

BH. FORUM  
O UPRAVLJANJU  
INTERNETOM  
2016

INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM OF BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA (#BHIGF2016)

**REPORT**

*"BH Internet: Open and secure?"*

January 2017

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## Introduction

Internet Governance Forum (BHIGF) of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a national IGF initiative dedicated to open, inclusive, diverse and informal dialogue on Internet governance issues among all interested stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH). Last year, members of different stakeholder groups in BH who are active in their own fields of expertise, met for the first time and initiated the inter-stakeholder collaboration. It was just about the time for BH to join the dialogue on IG on regional and global levels through its own national IGF.

Motivated and encouraged by the success, engagement and participation in the first national BH IGF, we committed to the second BHIGF, to deliver the suggestions and outcomes provided by more than 150 participants. This year Forum was held on 21st October, 2016 in Sarajevo, at the Hotel Bristol.

The second BH IGF was a space for open dialogue for all stakeholders and individuals (government, business, civil society, technical community, academia, the media and others) interested in sharing ideas, shaping and contributing to strengthening Internet Governance in BH, with a strong encouragement for gender-equal participation.

The Forum had three key topics:

- ◇ Universal access, are we all equal? - How to contribute to a better understanding of roles and responsibilities that stakeholders have in order to ensure an open and accessible Internet
- ◇ Violent extremism, terrorism and right of reporting - How the state security collide with the right to reporting in the digital age? What are the practices, regulation and actors within that spectrum? How to ensure the public interest to the right to information?
- ◇ Human rights and business in BH Internet economy - Startups in BH, ISPs - practices, challenges and the role of the Internet in empowering the exercise of human rights and the promotion of innovation and economic growth.

Very important part of the Forum, something that has been done for the first time in the region, which also brought it to another level, is the fact that was provided ***sign language***

**translation.** This way, people with disabilities were actively involved in panels and discussions which gave us all better understanding of obstacles that persons with disabilities are facing and possible IT solutions for overcoming their problems.

## *Organizing Committee of BH IGF 2016*

Core organizing committee members:

- ◇ Nebojša Regoje, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Government)
- ◇ Amela Odošić and Emir Povelkić, Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Government body)
- ◇ Saša Mrdović, University of Sarajevo, Professor at Faculty of Electrical Engineering and director of University Tele-information Center (UTIC), (Academia and business)
- ◇ Valentina Pellizzer, Belma Kućukalić, Valida Hromadžić, One World Platform (Civil Society)

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## Pre –event for students

Emphasis on students' involvement and participation in National IGF is something that was carried on from the previous year. Therefore we prepared especially tailored day just for students from all parts of the country.

Opening presentation was inspired by Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Internet freedom. A presentation "What is internet freedom? – The Response of the Council of Europe", was organized in cooperation with Council of Europe and was presented by Ana Gascon-Marcen from Council of Europe. Students had opportunity to raise the questions and get direct answers related to digital rights.



*CoE presentation for students in Parliament Building*

In addition, they had opportunity to hear about some of the indicators and their status in BH, such as Freedom to access the Internet, Freedom of the media and Personal data protection. Presenters were Nedžad Eminagić, head of department for market regulation in Sector for interconnection and market regulation of Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Maida Bahnto- Kestendžić, representative of Press Council in BH and Valentina Pellizzer, president of Managing Board at One World Platform (NGO).

We used the opportunity that presentation was held in State Parliament building and provide students with tour and short presentation. For some students this was unique opportunity to be in the building crucial for politics in BH.



*Students visiting Parliament Building*

The last part of agenda for students was reserved for conversation with representative of CSOs from Europe. In particular, they had opportunity to talk with Tamara Rasevska (project coordinator) and Filip Stojanovski, (program director) from Metamorphosis, Macedonia; Eva Stoyanova (research associate) BlueLink, Bulgaria; Ed Maw from GreeNet, UK; Rozália Klára

BAKÓ from StrawberryNet, Romania, Rolf Klef as an independent member of APC - Association for Progressive Communication, Holland, Leila Nachawati (communications associate), Karen Banks (operational manager) and Katerina Fialova (gender and ICT policy monitor coordinator) from The Association for Progressive Communications who presented their work and possibilities of engaging.



*Students with APC members at Networks Sarajevo*



“It was a pleasure and great honor to be participant of BH IGF and to meet new people, wonderful people. Opportunity to visit the BH Parliamentary Assembly, then to visit the Networks and to be able to raise the questions and to listen great lectures, commitment and efforts, solutions to some problems, then constructive questions and answers.”

- Ammar Lidan

*Students with APC member, time for Q&A*

*“Participation in the second BH forum on Internet governance was an excellent opportunity for networking and the exchange of new ideas. Despite the relatively short period of time and large number of participants, I was able to collect a lot of information relevant to the work I do. Skills and expertise of lecturers at the panels opened new questions, which are still ongoing, but little attention is paid to their resolution. One of those topics is the inclusion of the blind, visually impaired and deaf and dumb in a society that has virtually no convenient medium for them. I appreciate the opportunity and the ability of this platform, which will allow for further cooperation and support to projects, ideas and information”. - Sara Velaga*



*5 Students with APC member, time for Q&A*

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## Agenda, press and opening remarks

Even though the BH IGF 2016 had its own pre-event, the Forum itself was planned to be one day event with three panels. The agenda was as it follows:

*8:30 - 9: 15 "What is ICANN? NextGen@ICANN - program for youth"*

*9:00 - 9:30 Registration of participants*

*9:30 - 10:00 Time for Press & Opening Keynotes*

*10:00 - 11:30 I Panel: Universal access – Are we all equal?*

*11:30 - 12:00 Coffee Break*

*12:30 - 14:00 II Panel: Security, extremism online and the freedom of media*

*13:30 - 14:30 Lunch break*

*14:30 - 16:00 III Panel: Human Rights and Business in internet Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

*16:00 - 16:30 Recommendations and Closing of the Event*

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The day of the Forum started with the special presentation for the students. Gabriella Schitteck, Global Stakeholder Engagement Manager for Central & Eastern Europe from Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) presented ICANN's



NextGen program and the fellowship. The goal was to introduce youth from BH to ICANN mission with the emphasis on possibilities if and when they become actively engaged in the future growth of global internet policies. It was our aim to widen the horizons of the students so they can be more involved in Internet policies

in their own country.

It was dedicated time slot from 9:30 till 10:00 for media and press statements. Media representatives had opportunity to take statements from: **Selma Zeković**, project officer, Security Co-operation Unit, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSCE), **Azra**



**Mulahasanović**, Senior Public Information Assistant, OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSCE), **Amela Odošević**, the Head of Public Affairs of Communication Regulatory Agency, **Emir Poveljak**, the Head of the Division of Licenses, Digitalization, and Coordination in Broadcasting of the Communications Regulatory Agency, **Valentina Pellizzer**, President of

Managing Board at One World Platform, **Nebojša Regoje**, Minister-Counselor, Office of Public Affairs at Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of Bosnia And Herzegovina, Nataša Maros, MyRight Project Coordinator and Muhamed Jusić, Islamic theologian and Arabist, an analyst and columnist.

Each speaker gave a brief about necessity of its respective panel and short overview about issues and expectations related to the panels and the Forum in general.



Valentina Pellizzer and Emir Povolakić welcomed participants on behalf of the BH IGF Organizing Committee. After short welcoming address, BH IGF Forum started with first panel.

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## Panel I - "Universal access, are we all equal? "

- Panelists:
  - ◇ *Branko Suzić*, President of the Association of the blind persons of Republika Srpska
  - ◇ *Feđa Kulenović*, IT expert
  - ◇ *Saša Grbić*, Support Centre for Students with Disabilities, Banjaluka
  - ◇ *Željko Bajić*, Journalist on BH Radio
  - ◇ *Ira Adilagić*, The representative of the persons with impaired hearing
  - ◇ *Elvira Bešlija*, The Council for Persons with Disabilities and the Union of paraplegics and the poliomyelitis from Federation of BH
  - ◇ *Saliha Đuderija*, The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees
- Moderator:
  - ◇ *Nataša Maros*, MyRight project coordinator (empowerment of people with disabilities)



*Panel I panelists and moderator. From left to right: Elvira Bešlija, Ira Adilagić, Željko Bajić, Saša Grbić, Feđa Kulenović, Saliha Đuderija, Branko Suzić and Nataša Maros*

The panel was attended by representatives of relevant government ministries, the Council of Persons with Disabilities in BH, Association / Associations of Persons with Disabilities and the technical community.

Alarming situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina proves the fact that even 10% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina has a physical, sensory, developmental, mental or emotional disability, and 30% of the population is directly or indirectly affected by the consequences of the phenomenon of disability.

The conclusions are as follows:

- ➔ Persons with impaired hearing and vision have limited access to information in a variety of communications, while mobile accessibility, web accessibility, and affordability of broadcasting are at a low level of representation.
- ➔ Needs of persons with disabilities are neglected when designing a web page.
- ➔ There is a lack of universal design, or 'Design for All', which makes accessibility difficult.
- ➔ It is difficult to follow program content in the digital environment due to lack of Captions, Audio captions, translations, translations that can be separately added to the image, additional video sign language and the lack of recorded voice captions.
- ➔ It was concluded that it is necessary that all responsible institutions and representatives of other national and international institutions and governmental and non-governmental organizations become involved in solving the problem of affordable websites, mobile applications and content of the public broadcasting system, faced by persons with disabilities, through the adoption of the appropriate legal framework with associated budgets.
- ➔ Competent authorities are required to consider the possibility to allocate some amount from the surplus revenues of the Agency towards financing assistive technology, which will enable the accessibility of information and communication for persons with disabilities, the production of affordable programs, and other similar projects.
- ➔ Require adopting relevant decisions that will allow all websites of state institutions and public services at all levels of the administrative system to be accessible to persons with disabilities.
- ➔ Initiate a campaign to raise awareness about the accessibility of ICT services and

broadcasting facilities for people with disabilities. To advocate for the education of all relevant stakeholders, especially the industry is regulated by the Agency (providers of audiovisual media services and telecom operators) on the accessibility of services provided to persons with disabilities.



*Participants questions*

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## Panel II - “Countering Violent Extremism Online”

- Panelists:
  - ◇ *Mario Janeček*, BH Ministry of Security
  - ◇ *Wolf Ludwig*, Founding member and co-organizer of the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG)
  - ◇ *Mirela Geko*, Member of the Social Media Team within the Super Građani-ke” (Super Citizens) platform
  - ◇ *Denis Džidić*, Editor for the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIRN)
  - ◇ *Muhamed Jusić*, Theologian and columnist
- Moderator:
  - ◇ *Selma Zeković*, OSCE Mission to BH Coordinator of Countering Violent Extremism



*Panel II panelists and moderator. From left to right: Wolf Ludvig, Denis Džidić, Mirela Geko, Muhamed Jusić, Mario Janeček and Selma Zeković*

Extremist and terrorist organizations are adeptly using a range of online communication tools for propaganda, funding, training and recruitment purposes. By putting out a plethora of often very well-produced videos, compelling text and powerful images, they are able to attract people to join their ranks, commit acts of violence or support their cause. This panel examined various approaches to tackling violent extremism online, a problem which has no single solution and instead requires a combination of restrictive measures, increased counter-messaging efforts and a clear understanding among media professionals of their roles and responsibilities in reporting on acts of violence.

The conclusions are as follows:

(1) The role of the government in filtering, blocking and taking-down online content that incites violence

- ➔ Systemic solutions that involve the whole of society and take a long-term, rather than purely reactive, approach should be devised.
- ➔ Measures such as blocking, filtering and take-down must be developed and implemented with full respect to freedom of expression and other human rights.
- ➔ Procedures should be clear, encourage self-regulation and cover hate speech and other forms of discrimination as well as terrorist content. They should be used on case-by-case basis and avoid blanket applications that may be in breach of human rights standards.

(2) The role of civil society and the private sector in producing credible counter-speech and counter-narratives as a fast, flexible and responsive way to counter violent extremism

- ➔ The sheer volume of extremist content online and the rate at which it is uploaded necessitates the provision of alternative and counter-narratives which, either directly or indirectly, undermine extremist messages.
- ➔ Counter-messaging can deconstruct hateful or violent messages by flagging their hypocrisies or factual inaccuracies as well as promote respect for human rights and tolerance.
- ➔ Humor is a particularly effective tool for subverting extremist messages which tend to work on an emotional rather than rational level.
- ➔ Recognizing the good work of the Coalitions against Hate and the Social Media Team,

panelists agreed upon the importance of engaging civil society and young people in creating and disseminating positive messages and counter-narratives. Such messages should be specialized (not purely reliant on the democratic ideals and values which extremists have already rejected) and tailored to their intended audience.

(3) The role of the media in countering violent extremism and preventing the spread of fear and panic

→ Institutional fragmentation, political influence and financial limitations all present problems for media professionals in fulfilling their CVE roles and responsibilities.

→ Participants agreed that the media should prioritize accuracy over infotainment when reacting to acts of violence. Journalists should be properly trained to report on such incidents in a responsible and timely manner and provide continuous coverage of relevant developments.

→ Protecting the pluralism and professionalism of the media was underlined as essential to any functioning democratic society.



*Participant's questions*

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## Panel III - “Human Rights and Business in internet Economy of Bosnia and Herzegovina”

- Panelists:
  - ◇ *Bojana Škrobić-Omerović*, Co-founder and CEO at Networks INT Sarajevo
  - ◇ *Ana Gascon Marcen*, Council of Europe
  - ◇ *Leila Nachawati Rego*, Communications Officer at Association for Progressive Communications, writer and a free speech advocate
  - ◇ *Predrag Katanić*, TelradNET, one of the leading telecommunication companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - ◇ *Muamer Bezdrob*, Co-owner and Director at Ping, a computer and information engineering company
  - ◇ *Saša Mrdović*, Associate Professor at University of Sarajevo, whose courses include the field of computer networks and security, also a former director of UTIC (ccTLD)
- Moderators:
  - ◇ *valentina pellizer*, One World Platform President of the Managing Board, an activist
  - ◇ *Dušan Stojičević*, a representative of the technical community, the manager of the ICANN accredited Registry and until recently the chairman of the Board of Serbian domain registrar.



*Panel III panelist. From left to right: Saša Mrdović, Muamer Bezdrob, Predrag Katanić, Leila Nachawati, Ana Gascon Marcen and Bojana Škrobić Omerović*

The discussion raised a few important questions regarding human rights in IT industry, personal data protection and the moral responsibility of companies with the use of their customers' personal details.

Some of the current issues were noted:

- ➔ Digital Agenda 2020 and the State role. Need of a debate and public conversations to engage and make the state accountable. BH progress status and if there is any development plan for the next decade at least. What are development goals in the next 10 to 50 years? It is an important issue that State must be tackling more actively.
- ➔ Last mile issues: land lane, and broadband connection, are not define and supported by state intervention or legislation. So the infrastructure is de facto privatized and owned by the companies that have invested in landing cables. If from one side mobile telephony is increasingly bringing customers online, the quality of access remain critical or law for remote areas were private companies do not see any investment return profit. Access

remains critical for all ICT infrastructural development since activities are happening in urban areas while rural areas are left out hence they remain undeveloped.

→ Problems regarding e-commerce, electronic money transfers and Law on electronic signatures, coding and export control, trademarks, copyrights and patent protection, databases protection are the biggest challenges of the economy, especially the ICT sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Issues that BH must work on in order increase competitiveness of BH companies in the region and abroad. The current situation is diminishing the image of the BH companies and the state.

→ Issue of jurisdiction, understanding how data are managed, protected and under whose responsibility they fall: who can access them, when, and under which law in case of violation of human rights (hate speech, harassment). It is evident that Internet affects the human rights, especially women's and LGBT rights. Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of privacy where privacy is not opposite to security. Talk more about the role of corporations in online violence against women

→ Criminalization of anonymity and the use of encryption tools is a concerning issue for activists, especially in the countries with repressive laws. Decision-making process must include participation of all stakeholders including civil society.

→ It was highlighted that the states are not the only ones limiting human rights, but big companies as well. The danger of the "filter bubble" which is responsible for selective information providing to internet users and effective isolation in certain cultural or ideological bubbles was also mentioned.

→ The importance of educating each individual about the responsible and safe use of Internet must not be ignored and internet cannot be blamed for all emerging issues. It is a powerful tool for addressing them. Problems must and can be solved by the joint effort of the state, communities and individuals.

→ Legal framework in regulating free-lance and distant/remote workers. More and more individuals work from remote for various IT companies in different capacities from UX designer to programming and they are not registered locally. Current legislation does not provide them with a legal framework to register their activity and pay taxes. Many people complained about the fact they are somehow forced to gray areas and a sort of illegality. On the other hand the lack of legal framework impact on local company competitiveness which offers become then too high due the high taxes they have to pay for employees.

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## Participants

The number of participants registered online was 96, but the total number of participants that was present at the Forum was 132. Statistic shows that civil society, academia and government recognized the importance of Internet governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina by almost the same number of representatives. For the next year organizing committee will have to do an extra effort to animate business sector, IT community and media to become more actively involved in the organizing process itself and to become equally represented as participants.

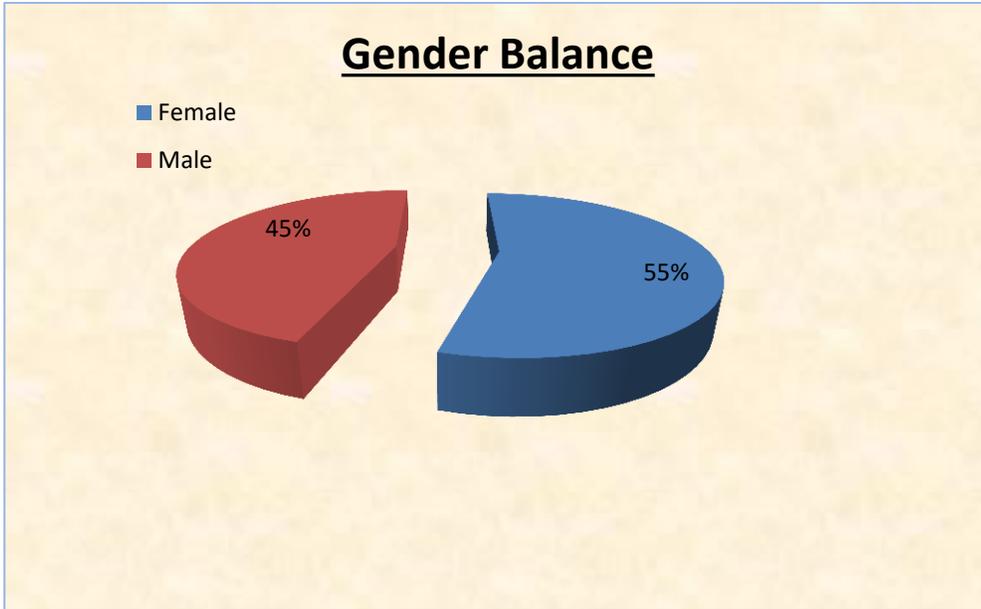
### Stakeholder Groups and Gender Balance



\*Some participants were representatives of more than one stakeholder group

\*\*Academia also includes students

## Gender Balance



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## Special thanks

BH IGF 2017 was possible due to the enthusiasm and belief that BH can and must be part of Global IGF landscape, as well as hard work and commitment of BH IGF Organizing Committee.

We would like to thank our friends from Afiliias for their help and support.

Special thanks to ICANN, especially to Andrea Beccalli for helping us with arranging financial support and to Gabriella Shittek making herself available for presentation at BH IGF which helped us bringing the BH Forum to another level.

Also, we would like to express our gratitude to APC for their generous support and APC members for arranging their time to give BH youth glimpse of activist work. When mentioning students we must thank Council of Europe for making possible to gather 30 students from across the county and making their stay in Sarajevo interesting and inspirational.

At last but not the least we would like to thank IGF SA for funding support which helped to convene the message to the large audience and to get a global validation of our initiative.

At the end we would like to thank all of our participants for being part of second BH IGF and making the Forum their space and contributing to live conversation between stakeholders.



*Organizing Committee with students, panelists and APC members*