



Bosna i Hercegovina  
Regulatorna agencija za komunikacije

Босна и Херцеговина  
Регулаторна агенција за комуникације

Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Communications Regulatory Agency

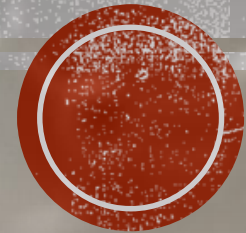


# THE NEED FOR REGULATORY INTERVENTION IN ORDER TO INCLUDE SOCIALY VULNERABLE AND NEGLECTED POPULATIONS INTO DIGITAL SOCIETY

- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ROMANI PEOPLE CASE -

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# Digital Society

- **DIGITAL SOCIETY** is the society organized in such a way that performance of social and private functions relies on information and communication technologies (ICTs). Such the society is acceptable only if it is inclusive and secure, if enables people to collaborate and have equal chances, and if it is sustainable. Otherwise, digital society will produce more social gaps and injustices introducing a digital divide. As such, digital society is more than technology. Digital society must be a way to help Humanity to bridge existing gaps between developed and less developed countries, well-educated and uneducated people, wealthy and poor people.
- **DIGITAL INCLUSION** enables that every individual or group becomes not only allowed, but also supported to participate in digital society. With digital inclusion the basic ICTs are made available to all, and specific groups are helped to get knowledge and skills to use ICTs. Such the groups can be indigenous people, minority groups, children, women, less educated, etc.
- **DIGITAL EXCLUSION** is in fact a digital discrimination. In such a society not all individuals or groups enjoy the opportunities and benefits of ICTs. The society itself does not doing enough or doing insufficient to include neglected individuals or groups into a digital society.



# Groups At Risk To Be Excluded From Digital Society?

AS MUCH AS A PERSON OR A GROUP FULFILLS SOME OF THESE CRITERIAS, THE HIGHER IS THE RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION.

THE COMMON FACTOR CONNECTING ALL THESE GROUPS WOULD BE AN UNEQUAL CHANCE WHICH THEY HAVE IN THE SOCIETY COMPARING WITH OTHER GROUPS OR PERSONS.

**Poverty** - poor or unemployed people

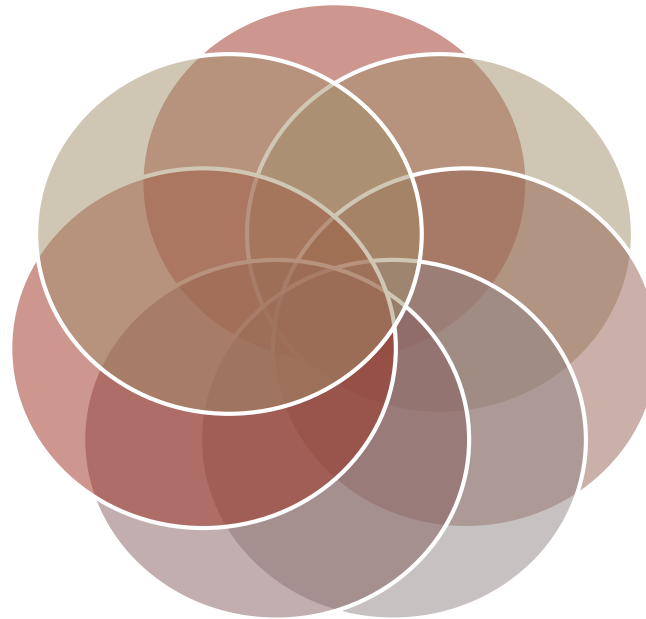
**Lack of education and experience**  
- uneducated or illiterate people, unexperienced persons (e.g. person without formal education and people with no working experience), uninformed or disinformed people

**Lack of personal abilities**  
- elderly people, people with personal disabilities

**Other categories**

**Objective obstacles** - people living in remote areas or areas with poor or no infrastructure, lack of services on the market, etc..

**Social prejudices and discrimination** - woman, minority groups (e.g. people of different religion or race)



## *UN „Transforming our world - the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development“*

25-27 September 2018

The Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25-27 September 2018, have decided on new global Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets were declared by Agenda.



## UNESCO „Towards Knowledge Societies“

„Will everyone one day be able to find their place in knowledge societies, without distinction of any kind – race, sex, language, religion, political or philosophical convictions, income or class? Or will knowledge again be a powerful factor of exclusion, the temptation to acquire it being made all the keener by the advantages it brings in its wake?“

„Most of the early knowledge societies were based on different systems of exclusion. Knowledge there was largely reserved for the happy few, for a small circle of initiates. In sharp contrast with such an elitist conception, knowledge societies in the twenty-first century will only be able to usher in a new era of sustainable human development if they ensure not only universal access to knowledge, but also the participation of all in knowledge societies.“

„Not only do the most disadvantaged socio-economic categories have often a limited access to information or to knowledge (*digital divide*), but also they do not assimilate it as well as those who are on the highest rung of the social ladder. Such a divide can also be witnessed between nations. An imbalance is thus created in the actual relationship to knowledge (knowledge divide).“



unicef

## *Transforming our world - the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

The 2030 Agenda emphasizes that „**the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and...**“

Goal 4.

**4.b** inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all:

Goal 5.

**5.b** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls:

Goal 9.

**9.c** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

...



## *Digital Inclusion - ITU*

- Digital Inclusion means empowering people through information and communication technologies (ICTs). The Digital Inclusion activities of the BDT are designed to promote ICT accessibility and use for the social and economic development of people with specific needs, including indigenous peoples and people living in rural areas; persons with disabilities; women and girls; and youth and children.



# Digital Inclusion - ITU?

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

„DIGITAL INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, an effort of ITU-D since 2005.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in a common effort with other institutions and organizations that support the rights of Indigenous Peoples, has carried out, since 2005, a series of interesting training programs for indigenous leaders,...

- RESOLUTION 1225405 UN Resolution (2012) - Indigenous women: key actors in poverty and hunger eradication
- PP RESOLUTION 184 (Guadalajara, 2010) - Facilitating digital inclusion initiatives for indigenous peoples
- WTDC RESOLUTION 11 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) -Telecommunication/information and communication technology services in rural, isolated and poorly served areas and indigenous communities
- WTDC RESOLUTION 46 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) - Assistance to indigenous peoples and communities through information and communication technology





# Digital Inclusion - ITU?

## **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

- WTDC RESOLUTION 58 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) - Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs
- PP RESOLUTION 175 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) - Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities and persons with specific needs

## **WOMEN AND GIRLS**

- PP RESOLUTION 70 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) - Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through information and communication technologies
- WTDC RESOLUTION 55 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) - Mainstreaming a gender perspective for an inclusive and egalitarian information society

## **YOUTH AND CHILDREN**

- WTDC RESOLUTION 76 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) - Promoting information and communication technologies among young women and men for social and economic empowerment
- PP RESOLUTION 198 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) - Empowerment of youth through telecommunication/information and communication technology



## ***Digital Inclusion - EU***

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273025141\\_Europe's\\_Information\\_Society\\_project\\_and\\_digital\\_inclusion\\_Universal\\_service\\_obligations\\_or\\_social\\_solidarity](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273025141_Europe's_Information_Society_project_and_digital_inclusion_Universal_service_obligations_or_social_solidarity)

### **DIGITAL INCLUSION IN EU STARTED AS PART OF PHILOSOPHY PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR ALL**

1989

Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers - It was one of the first EU policy documents referring to social exclusion. This document was followed by Resolution of the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs on Combating Social Exclusion (89/C277/01). This resolution states that SOCIAL EXCLUSION IS A LEGITIMATE CONCERN OF THE EU.

1992

Document called „Towards a Europe of Solidarity“ was published by EU Commission. This document highlights the NEED TO FIGHT AGAINST SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND TO FOSTER INTEGRATION (COM(92) 542).

1994

„Before the Information Society Project (started in 1997) the most important document on Europe and the new information technologies to date is, without doubt, the report that Martin Bangemann produced for the European Council in 1994 – EUROPE AND THE GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY. It is important because it has provided the philosophical basis for the information society project of the European Union for almost two decades.,,

## *Digital Inclusion - EU*

- The Riga Ministerial Declaration, signed 11 June 2006, Riga, Latvia, by ministers from EU Member States, accession and candidate countries, and EFTA/EEA countries, sets out the following specific targets:
  - halve the gap in internet usage by 2010 for groups at risk of exclusion, such as older people, people with disabilities, and unemployed persons,
  - increase broadband coverage (i.e. the availability of broadband infrastructure) in Europe to at least 90% by 2010. In 2005, broadband was available to about 60% of businesses and households in the remote and rural areas of the EU15 and to more than 90% in the urban areas; see IP/06/340),
  - ensure that all public websites are accessible by 2010,
  - by 2008, put in place actions in the field of digital literacy and skills to reduce gaps for groups at risk of exclusion by half in 2010,
  - by 2007, make recommendations on accessibility standards and common approaches, which could become mandatory in public procurement by 2010, and
  - assess the necessity for legislative measures in the field of e-Accessibility, and take account of accessibility requirements in the review of the electronic communications regulatory framework beginning in June 2006.
- [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-06-769\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-06-769_en.htm)



## ***Digital Inclusion - EU***

Brussels, 29 November 2007

### **„Commission calls for an all-inclusive digital society**

Despite technological progress and enhanced competition, **more than one in three Europeans are still excluded from fully benefiting from the digital society**. Benefits of €35-85 billion over five years could be generated if society would be made more inclusive, websites more accessible and broadband Internet made available to all EU citizens. Today, the Commission presents its e-Inclusion initiative to Council, calling on Member States to support a number of key actions, including an awareness campaign for 2008 "e-Inclusion, be part of it!" e-Accessibility legislation, similar to that of the USA, is also under consideration.“

**„To address the challenge, this European initiative for an all-inclusive society sets out a strategic framework to:**

- **Enable everyone to take part in the information society by bridging the accessibility, broadband and competence gaps.**
- **Accelerate effective participation of those at risk of exclusion, and improve their quality of life.**
- **Integrate e-Inclusion actions in Europe, and so maximize their lasting impact.“**



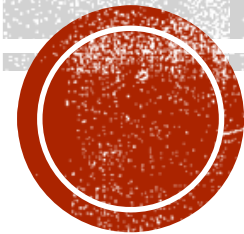
## ***Digital Inclusion - EU***

2000

The Lisbon Agreement was a cornerstone of the development of EU social inclusion policy.

The Lisbon policy program sets four objectives and activities:

- **PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS BY ALL TO SOCIAL RESOURCES, RIGHTS, GOODS AND SERVICES**
- **PREVENTION OF RISKS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION**
- **HELPING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN SOCIETY**
- **ACTIVATION OF ALL RELATED BODIES IN SOCIETY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**



## *Digital Inclusion - EU*

### Digital Single Market

- The Digital Single Market strategy aims **to open up digital opportunities for people and business** and enhance Europe's position as a world leader in the digital economy.
- The Digital Single Market (DSM) strategy was adopted on the 6 May 2015. It includes 16 specific initiatives which have been delivered by the Commission by January 2017.
- The DSM Strategy is built on three pillars:
  - Access: better access for consumers and businesses to digital goods and services across Europe;
  - Environment: creating the right conditions and a level playing field for digital networks and innovative services to flourish;
  - Economy & Society: maximizing the growth potential of the digital economy.



# ROMA PEOPLE IN THE BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## The Status of Roma Children and Families in Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the latest official estimates, there are between 25,000–50,000 Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). They are acknowledged to be BiH's most numerous, most disadvantaged and most vulnerable minority and the current situation of most Roma families in BiH is one of chronic multi-dimensional poverty. The gap between Roma and the majority populations in terms of access to housing, employment, education and health-care is significant and Roma women are particularly disadvantaged. The key indicators for Roma children are that they are three times more likely to be living in poverty than their neighbours, they are five times more likely to be underweight; they are twice as prone to stunting; their primary school attendance rate is one third less than among the majority population; and their immunisation rate is only 4 per cent compared to 68 per cent of the majority population.

[http://ba.one.un.org/content/unct/bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina/en/home/publications/polo\\_aj\\_romske\\_djece-i-porodica-u-bosni-i-hercegovini.html](http://ba.one.un.org/content/unct/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/publications/polo_aj_romske_djece-i-porodica-u-bosni-i-hercegovini.html)

- most disadvantaged minority
- chronic multi-dimensional poverty
- significant gap between Roma and the majority populations in terms of access to housing, employment, education and health-care
- Roma women are particularly disadvantaged
- Roma children are three times more likely to be living in poverty than their neighbours
- Roma children are five times more likely to be underweight
- Roma children primary school attendance rate is one third less than among the majority population



# WHAT WAS THE IDEA?

- The idea was to create a set of questions which will shed a light to the current state of usage of telecommunication services in Roma population in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- The time for answering the questionnaire was short
- Because of short time, a Roma NGO, „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ was asked for help
- „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ positively responded and supported a short study. They published a questionnaire on Facebook pages of Kali Sara i REYN networks, as well as sent it to three email addresses of „resource centers“

- That way the questionnaire became public
- The questionnaire had four main groups of questions:
  - General information
  - Social status,
  - Social equality
  - Usage of contemporary digital and communication services
- „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ was the only who gave the answers
- No private individual sent any answers





# WHAT THE STUDY SHOWS?

## SOCIAL STATUS

- Majority of elder Roma population is no, or poor educated
- Minority of younger Roma population has secondary or university education
- Majority of Roma population lives is in poverty, or extreme poverty

*This statement of „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ is in accordance with many studies prepared by international and domestic organizations about the issue of Roma status in Bosnia and Herzegovina\**



## SOCIAL EQUALITY

„Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ believes that Roma population in Bosnia and Herzegovina has no equal position in Society because:

- they are not accepted at school (due to stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination)
- they have trouble finding a place to live
- they can hard get a job
- they do not have enough knowledge and experience for more complex jobs to be qualifie

„Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ believes that some measures are being taken, but in general not enough. Although certain institutions are actively working to improve the situation and concrete activities are being taken, there is no systematic approach to solving problems at all levels, but the problems are solved partially, from municipality to municipality, cantons, etc.

Because of the political situation, the political organization of the state, corruption and discrimination, there are little or no results.



# THE USE OF ICT IN THE ROMA POPULATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In accordance with „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ opinion, Roma population most commonly use these telecommunication services:

- Cable TV/radio
- Mobile telephony
- Internet
- Terrestrial TV&radio

In accordance with „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ opinion, Roma population most commonly use mobile services for:

- making a phone calls
- for SMS
- for access to the mobile Internet



In accordance with „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ opinion, Roma population most commonly use the Internet for:

- communication with other people
- entertainment (for viewing of music spots, humoristic and similar videos, fun pages, chats and similar)
- getting the information
- education/study

„Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ did not answered if telecommunication operators refuse or avoid to introduce cable networks and services in Roma populated settlements, but stated that there is over 100 formal or informal Roma settlements in Bosnia and Herzegovina in which some families even do not have electricity, so they do not have cable TV. But it states that it know for the cases where some individuals or organizations raised a question about accessibility of these technologies and services to Roma.



As a reason why ICTs are not accessible to Roma population „Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar“ states that Roma people are not in position to conclude the contracts for such services because they do not have financial resources to regularly pay fees for such services.

The Article 14 paragraph (13) of „**RULE 69/2013 ON TERMS OF PROVISION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH END USERS**“ states that:

„An operator can reject the request for establishment of a subscription when there is reasonable suspicion that the applicant could abuse requested service or not be able to settle his future or already overdue debts for the use of public telecommunications services. If the applicant provides adequate assurance of payment, such as a bank guarantee, deposit, etc., the operator must accept the request for the establishment of a subscription. Operator makes a written decision on the rejection of an application.“



# WHAT THE ROMA PEOPLE WANT US TO DO?

„**Kali Sara-Romski informativni centar**“ believes that the Roma people want us to:

- provide free or cheaper communication services to the Roma and other socially disadvantaged families
- support the Romani language web portals
- oblige the industry to give instructions for using products and services in the Romani language
- oblige the telecommunication operators to include their basic documents in the Romani language on their web pages



# INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The responses collected through the questionnaire were not verified through field research. Therefore, it would be good to do a comprehensive study on the availability of ICTs to the Roma population.

The answers were provided by one subject only, the Kali Sara-Roma Information Center. It is a Roma non-governmental organization with extensive experience in Roma activism.

The fact that other Roma organizations or individuals did not participate in the survey indicates that either there is no awareness of the need to actualize this issue, or the survey did not reach Roma nationals at all. It is even possible that there is a fear or fear of shame to participate in this survey.

Also, it is specific that the only answer left out in the survey was the answer on question if telecom operators avoids to introduce their networks in Roma settlements.

The „Kali Sara-Roma Information Center“ stated that in over 100 formal or informal Roma settlements in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are families that do not even have electricity. However, this organization places cable television at the top of the services used by the Roma population, what is in contradiction. This could only mean that very few Roma use telecommunication services at all.

From some point of view, such the answer is logical given that cable television services do not require significant technical knowledge from the users, and this corresponds to the educational status of Roma population.

The fact that that the mobile services are mainly used for making phone calls, SMS services, and only then for accessing the mobile Internet confirms that the Roma population uses only basic telecommunications services, and they use them mostly for the purpose of entertainment and communication.



The internet is said to be mostly used to communicate with other people. Many Roma from Bosnia and Herzegovina live permanently or periodically in EU countries, and this answer is logical because other citizens, due to high tariffs for international telephone services, mainly use OTT services (Viber, Whatsup, etc.).

Another purpose of using the Internet is entertainment (viewing music, humorous and similar videos, visits to entertainment sites and chat rooms). Then, the third purpose was to inform, and only finally to educate.

The reason why the Roma population does not sufficiently use modern digital technologies is the poor financial situation which makes it impossible to conclude a subscription contract. Such contracts provide better access to telecommunications services in enough capacity.

Although the Roma population is indigenous to the Balkans since the 13th century, there is not a single road sign, user guide or anything else in formal use in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is written in the Roma language.

Therefore, it is a logical requirement that there be web portals in the Romani language, instructions for use of products and services in the Romani language, or that there are at least basic documents in the Romani language on the websites of the communication operators.

All this clearly indicates that there is no good communication between the society and the Roma community. This community was not given an equal opportunity to participate in society and to contribute intellectually and through work. Modern digital technologies are a chance to bridge the gap.





# THE REGULATORY INTERVENTION NEEDED

- The Roma population is not able to help itself in raising the level of use of ICTs. So the help of the whole society is needed. There is a need for a set of measures that will advance: the Roma population knowledge of ICTs and their capabilities, physical availability of ICTs to Roma, and economic accessibility of services.
- Most importantly, the Roma population have to be recognized as a particularly vulnerable group to which social assistance should be directed for the dissemination of ICTs. The action of society towards the Roma population regarding the spread of ICTs should be done through Universal services, as a systematic tool for assistance. The lack of fixed networks and poor coverage of the mobile signal destroys any chance of this population to reach the socially acceptable level of use of ICTs. Without this availability, it is pointless to apply any other aid measures.

- Telecommunication operators in their general documents need to have translated into Romani at least a basic set of information on their services and offers. Roma people understand and use official languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but this way they will be acknowledged as a user group.
- In terms of economic accessibility, operators should be encouraged to tailor the packages of their services in terms of content and price so that they are economically acceptable to the Roma population. Through universal service, such packages could then be subsidized by the State or local community so that they appear even free of charge for certain categories.
- Assistance measures should not be solely regulatory-imposed, but operators should be encouraged to devise ways of assistance themselves, e.g. to provide free hosting of Roma NGO websites.



- Most importantly, special attention should be paid to the children of the Roma population. They should be provided with free practical courses on the use of the Internet and computers, and not just theoretical instruction provided through regular school curricula. This would give them an interest in new technologies. Therefore, the fact that the younger Roma population is better educated than the elderly should be exploited.
- The introduction of free internet clubs in Roma communities would allow young Roma to make practical use of the Internet even where fixed telecommunications networks do not exist. Otherwise, children from poor and illegally constructed Roma settlements will be sentenced to technological darkness because their parents do not know the essence and importance of new technologies and, unless supported by society, they will not have this support at home.

- It is very important that there are Roma NGOs that will devote themselves to introducing ICTs and monitoring the dissemination and use of these technologies in the Roma population. These NGOs must be supported by the state, both financially and professionally, in order to build Roma experts on these issues. They could then indicate problems and ask for the necessary measures and assistance.
- The state itself must incorporate the issue of disseminating ICTs to the Roma population in its strategies and plans.



# THANK YOU!

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