote information technology (IT) and robotics curricula in all primary schools. Moreover, the Ministry is using EU funds to equip primary schools in Serbia with around 5000 new computers, thus creating the premises for the implementation of a previously adopted measure of introducing IT as a compulsory subject.

In **Armenia**, the Ministry of Education and Science and Microsoft Innovation Center Armenia (MIC Armenia) signed a Memorandum of Understanding through which the two parties commit to work together to improve the quality of Armenian education, elaborate educational programmes, and introduce innovations in the educational system. On its side, Microsoft will promote the use of software products as part of the educational processes, and support initiatives dedicated to encouraging teachers and students to make better use of technologies.

In **Croatia**, a student educational initiative focused on the Internet of Things (IoT), launched as part of the Croatian Telecom's *Together We Are Stronger* initiative, and implemented by the Institute for Youth Development and Innovativity, came to an end. The programme included 38 schools in the country, and was aimed at empowering students to develop their own IoT projects, by making use of equipment made available to them. In the final stage of the programme, one project was presented, and it involved the use of IoT technology to measure temperature and remotely turn lights on and off in schools.

Development
– other issues



Ukraine has concluded a partnership with technology company Bitfury Group, on the use of blockchain technology for digital governmental projects. The technology is expected to contribute to improving the efficiency, accountability, and transparency of governmental initiatives. The first step is a pilot project to introduce blockchain to Ukraine's digital platform, with possible services to be covered including state registers, public services, social security, public health, and energy. The plan is to expand the technology to other services, after the completion of the pilot.

Mainstream, one of the largest hosting providers in **Serbia**, launched a project called *Super Woman*, aimed at fostering women entrepreneurship. As part of the project, Mainstream will offer discounts for women managers, entrepreneurs, women who already have their business, and women who have a business idea. The project also includes different IT courses and trainings, and the registration of Internet domain names, inter alia.

In **Croatia**, the Ministry of Public Administration has introduced a new e-government service, as part of a wider project – *A paperless country*. From 1 May, state institutions in Croatian counties will be given access to a web application called *Insight into the personal status of citizen*, thus allowing direct exchange of information regarding citizens' documents such as certificates of birth and marriage. With this new service, citizens will no longer have to present these documents in paper when dealing with public authorities.

Privacy and data
protection



In **Romania**, the Joint Standing Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate for the exercise of parliamentary control over the activity of the Romanian Intelligence Services (SRI) responded to concerns voiced by civil society organisations on SII Analytics, a controversial e-government project. The Committee is of the view that the project was legally attributed, but the concerned NGOs find the statement largely dismissive, failing to alleviate concerns on government misuse of EU funds, the lack of oversight mechanisms, and potential privacy infringements. The issue has since been referred to the European Anti-fraud Office. The stated purpose of SII Analytics was to modernise institutions responsible for preventing and combating terrorism, organised corruption or tax evasion, and to optimise cooperation between them.

The Ministry of Security of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** Dragan Mektić and the Deputy Director of Europol Oldrich Martinu signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the protection of information that is exchanged between the two parties. The memorandum, which is key for the implementation of the Agreement on Operational and Strategic Cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Europol, addresses issues related to the confidentiality and security of exchanged data, and is mainly aimed at allowing the secure exchange of classified information used in activities related to the prevention of and fight against organised crime, terrorism, and other forms of international crime.

Content policy



The commercial court in Istanbul, **Turkey**, issued a temporary injunction to prevent the accommodation booking platform *booking.com* from facilitating the booking of hotel rooms in Turkey, by Turkish customers. The ruling was issued as part of an ongoing case opened in 2015 by the Union of Tour Operators (TURSAB), which accused *booking.com* of unfair competition. While the court is deliberating on whether *booking.com* requires a license when offering its services in Turkey, Turkish hotels continue to be available on the platform for customers from other countries, while Turkish citizens can book rooms in any other places but their country. The company plans to appeal the decision.

EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION



Infrastructure and technologies [↗](#)

Venture Day Minsk | 12 April | Minsk, Belarus [↗](#)

The event provided networking opportunities and first-hand experience from world tech industry experts. Themes included technology trends in 2017, such as robotic and drone ecosystems, artificial intelligence, innovation, and global venture capital. In addition, a startup competition was held.

International Conference on Computer and Information Technology 2017 | 12–14 April | Kuşadası, Turkey [↗](#)

The conference was sponsored by Gazi University, and brought together professors, researchers, scholars, and industrial pioneers from around the world. The event provided a forum for exchanges of past experiences and discussions on new advances and research results in the field of theoretical and industrial computer and information technology.

Microsoft Network 7 | 19–21 April | Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina [↗](#)

The conference dealt with the process of digital transformation, migration of infrastructure and solutions into the cloud, and improvements in the security environment. It was structured around six thematic areas: digital transformation, development of software solutions, infrastructure and security, business use of technological solutions, lectures by experts from the Microsoft community, and learning solutions and case studies.

Enter Conference (Women in IT) | 24–25 April | Belgrade, Serbia [↗](#)

The two-day conference was designed to bring together women engaged in IT, both beginners and those with longer experience in the field. It consisted of lectures, workshops, and panel discussions. Some of the topics covered were physical gaming, mobile and web development, robotics, the IoT, and bioengineering.



Cybersecurity [↗](#)

Cybersecurity Workshop CERT-RO – Bitdefender: Bitdefender Hypervisor Introspection | 7 April | Bucharest, Romania [↗](#)

CERT-RO and Bitdefender hosted a cybersecurity workshop on protecting companies against targeted attacks (APT). The security software provider pitched its new product, the Hypervisor Introspection (HVI), which increases the quality of response to stealth threats, allowing real-time reaction to kernel-level attacks. The event hosted 40 cybersecurity professionals, under the umbrella of the Center for Innovation on Cyber Security, a CERT-RO initiative tasked with maintaining and training a public-private expert community.

Cybersecurity Workshop CERT-RO – Combridge: Security Solutions for Smart WiFi and Cloud Managed LAN&WLAN | 19 April | Bucharest, Romania [↗](#)

CERT-RO and Deutsche Telekom Group member Combridge organised a workshop dedicated to the presentation of Private Pre-Shared Key (PPSK) and Wireless Intrusion Prevention System (WIPS) characteristics and facilities. The audience included 15 cybersecurity experts from CERT-RO and other public institutions in the country.



Development [↗](#)

Codefest Marathon 2017 | 8 April | Ohrid, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia [↗](#)

Codefest Marathon 2017 took place as the 5th anniversary edition of Codefest Tech Festival, with the participation of different tech enthusiasts. The marathon event had three distinct tracks: junior, student, and pro. It was a 32 hours long challenge where teams made up of 2-5 participants built solutions from idea to prototype/demo.

try {code} catch Hackathon | 8–9 April | Zagreb, Croatia [↗](#)

Try{code}catch was organised by Combis with the goal of finding and recruiting teams for a new internal startup – Neostartup. Teams made up of 2-4 students had 24 hours to design a web application, using technologies of their choice. The themes of the hackathon were announced at the event. Best three teams were awarded with rewards in cash.

DigiGirlz | 11 April | Zagreb, Croatia [↗](#)

Microsoft's initiative DigiGirls was aimed at encouraging high school girls to take up careers in ICT, an area usually perceived as male-dominated. Lecturers addressed stereotypes about the ICT in-

dustry being 'just code writing' and how technical faculties are much more demanding than others.

Smarter Transportation Data Hackathon 2017 | 15–16 April | Yerevan, Armenia [↗](#)

The event, organised with the support of Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technologies of Armenia and USAID Armenia, provided a space for participants to creatively and collaboratively develop applications, visualisations, or information graphics. The event put emphasis on the innovative usage of transportation-related data and its impacts on the public.

IT-Eureka! Ukraine 2017 | 22–23 April | Kharkiv, Ukraine [↗](#)

The hackathon, sponsored by Ukrainian IT company Sigma Software, Swedish Sigma Technology, and Kharkiv National University of Radioelectronics, brought together student teams who worked on developing innovative IT solutions in education. The overall aim was to provide students with an opportunity to develop practical skills to advance, present, and promote their ideas.

EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION



Content policy [↗](#)

Blocking, Filtering and Take-down of Illegal Online Content | 30 March | Tbilisi, Georgia [↗](#)

The workshop was held within the framework of the *Improving Judicial Guarantees on Freedom to Internet in Georgia* project, and it aimed at identifying major challenges related to Internet restrictions in Georgia; encouraging public discussions on the issues of blocking, filtering and take-down of online content; fostering multistakeholder dialogue on these issues; and gathering feedback from civil society organisations about a draft law on the issue of online content restrictions.



Human rights [↗](#)

Digitised security: How to Read the Surveillance Discourse and Fight it! | 25 April | Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina [↗](#)

The Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe organised this international youth seminar on digital rights. The 6-day seminar dealt with digital rights, Internet policy, security, surveillance, data protection, and digitalisation. The twofold goal of the seminar was to teach 40 participants on how to protect their rights online and how to campaign in the field of digital rights.



E-commerce [↗](#)

WEBIZ Education – Where the Ideas Come From 2017 | 30–31 March | Zrenjanin, Serbia [↗](#)

The fourth WEBIZ educational seminar and workshop provided lectures by experts in the e-commerce field to small and medium business owners that want to expand their business online. The seminar put emphasis on the current state of e-commerce and the role of online marketing, with lectures providing advice on the use of online tools.

Ukrainian E-commerce Awards | 7 April | Kyiv, Ukraine [↗](#)

The fifth annual Ukrainian E-commerce Awards announced the best Internet projects on the Ukrainian e-commerce market. More than 200 Internet projects participated. The awards were divided into four main categories: consumer's choice (with six subcategories), Breakthrough of the Year, The Best Product for B2B Commerce (with three subcategories), and Person of the Year in e-commerce.



Economic – other issues [↗](#)

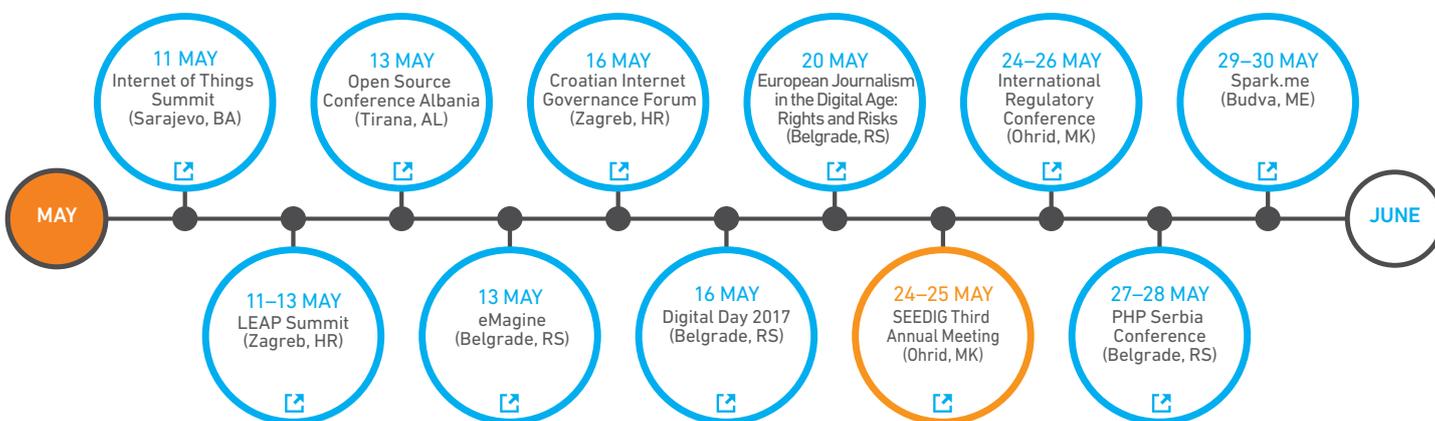
13th South Eastern European Telecoms Forum | 31 March | Belgrade, Serbia [↗](#)

Belgrade hosted the 13th edition of the SEE telecom Forum, an event that brought together private and public stakeholders from the region to discuss market and regulatory evolution and to assess investment opportunities. Topics ranged from data streamlining and harmonisation to infrastructure developments and upcoming models in the telco sector.

HitIT Digital | 6 April | Zagreb, Croatia [↗](#)

HitIT Digital was a one-day Google AdWords / Google Analytics conference held in Zagreb. The topics of the conference were customer lifetime value, the role of Google Analytics tools in making business decisions, e-commerce reports, optimisation, competition in AdWords, and AdWords.

AHEAD IN MAY



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.