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

Wireless Internet on its way to 1400+ locations in Turkey
Turk Telekom mobile subsidiary Avea and Vodafone **Turkey** have been awarded a tender to deploy and operate a mobile infrastructure in 1472 locations currently not covered by wireless connectivity. The roll-out project, valued at USD 449.3 million, needs to be completed in three years, and the work will start as soon as the companies sign an agreement with the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications.

European Commission gives green light to Croatia's Broadband Plan
The European Commission has endorsed **Croatia**'s Next Generation Network (NGN) Broadband Plan and found it in line with EU state aid rules. The EUR 101.4 million plan will consists in the deployment of NGN networks in areas where there is no network, or where the existing infrastructure is insufficient to meet projected needs. Once built, the publicly-owned infrastructure will be offered for lease to telecom operators.

Free Wi-Fi for drivers on Serbia's highway
The first free Wi-Fi connection on the **Serbian** portion of the pan-European transport Corridor 10 was put into operation on 11 June, at Jerina rest stop. Serbian Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure stated that this is the first of ten planned points on Corridor 10 where all drivers will be able to use the Internet for free. The Ministry also announced plans for installing electric car chargers at several pay tolls including Sid, Presevo, Dimitrovgrad, and Subotica, in July 2017.

Roam (almost) like at home
A few days after the entry into force of the EU roaming tariff cut, **Romanian** telecom provider RCS/RDS filed a request at the national telecom regulatory body (ANCOM) for overtax approval, citing inability to cover extra costs. If upheld, the tax will charge all users starting from their first minute/SMS/MB used outside the national network. 'Roam like at home' offers in-built bypass mechanisms designed to protect operators' economic interests, and service providers are already scrambling to mitigate potential losses and abuse.

Internet of Things

IoT Garage Lab opens in Belgrade
Garage Lab Belgrade was launched on 17 June, with the main goal of creating a strong Internet of Things (IoT) community in **Serbia**, which will not only follow trends but also take lead in creating new hardware solutions. Garage Lab will offer equipment, tools, and expert support for building and testing prototypes, but also general introduction to electronics, sensors, and technologies on which the IoT rests.

First IoT Lab in Moldova
Microsoft and the **Moldovan** Association of ICT Companies (ATIC) launched the country's first IoT lab in Chisinau. The project aims to offer technical expertise, access to equipment, as well as 'go-to-market' guidance for programming teams interested in these emerging technologies. This is the first initiative of its kind for the Eastern European country, which boasts double digit growth in the ICT sector.

Access

More Internet users in Kosovo
Data presented by the Regulatory Authority of Electronic and Postal Communications (ARKEP) in **Kosovo** shows an increase in the number of both fixed and mobile Internet connections in the first quarter of 2017. Fixed Internet connections increased with 13.06% year-on-year, while mobile Internet connections saw an increase of 46.96%. The stats also look at the number of mobile and fix phone users, market shares, and revenues across the telecom sector.

Cybersecurity and cybercrime

Cybersecurity Nexus launched in Serbia
The **Serbian** Cybersecurity Nexus is intended to function as a platform for stakeholders from Serbian institutions, the private sector, and civil society to cooperate on shaping the national cybersecurity policy environment and strengthening awareness and institutional capacities. The Nexus was launched in the context of the 'Partnership for a secure cyberspace' conference, organised by the OSCE Mission to Serbia, in partnership with the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Microsoft, and DiploFoundation.

Ukrainian universities to prepare cybersecurity specialists
The National Agency for Higher Education Quality in **Ukraine** approved a new higher education standard for the specialisation 'Cybersecurity', describing skills, competences, and knowledge to be obtained by students upon completion of the respective BA programme. The new BA programmes are expected to be launched for the 2017-2018 academic year, and they will rely on the expertise of both academic communities and the industry.

Digital signatures

An electronic signature resistant to forgery attacks?
Georgian scientists won a grant competition organised by Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation and Center for Science and Technology of Ukraine, with a project aimed to create an electronic signature scheme that can resist forgery attacks. The project, supported by Teaching University of Bank of Georgia and A. Razmadze Mathematical Institute of Tbilisi State University, is expected to create mechanisms against unauthorised use of electronic signatures.

Child safety online

Textbooks and safe kids online
Croatian e-commerce platform eKupi.hr and Kaspersky Lab have joined efforts to make children more secure online. The platform, which, among others, sells school textbooks, will also offer for sale the Safe Kids application developed by Kaspersky Lab. The first 5000 buyers of textbooks will get the application free of charge. This application enables parents to manage the time their children spend on a particular device, monitor whether the content reviewed is in accord with the child's age, and receive reports on the subjects the child searches for and the sites the child visits. There is also a safe location option – if a child is a predefined safe area, e.g. part of the city, parents will receive a notification in real time, via SMS or e-mail.

Capacity development

More ICTs in Slovenian schools
The Academic and Research Network of **Slovenia** (ARNES) will implement a four-year programme dedicated to the establishment of ICT infrastructures in schools across the country. The Slovenian Education Network will have three pillars: the construction of wireless networks, the purchase of new ICT equipment for schools, and the development of e-services and e-content. The overall aim of the initiative is to enhance the use of ICT in the education system and better prepare children for the world of work.

Development – other issues

Online anti-discrimination tool in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Thanks to a joint effort of international organisations and local non-governmental organisations, an online tool has been launched in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** for reporting cases of discriminations to relevant institutions. The Platform for Reporting Discrimination can now be used by citizens to report cases of discrimination in a simple, fast, and secure manner. The platform also provides access to important documents and contacts of relevant institutions in the field of human rights protection.

Digital map of Greek Diaspora
In **Greece**, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad, and South East European Studies at Oxford have launched the Greek Diaspora Map, a digital recording and visualisation of the Greek community abroad. The interactive map will be continuously updated with new information on Greek diaspora around the world, and it is also aimed to serve as a tool for the promotion of Greek language and culture.

E-commerce

Challenges for Croatian online retailers
The Association eCommerce **Croatia** has carried out a research on the practices of Croatian e-commerce retailers, trying to identify the problems they face. The results show, among others, that 47% of the online shops in Croatia have exclusively digitally-oriented businesses, but that Croatians have more trust in shops that also have physical outlets. Administrative issues in managing online stores, a shortage of qualified personnel, and frequent legal changes which destabilise business were identified as the biggest challenges encountered by online retailers.

E-money and virtual currency

A national electronic currency for Ukraine?
The National Bank of **Ukraine** (NBU) is considering the possibility of issuing a national electronic currency based on blockchain technology. A pilot project, which relies on the voluntary participation of players on the Ukrainian payment market, studies the possibility of introducing a prototype virtual currency platform. Based on the results, the NBU will assess the risks and benefits, and if the latter outweigh, will proceed with a fully-fledged implementation.

EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION

Infrastructure and technologies ⬀

Days of Electronic Communications | 7-10 June | Odesa, Ukraine ⬀
The international conference explored market trends and regulatory perspectives in the field of electronic communications services. Many discussions revolved around current draft laws on electronic communications, radio frequencies, audiovisual services, and access to telecom networks. Other issues addressed included competition on the telecom market, cybersecurity, online piracy, and content blocking.

SEE 6 – RIPE NCC Regional Meeting | 12–13 June | Budva, Montenegro ⬀
The meeting brought together the technical community in South Eastern Europe to discuss Internet infrastructure-related issues such as challenges in the deployment of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs), experiences in the transition to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6), and privacy and security concerns related to IoT devices. Sustainability in the digital era, the Internet market in Montenegro, and updates on RIPE NCC web services were also topics presented during the event. ⬀

Cybersecurity and cybercrime ⬀

Information Security in the Multi-Platform Era | 8 June | Bucharest, Romania ⬀
The 13th Annual IDC Security Roadshow featured discussions on current and future cybersecurity challenges, with a focus on modalities for improving security while ensuring resource efficiency, the sharing of security responsibility between organisations and the service providers, and the impact of cybersecurity legislation and regulations. There were also briefings on recent developments in the area of cybersecurity policies, both in the EU and beyond, and on emerging cybersecurity services.

Global Cybersecurity Summit 2017 | 14–16 June | Kyiv, Ukraine ⬀
The summit, which gathered representatives of the private sector, government, academia, and civil society, underlined the need for multistakeholder cooperation in addressing both existing and emerging cyber-risks (such as those brought by the IoT, artificial intelligence, and machine learning technologies). Emphasis was also put on aspects such as users' education when it comes to digital hygiene, the use of encryption and blockchain as modalities for protecting personal data and privacy, and threat intelligence sharing among public and private actors.

National Conference on Cybersecurity | 15 June | Bucharest, Romania ⬀
Organised for the third time by Bursa Newspaper, the conference focused on cybersecurity challenges in the context of the fourth industrial revolution, and policy and legislative responses to address them. Discussions revolved around the need to strengthen the Romanian legislative framework to make cyber-infrastructure owners more accountable, to increase their capacity to respond to cyber incidents, and to diminish the impact of such incidents. Cyber-risks associated to IoT devices, the creation of sector-specific Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT), and aspects related to privacy and data protection were also part of the discussions.

Development ⬀

Bitcoin Education | 2 June | Belgrade, Serbia ⬀
Organised by the Bitcoin Association of Serbia, the event included an introduction to blockchain technologies and bitcoin, as well as discussions on various applications of blockchain (e.g. online payments, finances, and gaming) and on regulatory responses to the evolution of this technology. There were also debates on the advantages of blockchain, and on how the technology could further evolve.

Open Data Meet-up | 8 June | Ljubljana, Slovenia ⬀
The event brought together the open data community in Slovenia, to share experiences and good practices in the use of open data. A presentation was the delivered on the Open Data Portal of Slovenia (OPSI), which functions as a single access point to open data sets made available by public institutions in the country. Open data projects in areas such as monitoring public procurements and public expenditures, as well as initiatives of the Statistical Offices, were also showcased.

Doku.Tech | 10–11 June | Prishtina, Kosovo ⬀
Organised by the IPKO Foundation, Share Foundation, and the International Documentary and Short Film Festival (DOKUFEST), the event focused on challenges and opportunities brought by technical advancements. The IoT was among the topics discussed, and participants were involved in the creation of an IoT application (turning on a light using a smartphone button or controlling temperature in the room from distances).

ICEE Fest 2017 | 15–16 June | Bucharest, Romania ⬀
At its 10th edition, the Interactive Central and Eastern Europe Festival gathered around 4000 participants for two days of workshops and discussions on Internet and digital technologies, including e-commerce and e-health, smart cars and smart homes, virtual reality and augmented reality, fintech, and social media marketing. Main trends and challenges in the tech and digital industry were explored, with a focus on the fourth industrial revolution and its implications for the humankind.

Open Data Challenge | 24 June | Nationwide, Ukraine ⬀
The challenge is a national competition of innovative IT-projects and solutions based on open data, and has five stages: application period, open data roadshow, intensive work, incubator, and demo day. 24 June marked the end of the second stage, which included trainings, consultations, and 'ideathons' where applicants had a chance to improve their projects. The final results are expected in mid-September.

EVENTS ACROSS THE REGION

Legal ↗

Intellectual Property and the Internet | 1 June | Belgrade, Serbia↗
At its third edition, the conference featured discussions on issues such as the responsibility of hosting providers for trademark infringements, the settlement of disputes arising out of domain names registrations, trademark infringements on social networks, cross-border content portability, and copyright law. The event was organised by the Belgrade Faculty of Law, the Serbian National Internet Domain Registry (RNIDS), and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

Round Table on 'Link Tax' | 23 June | Bucharest, Romania↗
Organised by the Association for Technology and Internet, the National Association of Librarians and Public Libraries in Romania, and the Centre for Independent Journalism, the event discussed the implications of European Commission's proposal↗ on the introduction of an ancillary copyright (also called 'link tax'). It was explained during the discussions that the right would give publishers the possibility to charge a fee for using snippets of text to point to online content, and it could have far reaching implications for online media, content aggregators, and Internet users.↗

Economic ↗

E-Commerce in Serbia | 1 June | Belgrade, Serbia↗
The conference brought together representatives of the National Bank of Serbia, banks, lawyers, and e-commerce providers and users, for discussions on the challenges of the e-commerce market in Serbia. The electronic conclusion of contracts, online payments, delivery of goods, customer support, and complaint handling were mentioned as some of the main areas where improvements are needed. The importance of ensuring the safety and security of online payments, as well as the need to further educate users on the advantages of e-commerce were also emphasised.
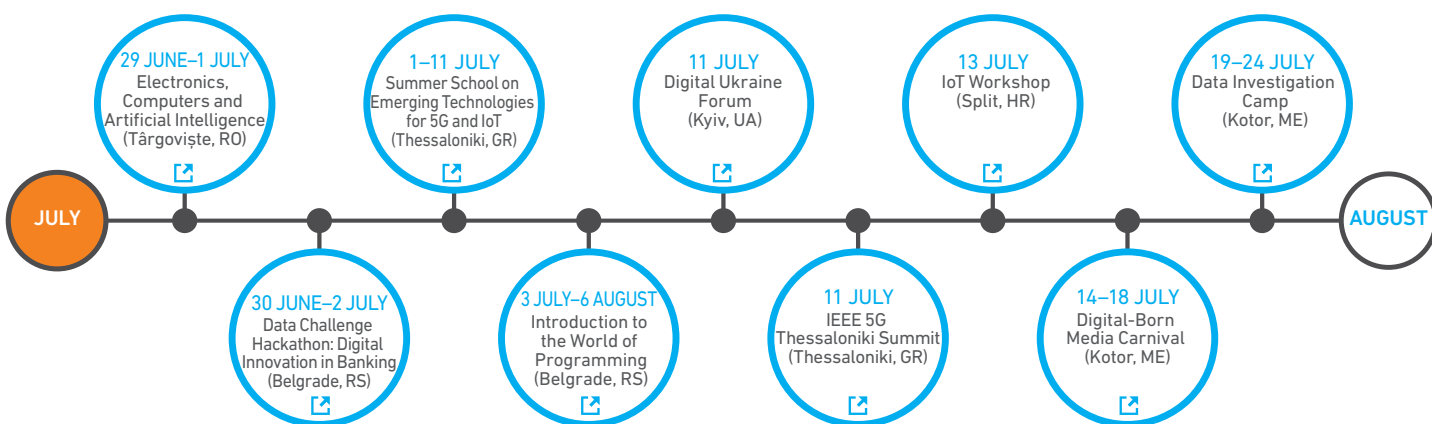
Internet Governance Forum (IGF) initiatives ↗

EuroDIG 2017 | 6–7 June | Tallinn, Estonia↗
The European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) celebrated its 10th anniversary in Tallinn, under the overarching theme 'Digital futures: promises and pitfalls'. Stakeholders from South Eastern Europe and the neighbouring area contributed to discussions on topics such as cybersecurity, human rights online, copyright, critical Internet literacy and digital citizenship, and e-commerce. Messages from the third SEEDIG annual meeting↗ were presented, and the SEE community was encouraged to contribute to strengthening the SEEDIG process and the linkages between SEEDIG and EuroDIG.

AHEAD IN JULY

JULY — **AUGUST**

29 JUNE–1 JULY
Electronics, Computers and Artificial Intelligence (Târgoviște, RO) ↗

1–11 JULY
Summer School on Emerging Technologies for 5G and IoT (Thessaloniki, GR) ↗

11 JULY
Digital Ukraine Forum (Kyiv, UA) ↗

13 JULY
IoT Workshop (Split, HR) ↗

19–24 JULY
Data Investigation Camp (Kotor, ME) ↗

30 JUNE–2 JULY
Data Challenge Hackathon: Digital Innovation in Banking (Belgrade, RS) ↗

3 JULY–6 AUGUST
Introduction to the World of Programming (Belgrade, RS) ↗

11 JULY
IEEE 5G Thessaloniki Summit (Thessaloniki, GR) ↗

14–18 JULY
Digital-Born Media Carnival (Kotor, ME) ↗

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.