

**SEEDIG and national IGF initiatives in
South Eastern Europe and the neighbouring area**

**Virtual meeting IV
22 September 2016**

Summary

Participants: Anja Gengo, Gürkan Özturan, Barbara Povše, Peter Sterle, Sorina Teleanu.

The aim of the meeting was to discuss past and future activities of both SEEDIG and national IGF initiatives from South Eastern Europe and the neighbouring area (SEE), and to further explore modalities for enhancing the communication and collaboration between these initiatives. The IGF Secretariat was also represented at the meeting, and it provided an update on the preparations for the IGF 2016 meeting.

1. Updates from national IGF

In **Turkey**, there are on-going preparations for a Youth IGF, expected to be held in November 2016. Although there have also been discussions about organising a national IGF meeting throughout 2016, the developments in the country have made this endeavour difficult, and it is most likely that such a meeting will not be held this year. SEEDIG reminded organisers of the Youth IGF in Turkey that it stands ready and available to support their efforts in any way they would deem suitable and necessary.

Slovenia held its first national IGF in May 2016. The meeting attracted various representatives of the local community, who manifested interest in the initiative moving forward with subsequent meetings. Discussions are currently held about organising a second Slovenian IGF either towards the end of this year or in early 2017. As before, SEEDIG expressed its support for such endeavours, as well as its appreciation for the successful organisation of the first Slovenian IGF (which it had the privilege of attending).

It was also noted that there are few other national IGF initiatives in the region whose annual meetings are soon to follow: the Armenian IGF, to be held on 5 October, and the Bosnia and Herzegovina IGF, scheduled for 21 October.

2. Updates from SEEDIG

Participants were reminded that the second SEEDIG meeting was held in April 2016, in Belgrade, Serbia. The meeting report is available online¹. Work is now undertaken on

¹ <http://www.seedig.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/SEEDIG-2016-meeting-report.pdf>

preparing the SEEDIG 2017 meeting², which is scheduled to be held on 18 May, in Ohrid, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and hosted by the country's Agency for Electronic Communications.

The preparatory process for SEEDIG 2017 will be launched in October, with a call for issues to be discussed at the meeting. As it was the case in 2016, this will be a joint EuroDIG-SEEDIG call for issues, and interested stakeholders will have the opportunity to submit proposals for both meetings through a single form, and as part of a single process. Other milestones in the SEEDIG 2017 preparatory process will be announced soon, and published on the SEEDIG website. Participants were encouraged to start thinking about issues they would like to propose for the Ohrid meeting.

SEEDIG also provided participants with an overview of the recently launched initiative '*Internet governance developments in South Eastern Europe*'³. Launched in collaboration with DiploFoundation and Geneva Internet Platform, the initiative includes two components: a monthly summary⁴ of Internet governance (IG) and digital policy developments in South Eastern Europe and the neighbouring area, and a SEE hub⁵ for the GIP monthly Internet governance briefings. The aim of this initiative is to contribute to achieving SEEDIG's objectives, especially with regard to strengthening the dialogue and exchange of information on Internet-related issues within the regional community.

Participants were informed that a first summary of regional Internet governance developments is expected to be published in the week on 26 September. It will include an overview of activities and events held throughout the region in September. It was also explained that the community is invited and welcome to contribute to the preparation of subsequent issues of the monthly summary, by submitting updates regarding Internet governance developments in their countries/communities.

The first SEE hub for the IG briefing⁶ will be held on 27 September, both online, and in-situ, at the DiploFoundation office in Belgrade. The hub will offer participants the opportunity to follow the briefing on global IG developments, delivered from Geneva, as well as to engage in discussions on regional developments and the relevance and/or impact of the global updates at a regional level.

3. Updates from the IGF Secretariat

Participants were told that preparations are currently undergoing for the upcoming IGF 2016 meeting (scheduled to be held on 6-9 December, in Guadalajara, Mexico)⁷. National and regional IGF initiatives will have a dedicated main session at IGF 2016, and work is now undertaken on planning this session. The IGF Secretariat made a call for representatives of

² <http://www.seedig.net/seedig-2017/>

³ <http://www.seedig.net/ig-developments-in-see/>

⁴ <http://www.seedig.net/ig-summary/>

⁵ <http://www.seedig.net/see-hub-for-ig-briefings/>

⁶ <http://www.seedig.net/2016/09/22/see-hub-internet-governance-in-september-2016/>

⁷ <http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/>

IGF initiatives to announce their intention to attend the Guadalajara meeting, for activities planning purposes.

It was also explained that remote hubs⁸ are also an integral part of the annual IGF meeting. Those not able to attend the meeting in person are encouraged to consider organising a local hub. Registration of remote hubs is open until 5 October⁹.

The next virtual meeting is tentatively planned for mid October.

⁸ <http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2016-remote-hubs>

⁹ <http://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2016-remote-hub-registration>