

# B H . F O R U M O U P R A V L J A N J U I N T E R N E T O M

BH INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM –  
#BHIGF 2017

REPORT

*“The Network Effect: from infrastructure to children”*

January 2018

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## Introduction

BH Forum on Internet Governance (BHIGF) is a national IGF initiative dedicated to creating an open space for all stakeholders of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to develop an inclusive, diverse and informal dialogue on issues and problems concerning Internet governance. For the third year in a row, BHIGF gathered representatives of various stakeholders to discuss global issues and topics from a national perspective, and finally to identify common priorities and make the first steps for a mutual cooperation. Motivated and encouraged by the success of the previous two BHIGFs, we focused on two critical aspects, the infrastructure, using as the starting point the role of IXP (the point of exchange for Internet traffic) and by taking into consideration the issue of net neutrality, and we also focused on children as the most vulnerable group of users from the perspective of local and global challenges. The forum was held on December 12th at the Hotel Europe, and like the previous year, the day before, we organized a zero day dedicated to students interested in learning something new about the Internet and how it functions. The title of this year's Forum was "The Network Effect: From Infrastructure to Children" and it consisted of three panels:

- Infrastructure: Internet exchange points – IXPs, net neutrality

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only country in the Western Balkans that has not yet established a point for exchanging Internet traffic known as IXP. What is the Internet infrastructure in BH, how is it managed, what is missing? What does the Internet service provider's current service area look like? Who owns the BH Internet infrastructure? What is net neutrality? What is the connection between IXP and net neutrality? To what extent are the principles of net neutrality implemented in BH and how do they relate to the accessibility of the Internet?

- Children on the Internet: why data matters

Practices and challenges of children on the Internet. What role do gender, age, and education have? Joint and articulated thinking about the interconnection of privacy, security and data. What are the results of the monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan for the Protection of Children and the Prevention of Violence against Children through Information and Communication Technologies in BH (2014–2015)? What is personal data, who owns them and who is responsible for them. Obligations and responsibilities of government, business and society.

- From the community

Main conclusions and problems presented by the representatives of the initiatives in the form of brief presentation of BiH Internet actors, and their successes, challenges and calls for joint action.

BHIGF is an open space for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and just like the previous years, it was important for us to provide a translation of the entire conversation into a sign language, as well as to ensure access for all persons with disabilities in order to be an equal part of this story. Unfortunately, such a practice continues to make our forum special and one of the few who think about the needs of all of its potential participants.

## Organizing Committee

Core organizing committee members:

- Valentina Pellizzer, Valida Hromadžić i Tina Lukežić  
One World Platform (Civil Society)
- Suada Hadžović, Amela Odošević i Emir Povelčić  
Regulatorna agencija za komunikacije Bosne i Hercegovine  
(Government body)
- Nebojša Regoje  
Ministarstvo vanjskih poslova (Government)
- Elmedin Selmanović  
Univerzitetski tele-informatički centar UTIC (Academia and business)

## Pre-event for Students

Talking about common priorities in the field of Internet governance is unthinkable without the voice of the young, and this year we organized a full-day program for students from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to enrich their knowledge with the basics for better navigation in the internet management space, and we encouraged them to be active participants in the forum itself.



Armin Talić

The program was opened with the lecture of Armin Talić from the Bit Alliance Association, the largest umbrella group of IT companies in BH. This lecture aroused great interest of our young participants because it focused on the lack of qualified IT staff in our country and the activities of the Bit Alliance aimed at

encouraging young people to strive for careers in the IT sector and enabling them to get educated in the right way. This lecture talked about the strong efforts of the Bit Alliance to work together with the government and educational institutions by developing public awareness, to implement two-year programming studies at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Natural Sciences in the University of Sarajevo, to amend curricula and provide free Bit Lab classes for students all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, all for the purpose of providing a better future for young people.

Valentina Pellizzer of the Association for Progressive Communications has introduced this selected group of students with a feminist approach to the Internet, told them a little bit more about feminism through the prism of the IT sector and about challenges at a global and local level, such as the unequal presence of women in the IT world and their discrimination in studying and employment. Also, Valentina introduced them with feminist principles of the Internet aimed at empowering as many women and queers as possible in all our diversity to create a world in which all people fully enjoy all the rights that belong to them as a human beings.



Students playing an interactive game during Sorina's lecture

Sorina Telenau visited us as a representative of the Diplo Foundation and the SEEDIG Initiative and explained the basic concepts of Internet governance as a multidisciplinary area, which is one of the key components of every modern society. She discussed with our students about the main stakeholders, importance

and way of developing an Internet governance dialogue, possible online space abuse, artificial intelligence, and many other burning issues.

In order for our students to be ready for the BHIGF and the first panel dealing with topics that are not related to them, Saša Mrdović, a professor at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, explained the concept and way of functioning of the Internet traffic exchange points, as well as the current state of our infrastructure and made it easier for them to understand. In addition to the advantages of the IXP system, cost savings, content delays, and overall cost-effectiveness, the issue of net neutrality was also raised.

We concluded the meeting with the lecture by Feđa Kulenović, professor at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo and the International University of Sarajevo, who talked about the issue of anonymity on the Internet, which awakened great interest and led to a vivid discussion among our participants.



Qanita Abedpour

“During today's presentations, as well as the subsequent dialogues, I had the opportunity to get acquainted with a number of issues whose importance now I fully understand. I consider that the issue of Internet governance is very complex and requires cooperation between different actors and sectors. While working on SEEDIG's reviews of

Internet governance issues in the region, I have drawn my attention to a number of problems, but also to the progress towards a more neutral and open Internet access. So I think that such forums and similar initiatives are key tools for raising public awareness about the better and smarter use of the Internet, and in general information and communication technologies.”



Elvin Okugić

"The seminar was excellent, the organization was fantastic, within the 1st day of the seminar, we had a very interactive workshop where we were divided into three groups and discussed the topic: Internet governance and net neutrality. I will try to apply much

in practice, in the form of further improvements in everyday life. I hope that in the future there will be more such seminars in which a lot can be learned. "



Lecture of Professor Saša Mrdović



Nijaz Čehaja

talk about the hidden problems regarding Internet and possible ways to solve them. For me, to empower young people in their daily online behavior, means to empower them for a better future that awaits them, resulting in a better society as a whole. "

"The opportunity to learn about the way in which the internet functions, and to exchange my thoughts with colleagues and lecturers, and meet such inspirational people make this event one of the most important ones that I attended. This experience as well as my last year experience in the

Forum is a proof that the organizers want to



Amina Beriša

more participants will take an active part because our future is coded.

"BH IGF is a unique opportunity for all relevant stakeholders to discuss and build a dialogue on the current situation, but also about the future of digital space through their own and collective experiences, and the best practices of the region and the world. I hope that the BH IGF will be a recognizable event in the country, and that more and

## Agenda and Opening Remarks

9:00 – 9:30 Registration of participants

9:30 – 10:00 Time for Press & Opening Keynotes

10:00 – 11:30 I Panel: Infrastructure: Internet exchange points – IXPs, net neutrality

11:30–11:50 Coffee Break

11:50 – 13:20 II Panel: Children on the Internet: why data matters

13:20 – 13:40 Coffee Break

13:40 – 14:30 III Panel: From the community

14:30 – 15:00 Recommendations and Closing of the Event

15:00 Lunch



Introductory speech



Valentina Pellizzer

The introductory speech was given by Valentina Pellizzer and Emir Powlakić who, on behalf of the organizing committee, welcomed our guests, spoke a little more about the initiative itself, and encouraged all participants to actively participate in the discussion and together with us contribute to the development of a

multidimensional and open dialogue aimed at deepening conversations, identifying challenges in the Internet governance environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and finding common solutions for common issues.

## Panel I – “Infrastructure: Internet exchange points – IXPs, net neutrality”

### Panelists:

- Ševal Bećirević, Chief Technology Officer at Telemach
- Šadi Matar, Advisor to the Ministry of Transport and Communications of BiH
- Saša Mrdović, professor at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Sarajevo
- Enes Halilović, University Tele-information Center

Moderator:

- Dušan Stojičević, Marketing Director for Eastern Europe, Gransy s.r.o.

First session rapporteur:

- Qanita Abedpour



Saša Mrdović, Enes Halilović, Šadi Matar, Ševal Bećirević

The first panel was divided into two parts. The first part was dedicated to the infrastructure starting from the Internet point of exchange, and the second was the issue of net neutrality.

As Valentina Pellizzer pointed out in her introductory remarks, the Internet is the most material thing that exists in the world because it makes an inevitable part of our everyday life. Most of the challenges we face in modern times point to the need for constant development and investment in the IT sector. But it is clear that

infrastructure is the starting point and that without it, it is impossible to do anything. Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only country in the Western Balkans that has not yet established a point for exchanging Internet traffic known as IXP, which was the focus of the discussion. The importance of establishing the IXP and all the benefits that come with it were clearly emphasized. This system directly contributes to reducing costs and increasing the speed of information flow, which would also enable additional development of information and communication technologies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Professor Mrdović stressed that there is no need to do much in terms of resources and infrastructure. This is a long-term investment, and for the beginning it is necessary to reach agreement on a separate and independent location between the operators and the internet service providers. UTIC premises were proposed as a potential location.

Advisor Matar reminded all participants of the legal barriers and the need for the adoption of unique policies and strategies regarding Internet governance. Matar believes that it is crucial to form an academic network and start from the real sector because, as he says, if an agreement and framework is established in that sector, the entire state and legislation could follow the same model and that would solve the problem of entity competence, which is the main obstacle for passing laws. Ševal Bećirević emphasized the multifaceted nature of this project, especially in the current situation where between 60% and 80% of Internet traffic takes place within networks of individual operators connected in Europe.

What the panelists have agreed on is that the focus of the dialogue should not be on the financial aspect that is in the shadow of great advantages for the users. Resources for such a project could be easily collected, and as one of the solutions it was suggested the adoption of a business plan on IXP management, which would determine the unit price and cost sharing with the agreement of all operators in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the strong will of all actors and the establishment of a "multistakeholder" management model, the IXP system could soon come to life.



Comments from the audience

Herzegovina there are currently no recorded cases of discrimination of content and restriction of traffic speed.

The second part of this panel has caused a heated debate on the future of the Internet. The question was raised whether the current turbulence in terms of net neutrality in the United States will have consequences for the rest of the world. According to the Communications Regulatory Agency, in Bosnia and



Ševal Bećirević

consequences for the operator himself.

However, it was pointed out that certain operators in the region offer user packages with free access to certain applications, favoring specific companies. The technical director of Telemach believes that a violation of the principle of net neutrality would have a direct effect on user consumption and, consequently, the negative

It was agreed that the principle of net neutrality protects the digital rights of users and that its violation would have disastrous consequences for a hacktivist community that holds a special place in the online space and is responsible for constant innovation. One World Platform organization emphasized that the abolition of this principle is jeopardizing the work of non-governmental organizations and other associations that do not have sufficient resources to invest in highlighting their own content on the Internet. The conclusion that has been made is that users, their experience and consumption are the most important in this story, and that they have the greatest power to protect this principle in their hands.

## Panel II – “Children on the Internet: why data matters”

Panelists:

- Silville Fućec, public relations officer of the Personal Data Protection Agency
- Sandra Kovačević-Đurđević, a spokeswoman for the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Republika Srpska
- Josip Vojnić, education advisor for the Pedagogical Institute of the Tuzla Canton
- Alen Zaimović, children’s protection program coordinator for Save the Children
- Adnan Hantalašević, representative of BH Telecom

Moderator:

- Suada Hadžović, licensing expert at the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Second session rapporteur:

- Qanita Abedpour
- Amina Beriša



Suada Hadžović, Silvije Fućec, Sandra Kovačević–Đurđević, Josip Vojnić, Alen Zaimović, Adnan Hantalašević

Children represent the most vulnerable group of users. Recognizing and sanctioning violations of children's rights on the Internet is in itself a major challenge. In the digital world it is very difficult to determine who is the person on the other side of the network and the nature of those intentions. That's why Adnan Hantalašević from BH Telekom believes that there is no uniform approach to the issue of child protection. BH Telekom is trying to develop an environment that is user-oriented. Together with CISCO, they launched a Safe Internet project that enabled parents to have an insight into the online activities of their children

by making home-based traffic available through a special platform. Statistics show that children use 60% of their time spent on the Internet to visit YouTube, while their parents spend most of their time on Facebook. It is very important to know the habits and behavior of children on the Internet in order to be able to meet the needs and demands of children in a safe way and react in a timely manner in case of certain problems.



Panel moderator Suada Hadžović stressed the need for recognizing and responding to the problem of circulating all kind of data, which is why it is necessary to create a safe space within which children can communicate. In doing so, it is crucial for the child to have the

freedom to explore and develop in the way he or she wants and to be very careful about the constraints imposed.

Alen Zaimović presented Save the Children initiative #MislišDaZnaš (#YouThinkYouKnow), which has launched a discussion on the safety of children on the Internet. He emphasized the existence of a major misunderstanding of the basic concepts of online abuse, and, in accordance with technology development, new forms of abuse on the Internet are developing rapidly. It is necessary to reach agreement on the legal basis that could enable and sanction such abuses. A survey in this initiative revealed a frightening information that 50% of children participating said they would not report online harassment. . Every third child has some kind of a digital device, and children aged 14-15 have their own mobile phones. Most of the children can access the Internet whenever and wherever they want to. However, a question was raised on how many of them are digitally literate and understand what kind of challenges they bring with the use of the Internet, such as leaving their own personal data. Two thirds of children share

their photos and data like addresses and the names of their schools. In most cases, parents were not familiar with the content their children viewed on the Internet. Unfortunately, parents and teachers shift the responsibility of educating children about safe behavior on the Internet to one another. Save the Children organization, within the framework of this initiative and with Balkan Tube Fest initiative, presented messages about five golden online protection tips that have reached over two million users.

Josip Vojnić points out that the main theme that is addressed in schools is the question of equipment rather than quality content. Through the training conducted by the Pedagogical Institute of Tuzla Canton, with ten schools, including three primary and seven secondary schools. The training aimed to raise awareness of digital violence as a relatively new form of violence that can not be isolated from the physical or real world. Out of this form of violence children are not protected not even in their homes. As Josip says, the screen provides only false security for children.

Sandra Kovačević-Đurđević from the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the RS emphasized that, regardless of the non-revised action plan, there are a number of acts that could solve this problem to some extent. Violence on the Internet is defined through the Law on Secondary Education, but not at the level of primary education. The Criminal Law of Republika Srpska contains Article 188 which mentions the exploitation of a computer network for acts of sexual abuse, for which a maximum sentence of eight years is envisaged. Also, a campaign for strengthening media literacy has been launched, which is primarily directed towards schools, through which children learn about classical, as well as new forms of media, and the ultimate goal is the adoption of policy and legal regulations. The purpose of the campaign is that children develop awareness about all mediaforms, responsible online behavior and how they can use the media for educational purposes.

Silvije Fućec from the Personal Data Protection Agency in Bosnia and Herzegovina presented their education program "Do not leave your tracks on the Internet". In case of problematic foreign content, the agency can act only as an advisory body, which is why the need for the above mentioned campaign has been recognized. Silvije once again stressed the importance of involving parents in order to educate their children and develop mutual communication with them.

One of the conclusions at the end of this panel mentioned the need for a faster response of the competent institutions in cases of violations of children's rights. It has also been emphasized that services for reporting violation of rights need to work on their greater visibility as well as on the visibility of police services and other institutions that in these cases can provide assistance with the aim of returning citizens back their trust in these institutions. Finally, education is the key to solving this problem, and it would be urgent to start working on changing curricula in schools across Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Comments of the audience

## Panel III – “From the Community”

### Panelists:

- Elmaja Bavčić, OSCE Program Advisor on Gender Equality
- Rialda Spahić, representative of the IT Girls Initiative
- Erna Ključić, editor of the portal zenskaposla.ba
- Selma Badžić, representative of the Women's Rights Center

### Moderator:

- Valida Hromadžić, One World Platform

### Third session rapporteur:

- Qanita Abedpour



Valida Hromadžić, Elmaja Bavčić, Erna Ključić, Selma Badžić, Rialda Spahić

The third panel had a goal to present the position of women in the online world, all the difficulties they encounter, but also present initiatives that aim to contribute to improving this position. The panel was opened by Elmaja Bavčić, emphasizing the importance of collecting data. According to a 2014 European Agency for Basic Rights research, 5% of women in the EU have faced one or more forms of online stalking. Online violence affects the younger female population the most. 11% of women were confronted with some form of sexual harassment and received messages of undesirable content. What is troubling is that 33% of women stated that they faced this problem at their workplace. These data have prompted the OSCE to focus its activities on extending the definition of violence that would include the use of all kinds of modern technologies.

Erna Ključić presented an analysis of stopping the trend of online ICT violence as part of the One World Platform's submission to the High Representative for Human Rights. The aim of the analysis was to show that offline and online violence should be treated in an equally serious manner, and that the consequences may be equally tragic in both cases. There is a question of who is responsible for cases of online violence and whether web portal administrators are obliged to act ethically in the absence of a legal framework. Thanks to the increasing engagement and lobbying of non-governmental organizations, punishment of such cases is possible to a certain extent.

Selma Badžić revealed that the Center received more than 120,000 clients during their work, who were seeking counseling and help because of ICT violence. Most of them escalate precisely when the partner decides to leave the relationship. Unfortunately, in a large number of cases, the competent authorities believe that there is no objective security threat in these cases, which in turn affects the further flow of the issue. Women's Rights Center as a place that provides free legal aid very often could not provide the necessary assistance due to the lack of a legal definition of this form of violence as a criminal offense.



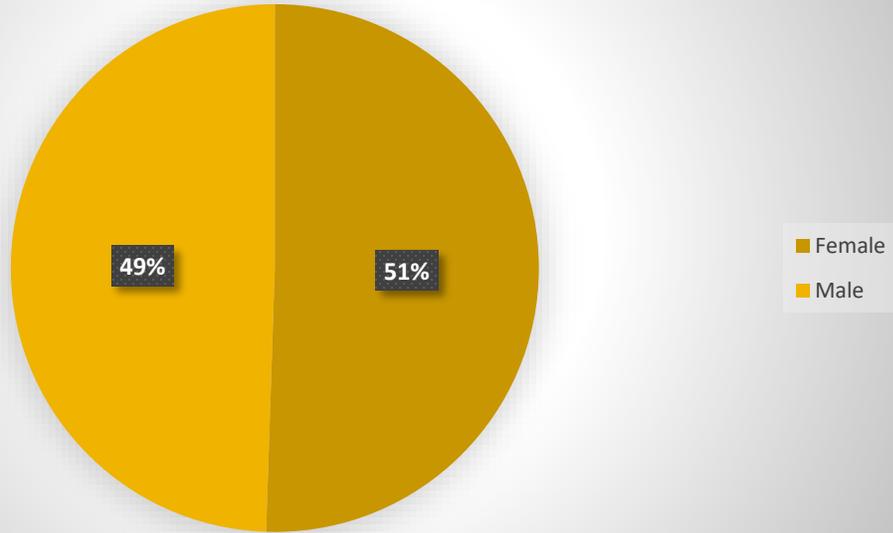
The panel was in a good mood and with hope in a better tomorrow concluded by Rialda Spahić in front of the initiative of IT Girls who is working hard to educate and empower girls across Bosnia and Herzegovina in an age group of 9 to 18 years to pursue a career in the IT sector and learn how to code. The proportion of women in the IT sector is devastating with only 25% of their presence. Conservative attitudes that are present in our society are greatly responsible for this situation. In addition to programming, girls learn through special workshops about presentation skills, as well as digital safety.

134 girls actively participated in these workshops, and in online challenges of up to 300 girls and young women.

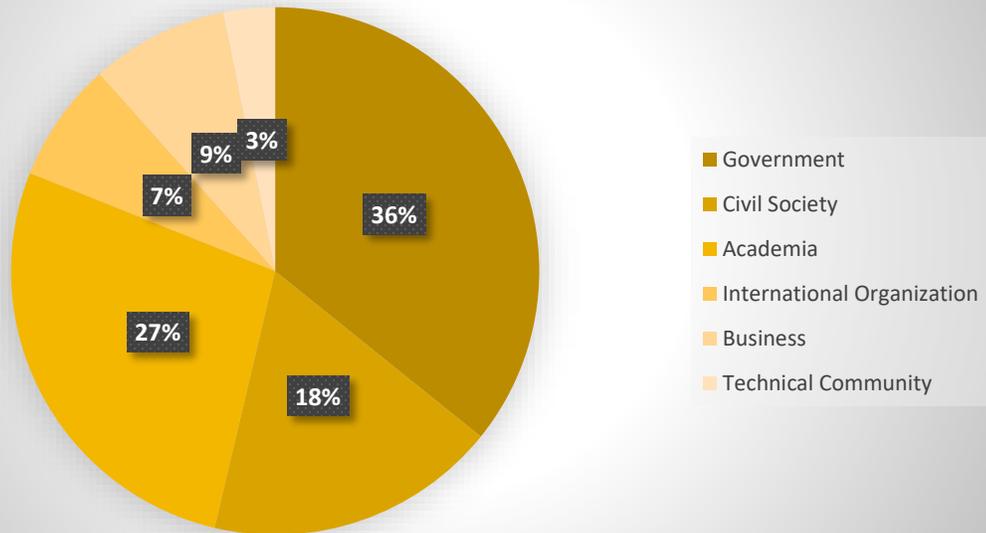
## Participants

The total number of participants was 95. Once again, stakeholders that include government, civil society and the academy have shown the greatest interest in the forum. We need to make additional efforts to animate the IT community, the media and the private sector to actively engage in the organization of the forum as well and discussions regarding priorities.

## Gender Equality



## Stakeholder Group



## Special Thanks

For the past three years BHIGF has been a result of the work, effort and commitment of the organizing committee and its members. However, none of our forums could be possible without the continued and unselfish support of our partners of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), International Corporation for Assigning Names and Numbers (ICANN), Association for Providing Support to Internet Governance Forums (IGFSA), Reseaux IP Europeens Network Coordination Centre (RIPE NCC) and Afiliis.

Also, this year special thanks goes to Željka Šulc, Head of the Public Relations Department of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina for their financial support and for providing translation for our foreign guests. Many thanks also to the companies Mtel and Telemach who contributed to the organization of the day dedicated to students carefully selected from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the end, we would like to thank all of our panelists who contributed to this year's BHIGF, as well as to all of our guests who have participated in the creation of the Internet governance dialogue with their presence, knowledge and experience.