



# **IGF SERBIA 2024**

Belgrade  
Serbia

# About IGF: Global Outlook

The IGF is an international arena for discussion and cooperation in areas relating to the development of the information society, Internet governance and issues facing the Internet as a whole. The IGF is not a decision-making body but rather a forum at which the problems defined and approaches discussed can be formulated into public, international or national policies and presented to other bodies, whether to those within the UN or to other international organisations or governments, for their consideration.

The range of subjects cover technical, legal, economic and social aspects, including the topics of:

- primary infrastructure and global regulations for management of primary resources (critical information infrastructure, internet service and bandwidth providers, the IPv4/IPv6 protocol, IP/DNS/IDN, open standards);
- cybersecurity, cyber conflict, cyber-crime, child safety;
- access to information and knowledge (digital media, intellectual property rights);





- the economy (e-commerce, taxation, the gig economy, labour rights);
- human rights (freedom of speech, privacy and anonymity, hate speech and violence, content policy, ethics);
- development (universal access, education and digital literacy, emerging technologies, e-governance and services, e-health);
- regulatory aspects (relationship between regulators, service providers and tech companies, civil society and users; approaches to governance, policies and regulatory issues at the global, regional and national level)

IGF brings together a broad range of stakeholders: representatives from many countries, representatives of the business sector, technical communities, networks of non-governmental organisations, international organisations and institutions and telecoms regulators.

In addition to the global IGF under the patronage of the UN, a large number of national and regional IGF initiatives (NRIs) have also been established.

The European process, known as the European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) has existed since 2008, organised by the Council of Europe, the EBU, Swiss OFCOM, the European Commission and many other partners.

Belgrade has hosted the meeting, in 2011. Institutions and organisations from Serbia have been regular participants in EuroDIG and in 2021 Belgrade hosted one of the centres of the event, which was held in a hybrid format.

In the South-Eastern European region there is also SEEDIG, in which organisations and professionals from Serbia take active part, and there are a number of national IGF processes too.



# Dialog in Serbia

The first meeting to focus on IGF themes in Serbia was held in 2009 in the form of a panel debate titled “Serbia in the international information society process”, with several ministers and the director of RATEL in attendance. Between 2012 and 2014 the annual Serbian Internet Dialogue was held, with the participation of numerous institutions, companies and organisations and active discussion of key topics of significance to Serbia and digital policy in this country.

The Serbian Internet Governance Forum (IGF Serbia), held for the first time in 2022 under this name and as part of the NRI network of the global IGF, represents the continuation of national discussions about digital policy and internet governance.

It has been initiated in the multi-stakeholder spirit of IGF as the shared initiative of several organisations and institutions, under the auspices of the Ministry. The establishment of a national IGF is also one of the objectives set out in the Serbian Information Society and Information Security Development Strategy which was approved in autumn 2021 and runs until 2026.



The intention of the organisations and institutions which initiated, and which organise and support IGF Serbia was to have an annual meeting in the coming years which will grow into an open, inclusive, public, open, constructive and useful process that helps shape national digital policy, thus creating the conditions for further digitalisation whilst preserving the rights of citizens. This outcome will largely depend on the interest and involvement of the public at large and of a significant number of institutions, companies and organisations going forward.

# Internet Governance Forum Serbia 2024

The third Serbian Internet Governance Forum (IGF Serbia 2024) was held on September 11 at Dorćol Platz in Belgrade. The forum was hosted by the Serbian National Internet Domain Registry Foundation (RNIDS), with co-organizers including the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, Diplo Foundation, the Internet Society Serbia Chapter Belgrade, and Gransy, supported by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Cybersecurity Network Foundation.

Welcome speeches were given by Dejan Đukić, director of RNIDS, and Jakup Berish, the UNDP Resident Representative in the Republic of Serbia.

Đukić highlighted the importance of the technical community's involvement in internet governance discussions, RNIDS's role as the local forum host, and the organization's participation in regional and global IGF events over the years. Mr. Berish emphasized the significance of two interconnected global processes—the digital and green transitions. Although these areas are still often viewed separately, UNDP sees them as linked paths toward faster sustainable and humane development, striving to integrate them into their work, focusing on technology and data, skills for their implementation, and financing such projects.

Chengetai Masango, head of the UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Secretariat, delivered an introductory address explaining that the global digital landscape is undergoing significant changes, including events such as the Summit of the Future and the Global Digital Compact (GDC).



The Summit of the Future presents an opportunity to strengthen multi-lateral cooperation and address global challenges such as climate change, inequality, and conflict, while the GDC aims to establish shared principles for a secure, open, and accessible digital future, supporting the multi-stakeholder model of internet governance and emphasizing the importance of including all actors, especially developing countries. He reminded that local IGFs, including the Serbian IGF, play a crucial role in promoting digital literacy and incorporating local voices into global internet governance conversations, as the exchange between global and national IGF initiatives is key to preventing internet fragmentation and fostering collaboration.



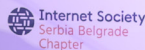
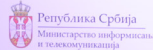


## **Stakeholders and supporters**

Serbian National Internet Domain Registry (RNIDS) – the host; Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, the Diplo Foundation, the Internet Society Serbia, Belgrade Charter, and Gransy, with the support of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Cybersecurity Network Foundation.



# IGF СРБИЈА 2024



## Thematic scope and general outlines

The audience, both in-person and online, had the opportunity to follow and participate in discussions across four panels, resulting in significant conclusions and recommendations. During the first, introductory panel, a reflection was made on the early 2000s global debates on internet governance under the UN and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which led to the creation of the IGF as an annual global forum. Given the ongoing review of the IGF's purpose and role, discussions addressed how this process is unfolding, how broader global technological and geopolitical processes influence it, and what to expect at the 2025 conference that will decide on global internet governance.

Cybersecurity was the focus of the next panel, with discussions on European and national processes in this area. A review of the first EU NIS Directive and its impact on processes in Serbia was provided. Issues that European domain registries and DNS service providers encountered during the drafting of the NIS2 Directive were highlighted, as well as how non-EU registries were involved in the process and how work progressed in the working group drafting the new version of the Serbian Information Security Law.

It was noted that the national law will include all important elements of the NIS2 Directive, expanding the group of companies it applies to, making it easier for domestic firms to operate in the EU market.



The draft AI Development Strategy in the Republic of Serbia and its prospects for the academic community, industry, and society at large were the topics of the next panel. Various projects and academic papers that could contribute to improving the application of ethical principles and the protection of human rights were discussed.

The panel concluded with an agreement that multisectoral cooperation is the only way to establish an adequate legal and strategic framework that will protect human rights without hindering economic development.

The panel on digital violence and individual dignity in the digital environment concluded that criminalizing revenge porn should be a priority for legislators. The panel emphasized numerous violations of individual dignity online and the need for media to drive ethical communication, primarily by eliminating sensationalism from reporting on gender-based violence.

The program section dedicated to merging green and digital transitions from a UNDP perspective was led by Ana Mitić-Radulović, Circular Economy Analyst at UNDP, and Slobodan Marković, Digital Technology Advisor at UNDP. Five teams or startups presented their companies' green and digital innovations to the audience.

The cultural and academic aspects were also represented at IGF Serbia 2024 through a lecture by Vasilije Milnović from the Svetozar Marković University Library, who spoke about digital humanities and e-science, showcased numerous international projects in this field that the institution participated in, and provided a broader perspective on the development of humanities in the digital environment.

# IGF СРБИЈА 2024

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## IGF Serbia 2023 discussions and key messages

**Panel: Global, Regional, and Local Perspectives  
on GDC, WSIS20+, and IGF20+ Review**

### Panelists:

- Olga Kyryliuk, Internews/SEEDIG
- Desiree Željka Milošević, Internet Society Serbia (ISOC), Belgrade Chapter
- Danko Jevtović, ICANN Board of Directors Vice Chair

**Moderator:** Slobodan Marković, UNDP



1. **One Global Internet.** At the global level, there is still a de facto consensus on maintaining the internet as a single global network, which is a success, especially in the context of rising geopolitical tensions threatening to fragment the internet into national systems controlled by governments. The vision of a unified global internet is not guaranteed and requires conscious and continuous support.
2. **Future of IGF.** While there is optimism that IGF will continue to play an important role in global internet governance dialogue, its future will depend on ongoing consultations and support from UN member states. IGF's inclusion in the Global Digital Compact (GDC) indicates a willingness to preserve this forum, although it may undergo some changes
3. **Multistakeholder Approach vs. Multilateral Tensions.** There is ongoing tension between governments seeking more control over the internet and those advocating for a multi-stakeholder approach that includes civil society, technical experts, and the private sector. This tension will continue to shape future discussions on this topic.
4. **Artificial Intelligence and Regulation.** Discussions on artificial intelligence are becoming central to internet governance debates. The complexity of AI technologies, their potential for manipulation, and the lack of adequate oversight were highlighted as major concerns. Regulatory efforts, such as the EU AI Act and UN initiatives, are steps in the right direction, but a careful balance between innovation and ethical standards is needed.
5. **Coordination and Avoiding Fragmentation.** There is significant concern about the potential fragmentation of discussions and policymaking processes across different bodies, which could lead to a fragmented internet. Coordination, especially in preparing for the WSIS+20 review and GDC, is crucial.
6. **Optimism and Caution.** Some participants expressed optimism in the resilience of an open internet, but caution is needed as new challenges, such as AI governance and privacy protection, come to the forefront.



## Panel: NIS2 and the Information Security Law. What businesses need to know

### Panelists:

- Milan Vojvodić, Ministry of Information and Telecommunications
- Mina Tomić, AI
- Dejan Đukić, RNIDS

**Moderator:** Dušan Stojičević, Gransy



- 1. Responsibility of Directors and Inspections.** It was mentioned that directors can indeed be held accountable under the law, and although inspections in Serbia are important, they currently lack sufficient capacity. There are plans to increase the number of inspectors to meet the growing demands of the law.
- 2. NIS2 Directive and Security.** The NIS2 Directive is considered necessary due to the increasing digitization of services, from banking to state administration, and the continuous threat posed by cyberattacks. The directive imposes obligations on ICT system operators, who will now be regarded as critical infrastructure.
- 3. Digital Identity and E-Wallet.** The importance of developing a unified digital identity system to facilitate the use of e-administrative services and improve security was discussed. This system could be aligned with European regulations regarding digital wallets.
- 4. Incident Response.** The discussion emphasized the need for efficient incident response systems to handle security breaches, as complete protection from cyber threats is impossible. The focus should not only be on preventing attacks but also on mitigating their consequences and ensuring rapid recovery.
- 5. Role of Private Companies.** A significant portion of the internet infrastructure in Serbia, as elsewhere, is privately owned. Cooperation between the state and private entities is crucial for protecting critical infrastructure.
- 6. Legal Framework and Future Development.** The current Information Security Law in Serbia is evolving to cover more sectors and ensure greater security for ICT systems. Future developments may include more robust systems for verifying digital identity and improved procedures for combating cybercrime.

The discussion concluded by summarizing key messages: the importance of a digital identity system, a clear incident response, and the necessity of cooperation between the state and the private sector to protect critical infrastructure.



## Panel: Artificial Intelligence in Serbia – Strategy and Future Outlook

### Panelists:

- Ana Toskić Cvetinović, Partners Serbia
- Ljubiša Bojić, Institute for Artificial Intelligence Research and Development of Serbia
- Uroš Poluga, Office for IT and e-Government

**Moderator:** Bogdan Banjac, Commissioner's Office for the Protection of Equality



- 1. Regulation and Strategy Regarding AI.** AI regulation should focus on preserving democracy, the rule of law, and citizens' rights. Issues of discrimination and data protection must be addressed, as well as the role of various stakeholders, including people with disabilities. International conventions and guidelines can be used as models to improve national strategies and laws on AI. Serbia could stand out through the global AI partnership and share examples of best practices.
- 2. Monitoring and Evaluation.** It is necessary to introduce systematic monitoring of AI in the public sector, especially in areas such as public procurement and education. Monitoring should include data protection and the prevention of negative technology impacts. Concerns were raised about the use of technologies like facial recognition cameras in schools, which are being implemented without acknowledging their true purpose. There needs to be a systemic response to the emergence of deep fake content and raising awareness of the risks. Establishing an AI observatory could help continuously monitor and evaluate AI systems. Examples from other countries, such as Spain, could serve as a model for this initiative.
- 3. Multidisciplinary Approach.** Involving various scientific disciplines is crucial for thorough AI research. Analyses of the characteristics of AI systems and their impact on users need to be standardized and structured. Evaluating how AI affects users' emotional states is essential for the development of positive and beneficial AI systems.
- 4. Education and Awareness of Risks.** Raising awareness of the risks associated with AI, including deep fake technologies and other potential dangers, is necessary. Educational initiatives and public dialogue are key to preventing misuse. Questions were raised about how AI could affect empathy and interpersonal relationships. There is a need to consider how AI might reduce human empathy and cause depression.

Developing comprehensive strategies and laws covering all aspects of AI use, along with a multidisciplinary approach, is crucial for ethical and secure technology implementation. Education and awareness of AI's potential negative consequences are necessary to preserve humanity and empathy in a technological world.





## Panel: Digital Rights and Freedoms. The Dignity of Individuals in the Digital Age

### Panelists:

- Brankica Janković, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality
- Anđela Milivojević, Investigative Journalist
- Branislava Antović Aleksić, BDW Magazin

**Moderator:** Kruna Savović, Savović Law Office

1. **Women's Perspective on Digital Violence.** Online violence is pervasive, especially for women and journalists. The internet allows for constant harassment 24/7, which is much harder to avoid than physical violence. The high level of misogyny and belittling of women in the digital space was noted, particularly towards those influential in new industries like digital marketing and media. Women are often targeted due to their appearance and success, and this violence is especially pronounced due to the perceived anonymity that the internet provides. The goal is to raise awareness among decision-makers to take this issue more seriously.
2. **"Revenge Porn" and Patriarchal Structures.** One of the biggest problems in Serbia is so-called "revenge porn" – the unauthorized sharing of intimate photos and video content. A patriarchal narrative often blames women for taking the photos, while perpetrators of this digital violence are rarely sanctioned. In some neighboring countries, such as Croatia and Montenegro, this form of violence is already criminalized, while Serbia has yet to make the necessary legal changes.
3. **Anonymity and the Telegram Platform.** Special attention was paid to the problem of anonymity on the Telegram app, where groups with tens of thousands of members share explicit content without consent. This "anonymity" (even though it is possible to trace the perpetrators) allows offenders to feel secure in their actions, while victims remain unprotected since the law does not recognize these actions as criminal offenses.
4. **Recommendations and Legal Solutions.** Education is key in the fight against digital violence, and legal changes are needed to criminalize acts like "revenge porn." There are technologies that can help protect intimate photos, but greater engagement from society and the judiciary is required. It was also emphasized that the media should avoid sensationalism when reporting on these topics and focus on the true nature of the problem.

The importance of solidarity, education, and public awareness of these topics was highlighted at the end of the panel. Work must continue improving laws and mechanisms for protecting human rights in the digital space, as challenges and abuses in this area will continue to evolve.



## Stream and sessions recordings

Sessions recording in Serbian:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/DqfGI94JRzA?si=6P76bfPQ6LL6ZU46>

Sessions recording in English:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/af3Z7VXYZIY?si=AZp1t2QVypkN4h8J>

Following up on IGF Serbia activities:

[www.igf.rs](http://www.igf.rs)

