

Internet Governance in South Eastern Europe

INTERNET GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENTS

Telecommunications infrastructure



First Greek city with 5G technology

The Greek city of Trikala is to become the country's first 5G enabled city. An agreement between the General Secretariat of Telecommunications and Post, the Trikala municipality, and E-trikala SA company, envisions the transformation of Trikala into a 5G-ready smart city. A 5G pilot network will be installed to support the provision of Internet of Things (IoT) services – under the title Sustainable Urban Development Solutions – such as smart parking, smart lighting, as well as wireless Internet access. [\[1\]](#)

Cybersecurity



Report points to spyware campaign in Turkey

A report released by the Citizen Lab laboratory of the Munk School of Global Affairs [\[1\]](#) argues that deep packet inspection (DPI) devices have been used 'to deliver nation-state malware in **Turkey**'. The investigation carried by the lab determined that, with the use of devices installed on Türk Telekom's network, hundreds of users who attempted to download programs such as Skype, Opera, and Avast Antivirus, were redirected to malicious versions of those programs bundled with spyware. The spyware injection is said to have occurred in at least five Turkish provinces, and involved devices produced by network equipment company Sandvine, which denied the claims. While it is unclear who was behind the spyware injection, some have pointed out to the Turkish government as a possibility. [\[2\]](#)

Croatian university launches an information security masters course

In **Croatia**, the Zagreb University of Applied Sciences will open a new master programme this fall on Information Security and Digital Forensics. The University has developed this programme after consulting industry experts and after conducting a survey which confirmed the need for qualified personnel in the field of information security. After completing four semesters, students will be able to: analyse the security of information system components and security systems; explore new technologies for security systems; choose tools and equipment that should be applied in a security system; create security policies; and manage the organisation and implementation of activities within the scope of corporate information security. [\[1\]](#)

Cybercrime



Cybercrime group targets Turkish financial sector

Cybersecurity company McAfee, through its Advanced Threat Research Team, has reported that it found evidence of the cybercrime group Hidden Cobra targeting the **Turkish** financial system. [\[1\]](#) Among the targets were a major governmental-controlled financial organisation and three other large financial institutions in the country. The connection to Hidden Cobra was made based on code similarity, targeted business sector, and resemblance to the group's previous actions. The attack is suspected to be an early stage data gathering to serve in future attacks against Turkish and other countries' financial organisations. The attack exploited zero-day Adobe Flash vulnerability to access victim's systems.

Encryption



Encrypted e-mail service reportedly blocked in Turkey

Proton Technologies AG, a provider of encrypted e-mail services, announced that certain Internet services providers in **Turkey** have been blocking access to ProtonMail. Prompted by connectivity problems reported by Turkish ProtonMail users, the company launched their own investigation and concluded that domain name system (DNS) servers have either stopped resolving protonmail.com, or were returning incorrect results. The company indicated that the block is intermittent, as 'sometimes ProtonMail is accessible, and sometimes it is unreachable', and claimed that the problem was not due to a technical glitch, but rather 'a government-ordered block'. [\[1\]](#)

Capacity development



Digital training for pensioners

The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunication (MTT) of **Serbia** has launched digital training programmes for the elderly. [\[1\]](#) The MTT State Secretary Tatjana Matić stressed the importance of digital inclusion of all citizens. Just like other Internet users, the elderly need to be informed about the risks and possible abuses of cyberspace, and education programmes are necessary for them as well. The training aims to enhance digital literacy and digital skills of the pensioners and contribute to the overall development of the information society in Serbia.



Child safety online



Albania approves National Action Plan for Child Safety Online

In **Albania**, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, and the Ministry of Interior approved a National Action Plan of Child Online Safety for the period 2018-2020. The plan, prepared with the support of the Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania, aims to increase child safety online by strengthening the capacities of national and local institutions; consolidating partnerships between government institutions, civil society, and the private sector; and strengthening the relevant legal framework and awareness policies. At a launch event, participants stressed the importance of multistakeholder cooperation in the area of child safety online and outlined challenges in protecting children from cybercrimes such as online abuse and exploitation.

IT Caravan 03 officially launched in Serbia

IT Caravan 03, the third edition of **Serbia's** campaign to educate children and youth to use digital technologies safely, has been launched. The campaign includes a mobile platform and interactive presentations covering the risks and benefits of the use of digital technologies, and has been conducted by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications on a yearly basis since 2016. Workshops for parents are also part of the initiative. By the end of March 2018, the IT Caravan 03 has been in 26 schools in five cities across the country.

Internet safety seminars in Cypriot schools

In **Cyprus**, telecom company MTN is organising seminars in junior high and high schools, with the aim to raise more awareness among children on issues related to safety and security on the Internet. The seminars include, among other things, a video on cyberbullying – titled Your Choice – and a presentation of the educational app iWhiz. While the video intends to make students aware of the implications of cyberbullying, the app includes questions related to Internet security, the curriculum of the information technology courses taught in schools, as well as general knowledge questions.

Access



Review of the electronic communications market in Serbia

The Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services of **Serbia** (RATEL) has issued a report on the status of the electronic communications market in the last quarter of 2017. The number of users subscribed to fixed broadband Internet varied: 1,42 million in the first quarter, 1,41 million in the second, 1,46 million in the third, and 1,49 million in the last quarter of 2017. Most subscribers in all four quarters connected to the Internet via digital subscriber lines, at Internet speeds varying from 10Mbps to less than 30Mbps.

ISPs join an initiative to provide high-speed Internet in schools

In **Croatia**, the Ministry of Science and Education announced the start of negotiations with telecom operators to provide free high-speed Internet access for pilot schools which are part of a curricular reform pilot project. Vip, HT, and Tele2 have stated interest in supporting the project, and Minister Blazenka Divjak has already held working meetings with representatives of the three companies. The School of Life pilot is intended to reach approximately 60 schools with 1300 teachers and 6000 students. The project will also include educational sessions for students and parents on the responsible and safe use of the Internet.

Economic - other issues



Serbia to further support the ICT sector

According to the National Bank of **Serbia**, the financial value of national exports in the field of information and communications technologies (ICT) amounted to EUR 900 million in 2016. The growing trend of about 20 percent per year has continued over the last three years, making the information and communications (ICT) sector one of the key contributors to the country's economic growth. With ICTs and digitalisation being a governmental priority, several projects to advance education, infrastructures, and legal frameworks in these areas have been launched. In 2018, a total of 35 projects initiated by the Ministerial ICT Council will be implemented.

SEE countries are least equipped to deal with fake news, report says

A report released by the Open Society Institute in Bulgaria, and titled Media literacy index 2018: common sense wanted, found that **countries in South Eastern Europe** are least prepared to deal with the implications of fake news, and are more vulnerable to the possible negative effects of this phenomenon. This is said to be mainly due to 'controlled media, deficiencies in education, and the low level of trust among people'. Dealing with fake news can best be done through education and media literacy, according to the report's author. And here digital literacy, combined with additional knowledge and skills, has an important role to play, 'being especially necessary to bridge the generation divide'.

Content policy



Turkey approves law to license online streaming

The **Turkish** parliament has passed a law that will put online streaming platforms under the same regulations as those applicable to radio and television services. The law provides that 'institutions wishing to stream radio and television content only over the Internet' are to 'receive a license for only this purpose'. This way, online broadcasts will be subject to the same content supervision by the country's Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) as those transmitted via landline, satellite, and cable. RTÜK could report unlicensed transmissions to a criminal court, asking for their ban.

Development-other



Digital textbooks for Serbian schools

The first digital textbook in **Serbia** was presented in a primary school in Belgrade. [The fifth-grade biology textbook](#), in Cyrillic, contains various activities, games, video and audio materials, as well as experiments that children can do in the classroom or at home. Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić, who attended the trial class, stated that the Serbian Government had allocated EUR 70 million for the introduction of digital textbooks. A draft law on textbooks, [detailing standards for digital textbooks](#), has entered the parliamentary procedure on 19 March.

Pilot blockchain project to help combat child trafficking

The World Identity Network (WIN), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (UN-OICT) launched a pilot initiative that will use blockchain to help combat child trafficking in Moldova. To this aim, a Unite Ideas 'Blockchain for Humanity' challenge [was launched](#) in partnership with the Government of Moldova. Participants had to propose a blockchain-based solution that would establish a personal digital identity (ID) for children, set up a blockchain platform for the integrated ID system, and automate communication with potential or actual victims of trafficking. The winner of the challenge – ConsenSys Blockchain for Social Impact – will have an opportunity to assist Moldovan authorities in the implementation of the project. [The project](#)

Azerbaijan to transition to digital government

The president of **Azerbaijan**, Ilham Aliyev, signed a decree on 14 March on the development of the country's e-government system. The act aims to accelerate the transition to digital government and enhance e-government services. The State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, a body under the Office of the President, will take on several responsibilities in this regard, including: implementing a state policy on e-government, preparing an action plan for the transition to digital government, and managing the e-government portal (currently administered by the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Technology). These functions will be carried out through a newly established subsidiary – the E-Government Development Centre. [The project](#)

Serbia receives a WSIS Prize

At the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2018, **Serbia** won one of the WSIS Prizes, in the category Creating a good environment for the development of information society. The prize was awarded in recognition of Serbia's activities in line with WSIS Action Line C6 Enabling environment. [The project](#) – The establishment of the Office for Information Technology and eGovernment – explained the purpose and the functions of the office. Among them: consolidating state information technology resources, ensuring connectivity of various information systems, and providing support for the development of Serbia's e-government system. [The project](#)

Romanian bank to integrate AI in its services

In **Romania**, Transilvania Bank announced it has partnered with artificial intelligence (AI) company Personetics to integrate AI in its services, intending to personalise and improve clients' banking experience. [The project](#) Personetics' Cognitive Banking Brain will be integrated to Internet banking and mobile banking services later this year, and it will offer customers 'timely and relevant insights and advice' to help them manage their finances. The enhanced service will be available to retail customers, as well as small business owners and managers, allowing the latter to 'gain greater visibility into their business accounts, optimise cash flow, and simplify everyday money management tasks'. [The project](#)

AHEAD IN APRIL



EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION



Domain Name System (DNS)

DIDS 2018 & Regional TLD Forum | 6–7 March 2018 | Belgrade, Serbia

This year's Serbian Internet Domains Day (DIDS) conference was divided into three blocks. The Cyber Personality block addressed implications and challenges of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Digital Heritage block focused on digitalisation in culture and science. The Online Business block featured a presentation of the results of the 2017 Digital Vitality Index of small, micro- and medium enterprises in Serbia, followed by a presentation of Serbian online companies. DIDS was followed by the Regional TLD Forum, an industry gathering of representatives of registries of country code top-level domains (ccTLDs).



Cybersecurity

BSides Ljubljana | 10 March 2018 | Ljubljana, Slovenia

BSides Ljubljana, a one-day community-driven event, focused on security and related topics. The programme was built around several security issues such as malware, phishing, network security and encrypted protocols, security and privacy in healthcare, encryption and virtual private networks (VPN), and other similar issues tackled in lightning talks and workshops.

International Conference on Cyber Security | 20 March 2018 | Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sarajevo's second international conference on cybersecurity gathered experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Saudi Arabia, who discussed a wide range of cybersecurity issues through panels and presentations. The conference also included a panel discussion for computer science students from Mostar, Sarajevo, and East Sarajevo.



Capacity development

Albania IGF | 20 March 2018 | Tirana, Albania

The first Albanian Internet Governance Forum (AlbIGF) was dedicated to raising awareness and promoting a better understanding of Internet governance issues at national level. The half-day event included two panels on promotion and awareness of Internet governance in Albania, and cybersecurity and safer Internet. International guests and representatives of national public authorities, academia, technical community and civil society participated in the discussions and agreed to work towards a second edition of the forum.

6th International Symposium on Digital Forensic and Security | 22–25 March 2018 | Antalya, Turkey

The 6th International Symposium on Digital Forensic and Security, sponsored by the Turkey Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), provided a platform for researchers, academics, and representative of the private sector and public authorities to discuss recent developments on digital forensics, data privacy, security, and cryptography.

Cybersecurity Challenges | 26 March 2018 | Sofia, Bulgaria

The conference was part of the official programme of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and it addressed cybersecurity as a strategic priority in EU member states. The event consisted of four panels: European cybersecurity ecosystem; Internet security; Achieving cyber resilience – crisis response management at technical and operational level; Changing the mindset – way to gain true cyber resilience through cooperation at the strategic, political level. Over 150 delegates from the government sector, private companies, and non-governmental organisations attended.



Development - other

AI and Big Data Day | 10 March 2018 | Lviv, Ukraine

The AI and Big Data Day conference explored the role and practical implications of AI systems, as well as big data development challenges, practical application of intelligent data analysis, machine learning, and text data processing. The programme was structured in four simultaneous streams: data engineering, data science, startups and products, and workshops.

Kyiv Blockchain Forum | 15 March 2018 | Kyiv, Ukraine

The Kyiv Blockchain Forum focused on successful blockchain platforms, trends in the field, and Initial Coin Offerings (ICO) analysis. The event was attended by more than 30 speakers and 1500 visitors from around the world. It was divided into three stages featuring workshops for industry professionals, developers, and enthusiasts of crypto and distributed ledger technology.



Freedom of expression

Internet Freedom Summit | 21–25 March 2018 | Struga, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The second regional Internet Freedom Summit was hosted by the American Bar Association Rule of Law, as a part of its Development and Enhancement of Legal Frameworks in Eastern Europe and Eurasia to Protect Internet Freedom programme. The conference featured a plenary discussion on freedom of expression on 22 March, after which the meeting was divided into three tracks: freedom of expression, privacy, and cybersecurity.



Privacy and data protection

Cryptoparty Slovenia | 1 March 2018 | Ljubljana, Slovenia

Cryptoparty Slovenia is an annual event organised around topics of digital privacy and security. During this year's edition, attendees had an opportunity to participate in talks on Internet governance and regulation, and the challenges of regulating online platforms, among others. The evening concluded with a panel debate on encryption, blockchain, and users' privacy.



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.