

FINISHED FILE

NATIONAL STUDY FOR SERBIA: ITU STUDY ON THE ASSESSMENT OF  
DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND  
1 JUNE 2021

Services Provided By:

Caption First, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3066  
Monument, CO 80132  
1-877-825-5234  
+001-719-482-9835  
[www.captionfirst.com](http://www.captionfirst.com)

\*\*\*

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning, and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document, or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

\*\*\*

>> Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon, welcome to the presentation of the National Assessment of Digital Accessibility in the Republic of Serbia.

Before moving on to the official part, I would like to direct your attention to the following detail by clicking on the speaker interpreter for sign language or the presentation, you can increase the relevant window to monitor the presentation of the study in the most adequate way for yourself. The National Study for Serbia launch event: ITU Study on the Assessment of Digital Accessibility Policies has been implemented with the direct support of the International Telecommunication Union as part of the initiative for Europe, development of skills for all with the aim of ensuring digital inclusion and Sustainable Development. It is a great pleasure that after several months of working on this study together with our partners from the International Telecommunication Union we have the opportunity to present its findings.

We have with us Mr. Jaroslav Ponder, head of the office for Europe of the ITU, he helped get this implemented in the beginning, we'll hear him through a brief presentation presenting European context within this study was implemented, Mr. Ponder, it is our pleasure that you're here with us today. Go ahead.

>> JAROSLAW PONDER: Thank you very much. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to request also to put the slides on for the presentation. It is my great pleasure to be today with you and to make the short context, the context on this work which we have just accomplished together, developing this together with the Government of Serbia, and focusing on assessment of the digital accessibility policies in the country. This work has been carried out within the framework of the regional initiative on the accessibility affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and Sustainable Development. This regional initiative has been developed hand in hand with all countries of Europe, consisting of 46 countries which decided that digital accessibility is one of the top priorities. For Persons with Disabilities and Specific Needs to take advantage of the ICTs. The accessibility is close to the heart of the ITU, not only a strategic goal but the commitments of the all membership and to make sure that by the 2023 all countries are very well equipped and established the environments ensuring accessible telecommunications, ICTs, for Persons with Disabilities and 2023, it is not far away.

This is the reason why within the framework of the regional initiative we have launched successful partnership together with the European Commission focusing on Accessible Europe which consists of several building blocks. We are getting all stakeholders coming together at the regional events to discuss, but more importantly to shape what has to happen in the policy area and the implementation to provide the technical assess tans to the countries and to advance with them the digital accessibility at the country level and to make sure that no one is left behind.

Providing capacity building offerings, including the trainings and building also together with stakeholders the innovation ecosystem. This year is very particular. We have also assessed the 46 countries in taking stock where we stand in terms of implementing and setting the environment for the accessibility. We encourage you to read the reports and to take a look at where your country stands

and to be advocates to make the purpose. Also this brings us to the very significant move which we have done together with the Government of Serbia in terms of the assessing the digital accessibility policy in Serbia. Today we have the pleasure to hear about this work and carry it out together with the government and to take a look at what are the concrete steps to be done in the next few months.

During these studies, during the development of the study we wanted to provide an overview on the status of the ICT accessibility and digital inclusion and take a look at the ICT accessibility policies and strategies implemented in the country and also to provide a set of good practices and recommendations. We make also the in-depth analysis of the handbook and it has to be carried out to make the big progress in terms of the advancing digital advocacy at the country level and looking forward to next steps, building upon the results of this study.

Thank you very much. Handing over to you.

>> (No interpretation).

>> Thank you, Mr. Ponder on this nice introduction.

Now we will have the opportunity to hear the Executive Director of the University Centre for Students with Handicaps with the University of Belgrade and the President of the Managing Board of the Union for Accessibility of Serbia providing a truly large contribution to the implementation of this study.

Go ahead.

>> Thank you. Just nod to let me know you can hear me. Yes? Good morning to everybody.

I was supposed to start a speech, It is my great pleasure I'm speaking first but there is always unforeseen circumstances that make us change things a bit. It is my great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak today, and I will not talk too much about the study itself. I will try to be brief. Through an example, in fact, to present to everybody listening here today what accessibility means and in what ways is it best to approach it.

Something that's very important is to know that around 15% of the global population cannot live in a dignified manner if there is no accessibility of product, services, buildings, information, communication. This is the number, this number of people have some form of disability. Furthermore, it is also very necessary to the elderly with people with little children, to people that are temporarily presented because of injury from moving properly, meeting other needs, it is envisaged that in 30 years in the year nearly half of the global population will have a need for

some form of accessibility. This also includes population trends because the number of people in the world is growing, but also the number of the elderly population is also growing.

However, the most important thing is accessibility is useful for everybody. It can't harm anyone, you probably noticed that people prefer to move using ramp, elevators than to move on steps, stairs. People don't like to stop in places reserved to Persons with Disabilities and it is important to know that accessibility cannot be harmful for anyone, but when we adapt things to people who perceive the world differently, to people who have intellectual difficulty, when visualizing something, this is useful for everybody, you probably noticed in subways, maps, different machines we use for purchasing tickets, when something is drawn, when something is marked, it is useful for all of us.

However, an important thing, it is to determine who is everybody. When we say everybody, when we say everyone likes something, nobody likes something, we must often identify this with ourselves.

Therefore, I will just give you a brief example for what it looks like when everyone is you.

When I became independent I like to make family lunches for my family, we would gather together, hang out, and when I moved to my own apartment I invited everybody to lunch, these were brothers, parents, children, I was really happy they came in, I presented lunch. However, it was a disaster. Why?

Some of them don't eat mushrooms, others eat only chicken, some people are allergic to strawberries in the cake. In the end, I had to order additional food so that some people wouldn't remain hungry.

What's the lesson to learn from this? Never prepare service or a product without involving the broadest possible spectrum of users and asking what are, in fact, their needs.

Another thing, when do you this in time, you will not be exposed to additional expenses like I was. I had to order food once again. It is exceptionally important to make sure that we include all people, however, when preparing this family lunch, of course, it is unimaginable without a relative from abroad that will send an additional good gadget for the kitchen that we'll use to make something, so in this case of ours, the preparation of the lunch, the study, here it was that International Telecommunication Union, I would like to thank immensely,

of course, Jaroslaw Ponder, but of course without excluding the team. This lunch, it is impossible if someone doesn't want to make it. However, we run away from this, from policy we recollects don't want to work in policy, everything is policies and politics, if there is no political will for everyone at the level to work on the topic, progress will be very low or there will be none. Finally, I have to say when the Prime Minister and I met, they said let's work on accessibility, I thought it would be another political trick that politicians trends towards, this shows this is not so. I would like to thank the entire team, the entire Office of The Prime Minister to monitor, to the ITU sector, to the President of the social inclusion introduction unit and especially Deana who is running that programme today and I just will give a brief parallel story again about a friend that bought land to Mr. A house, he came to the office and said I won't let anyone ruin this day. This primarily relates to you, he said why, because you're going to ask me, okay, you bought land, when will you build foundation, when will you build the first floor, second floor, you set high goals. Someone is going to ask, when will we make the roof, install solar panels, Deana is a person who absolutely is tireless and has a lot of patience while doing this and we can't wait along with the rest of the team to start building this house to finally have a foundation.

Thank you.

>> Thank you for this address. Thank you on the beautiful words.

Today we have the great honor, pleasure that we have with us Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director of the Bureau for development of the international telecommunication unit without whom this certainly couldn't be done. Dear Doreen Bogdan-Martin, go ahead.

>> DOREEN BOGDAN-MARTIN: Thank you so much.

Can you hear me okay? Terrific! Good morning!

Your Excellency, Ana Brnabi, Prime Minister of Serbia, Heads of National Authorities, Members of the media, Ladies and gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to join you today for Serbia's national launch of the ITU Study on the Assessment of Digital Accessibility Policies.

Today's event represents another important milestone in our joint effort to build an inclusive digital world founded on equal opportunities for all.

This assessment is an essential component of the Accessible Europe Initiative, which seeks to foster

enabling environments and inclusive digital societies across the European region.

The Accessible Europe Initiative continues to engage all countries and stakeholders across Europe through activities including direct assistance, policy guidance and regional events and competitions to identify innovative accessible solutions.

It is a fundamental component of the Regional Initiative for Europe on digital inclusion adopted by ITU's World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 - an initiative developed by ITU's European Member States in recognition of the importance of digital accessibility in ensuring that no one is left behind.

Already, an estimated 15% of the global population - or around one billion people - live with some form of disability. Europe alone is home to an estimated 80 million persons with disabilities. In the face of an aging population and the increasing prevalence of non-communicable medical conditions, this number seems certain to grow.

Persons with disabilities are an integral part of today's digital society, yet all too often they are at risk of discrimination and socio-economic exclusion. To make matters worse, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges they face in terms of access to essential services such as education, health, and employment opportunities.

ITU, as the UN specialized agency for digital technologies, is strongly committed to advancing digital accessibility. Accessibility is not only embedded in the Union's strategic goals and targets, but, in 2018, ITU Member States affirmed that enabling environments ensuring accessible ICTs for persons with disabilities should be established in all countries by 2023 .

ITU's new ICT Accessibility Assessment for the Europe region is the product of many months of collaborative work with European administrations and regional organizations, and I take this opportunity to thank them for their outstanding cooperation, without which would not be possible.

Together, we were able to arrive at a clear picture of the status of digital accessibility across the region, and identify the gaps we still need to fill through targeted and effective actions.

Ladies and gentlemen:

I would like to thank the Prime Minister for her commitment to taking concrete steps to make an inclusive

digital society a reality in Serbia.

It has been a great pleasure for ITU to accompany Serbia on this journey. On behalf of my team, let me thank the many experts and collaborators from national institutions for the hard work and engagement which have brought us to this moment.

Today's launch lays the groundwork for advancing the digital accessibility agenda at national level. It provides an updated overview of the status of ICT accessibility and digital inclusion in Serbia, along with a set of good practices and recommendations for national policymakers and stakeholders on how to ensure inclusiveness is always taken into account across a range of key domains.

We look forward to continuing to support Serbia in its efforts to advance digital accessibility, and stand ready to assist any other ITU member in improving digital inclusion and ensuring that persons with disabilities enjoy full and unfettered access to the power of digital communications and the online world.

Ladies and gentlemen, we continue to live in very challenging times, with the COVID pandemic far from over, and the importance of connectivity never more apparent.

In a few months from now, ITU will hold its next World Telecommunication Development Conference at the invitation of the government of Ethiopia. This landmark event seeks to dramatically redraw the digital connectivity roadmap, with a view to leveraging the transformational power of digital to accelerate progress towards the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

I am convinced that digital inclusion, and in particular digital accessibility, will play an increasingly central role in any new global agenda for connectivity, and I encourage you all to become active participants in the preparatory process for this important global event.

Before I close, let me once again congratulate the Government of Serbia on its ongoing efforts to promote connectivity and digital transformation. Serbia can justly pride itself on having become a reference country on the global stage, and I applaud the government on the concrete steps recently undertaken to meet its commitment to connect 99% of households to high-speed internet by 2025.

I was also very impressed by the way the government leveraged the power of digital in its pandemic response through the launch of the eUprava e-government portal, which enabled Serbia to play a key role in expanding rapid access to vaccination for European citizens by offering them the chance of vaccination in the Republic of Serbia.

So once more, I thank the Prime Minister and her government for Serbia's engagement and commitment to helping shape Europe's digital future and define regional priorities to advance digital transformation to build back better, and I look forward very much to a very active future collaboration.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

>> Thank you very much Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, we will now be addressed by the Prime Minister of Serbia. Please go ahead.

>> Thank you, good morning to everybody. Apologies for being late to the start of this online conference due to prior commitments and meetings.

I'm very happy, it was very important for me to be personally present for this day. Dear Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, dear Mr. Ponder, distinguished representatives of media, universities, Civil Society organizations, dear participants, colleagues from my team, the entire Government of The Republic of Serbia, it is truly my pleasure today as I said personally to be present and for this presentation with the national study and the assessment of digital accessibility, policies in the Republic of Serbia and thus Serbia, we note the importance of digital inclusion for our entire society. The Sustainable Development.

The progress that we have achieved during the past five, six years. We as a country during the five years we have incredible success in the field of digital transformation, due to the efforts of the Government of The Republic of Serbia and the support we have received from the academic community, from Civil Society, businesses, we have turned nearly fully towards eGovernment as the best way for providing efficient, transparent and responsive public information to businesses and citizens and every individual during the past years in Serbia has realized the importance of digitalization, this was particularly the case as noted by the previous speakers when we were faced with a crisis caused by the coronavirus and we also have the advantage of digitalization in administration, education, healthcare, business, and I'm truly proud that Serbia has in the most positive sense managed to stand out in the adoption of popularization and the implementation of the digitalization as a direction for further development of our entire country and our reform and to great extent our entire society was mobilized during the past five years regarding the digital agenda. Digitalization is necessary as a method of providing better public service for the



state to be at the disposal of its citizens 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

To ensure the better quality of education that corresponds both to the interests and the needs of younger generations and enables them to perform the jobs of the future. Digitalization also as you have seen in recent years means competitive economy and improves the business environment in multiple times, now we're facing an equally important task that we had to initiate which is to provide all citizens with the opportunity to make use of digital technologies so that nobody is left behind as you would say in English, to leave no one behind. The study we're presenting today aims to determine the state of digital accessibility in the Republic of Serbia and to draw the route for steps forward. We want to establish an even more inclusive digital society and to overcome the digital divide that is certainly an increasing problem worldwide. For us to make what we have done during the past five years sustainable and to make it possible for everyone to be included in both the progress and the transition of this reform we truly have to make -- we have to do more than anyone else and to be a leader in the field in overcoming the digital gap. This is an example of the partnership we have with the ITU, with the ITU, and I thank you truly once again for this personally from the depths of my heart.

For a long time along with the ITU we have been jointly working on several initiatives and believe you are a true partner in the digital transformation. I would like to express particular thanks to Director Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Mr. Ponder, all of the experts that participated in the preparation of this study and all of the organizations of Civil Society and national institutions and their great contributions to reaching today's point.

This joint work is certainly necessary for the development of an inclusive digital society where everybody has equal opportunities to develop and participate. Since technology is advancing and accelerating, risks are increasing and the impact on the vulnerable part of the population is increasing. In Serbia there are 10,000 people per day becoming eCitizens at the portal of our eGovernment. For this, the immunization system is largely to think, the coronavirus virus that made it possible for Serbia to be a leader regarding vaccination in a global good example regarding mass immunization. The focus on digitalization in Serbia is reflected in large investments such as introduction of broadband network in all

settlements of the Republic of Serbia, the construction of national data certificate and the science and technology parks across the Republic of Serbia, the programmes to aim to improve accessibility and access to digital technology for all, for all categories of society from children to our oldest citizens. However, to ensure that nobody is left behind, it is necessary to have digital literacy and digital connectivity for all citizens. We have started to introduce digital textbooks and digital classrooms and our plan is to fully digitalize all our schools and our entire educational system by the end of 2022. Children from grade 1 are being introduced to algo rhythmic thinking and the rules of responsible behavior in a digital world and programming has been introduced in 2017 as a mandatory subject after grade 5 primary school as of September 1st of this year, the next school year, artificial intelligence will be part of the teaching programme in primary education in Serbia.

A large number of students in Serbia continue their education in the field of information technologies and specialized school and Classes and year on year we're expanding the capacity of technical facilitator cults every year. However, at no point did we forget that digital literacy is necessary to citizens of all ages and categories. The equal equations in the field of information technologies is an excellent example of successful programmes completed by,000 candidates to date and we're continuing with that, with particular focus placed on Persons with Disabilities in order to empower them and to increase their employability.

The development strategy for digital skills envisaged were in applicable trainings and improving the digital skills of all social groups, based on principles of equal opportunities. Finally, as the Director of ITU said regarding digital connectivity, our goal is to ensure a broadband network for 99% of the households in Serbia by 2025 and in this way we will introduce rapid and favorable Internet connections to half a million households in less populated areas of our country that currently either don't have or have very poor quality Internet.

Also last year we adopted a strategy for improving the status of Persons with Disabilities dealing with issues of digital inclusion under several key areas, the main focus is to ensure access to information with further development of assistive technology, this will impact social and healthcare services, employment, education and, of course, eGovernment in general.

Finally, during this event the project was supported under the project fun for innovation activities working on a system design and creating aids for Persons with Disabilities and the public innovation expected in late June and I encourage all candidates developing assistive technologies to apply for this for the development of their solutions together we can improve the lives of the Persons with Disabilities and their integration in everyday social activities.

The increase in the use of digital technologies has emphasized the divide for digitally connected and those that are digitally disconnected, the Government of The Republic of Serbia in the efforts to establish a digital society, it is paying particular attention to the most vulnerable categories of society. The study we're presenting today will serve as a basis for further work on this important topic and Serbia will continue its cooperation with International Telecommunication Union in this very important area.

I believe that digital inclusion is the key for enabling the autonomy of every individual in our society. To full inclusion and economic, social, cultural life we will improve the living standards and provide equal opportunities for all citizens. Therefore, we remain committed to the development of an accessible digital society where no one will be left behind. Once again, I would like to thank all of you and the teamwork and assistance and support that you have provided to the Republic of Serbia, to the government to reach this very important study. I understand that this is only the foundation and the basis and I look forward to our future cooperation in the further development of an equal, inclusive society that provides equal opportunities for all.

Thank you.

>> Thank you to the Prime Minister.

Thank you to all of our speakers to date and just as the Prime Minister mentioned in her address, the fun for innovation activities in the Republic of Serbia in the working in supporting various projects in the field of innovation and now we have an opportunity to see a video presentation of several projects that were implemented with the support of the fund that are aimed in the use of innovative technologies with the aim of improving the quality of life of Persons with Disabilities .

Let's take a look at the video.

(video with captions).

>> I believe that in the future we'll have the opportunity to see more of these projects and ideas. Now we have the documents that have been produced today, Ricardo will present findings and what are the things that the study has provided. Sir, it is our pleasure to have you here. Go ahead.

>> Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Good morning! Good morning, everyone.

Your Excellency, Prime Minister ITU colleagues, good morning, everybody, thank you so much. It is such a pleasure to be part of this effort and I'm really honored to be able to present this project of this study that's been a pretty significant teamwork by many, many people. For Republic of Serbia.

I want to congratulate first of all the Government of The Republic of Serbia for the steps that the government has taken to make the country more inclusive and to advance towards ICT accessibility and towards inclusion of Persons with Disabilities. Let me just try to share the screen here. Bear with me just a second and you should be able to see it in just one second.

Okay. So just -- I'm just going to run real quick, because we're running out of time through some of the key takeaways from the study. I'll highlight some of the most significant aspects that we have identified and some of the recommendations we would like.

First of all, as I said, I would like to acknowledge, I would like to thank for all of the hard work, I would like to thank Ljupka for the leadership, the vision, I would like to thank Tijana, of course, from the Office of The Prime Minister for all of the coordination, all of the hard work put into this project and along with her colleagues as well, Nevena and Dragana, I would like to thank all of the people, all stakeholders from all of the ministries that we have talked to, that we have reached out to collect all of the information that we needed and also from disability organizations, this project, this study couldn't have been possible without them, of course. Last but not least, of course I would like to thank the ITU colleagues for their support at all times. What do we want to reflect through this report, through this study? Of course, well, we want to first of all find out what was going on in the country in terms of the legal framework, the regulations and the policies and programmes in support of the work towards implementing ICT accessibility in the country and the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.

Of course we want to highlight those best practices

that have been implemented or are being implemented right now or will be implemented, there are plans for that. This study is also aimed at helping policymakers and other people that are involved in having the grounds and having the picture of the right instruments to do what to do now or what to do next and know what other countries, for example, are doing, what practices have worked. Obviously as part of a bigger programme, bigger global commitments this study is aimed at supporting exactly that. For example, the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 would be one of them but mainly we want to help the Republic of Serbia become a much more inclusive towards Persons with Disabilities and obviously help become a leading country in ICT accessibility. Right. I know this may sound really challenging maybe, ambitious, but no country in the world, in the Europe, U.S., Australia, U.K., nobody is doing everything perfect, no one. Maybe they started before, they have covered more ground. There is still a lot to be done.

What we included in the report what, are the key things we should focus on, right, so first of all, of course, the status of digital inclusion, ICT accessibility, what's going on, what's being currently done, what are the legal, regulatory frameworks, what are the policies currently being implemented, getting the snapshot of that. What are other countries in Europe, in the European Union space doing, we don't want to reinvent the wheel, we want to look at what others are doing, of course, we have our own legal framework, we have our own policy, of course, why reinvent the wheel? If there something that's working out there, let's go do the same. Let's do what others are doing that works or has worked.

Obviously we have included a number of recommendations, general recommendations around policymaking and around how to promote the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities through the digital inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and how to promote ICT accessibility at large. Right.

We have done this analysis of what's going on right now in the country and this key recommendation, it is a key area and we'll focus on the key areas, these are the foundations of the modern society. Obviously the study, it would be great if it helped future policymaker, current and future ones, to work on this, following on this same path, and obviously we have included a lot of really useful resources, many from ITU that can help in this whole initiative.

One of the key areas, one of the strategic areas we

have assessed that I have said, they're the foundations of a modern society, of course, so I'm going to read them allowed for blind, visually impaired users, these are really important. Internet access, web accessibility, eGovernment, mobile communications, devices, TV, television, digital content, accessibility, electronic kiosks, education, key, healthcare, even more so, even more so currently, of course, emergency situation, communications, we're seeing how important it is in the current situation in the whole world is now. Assistive technologies, other side of the coin of ICT information and communication technology.

Within the role of the government, the public administrations, public procurement, where is the government, the public administration entities or bodies buying that is ICT, that is information and telecommunications, right? Anything that is ICT is very important to consider accessibility in the public procurement when they buy.

Just running through some quick stats about disability in the country, we have some stats from 2011, a bit over a half million Persons with Disabilities, some estimates vary depending on the methodology use, could be between 500, 600, maybe 800 Persons with Disabilities, this is very important bus of the number of people that actually -- because of the number of people that use technology, they use computer, they use Internet connection of course or don't use yet and maybe they should, don't have access to that, use mobile phones, almost everybody uses mobile phones, and who uses government services? eGovernment services in this case and how many more would we want to use those eGovernment services? All of those numbers mean that there are a lot of people, citizens, that's a lot of family member, friends, consumers, customers, right, just bear in mind, dropping key ideas here, what are some legal frameworks and initiatives that globally effect the Republic of Serbia as a member of the global community, of course, the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities would be the key one, it is likely the mother of all let's say frameworks that have to do with this inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and in particular, accessibility, that's Article 9, a right, a right of everyone, everyone has and Persons with Disabilities in particular just to highlight that the Republic of Serbia signed and ratified and signed in 2007 the U.N. Convention and the ratified it in 20099, every country that signs and ratifies that must transpose the

provisions of the convention into the legal, national legal frameworks. Looking at Europe, other key elements, key pieces of legal regulatory frameworks here in the E.U. space, European space, of course, very important, web accessibility directly affecting public entity, public administration entities, websites, mobile app, the norm, the technical norm that the web accessibility uses to assess performance, that's very important, the EN301549 and the European Accessibility Act that will affect very, very soon the private sector, products and services produced by the private sector. Something to bear in mind immediately.

Some other large and very, very important frameworks that the Republic of Serbia, international frameworks that they're part of, would be the world international copyright, the Marrakech Treaty allowing to create books, transform printed books, works into accessible digital formats for Persons with Disabilities to use in educational settings and so forth, very, very important.

Obviously we have assessed the whole structure of laws and regulations in the country. I must say that I would like to congratulate again the government and the country for such a diverse, well-structured body of regulatory framework. As I said, countries, other countries, they have started before, others are still lagging behind in terms of the legal framework, they like many, many of these laws, that the Republic of Serbia already has. This is really one of the key, key pillars of this whole initiative of this whole roadmap towards accessibility and digital inclusion.

I want to briefly highlight some general recommendations -- wanted to -- that the study has included. Raising awareness of accessibility and disability, it is key. If we -- we do know this exists, all of the other efforts, they're going to be misguided. So it is very important to talk about this. Of course it is very important to involve the people affected, Persons with Disabilities, but older persons as well, the elderly as well in all of these conversations, creating legislation, building policies, we need to allocate funding, of course, keys to allocate funding to regulator frameworks and to policy implementations. Otherwise they will be -- they won't have that happen. They won't get any results.

We need to train people, build capacity to know technical aspects, to know general aspects that have to do with ICT accessibility, obviously we in the report, we have highlighted the importance of the Universal Funds, the role they can play in embracing funds for this, for the implementation of the policies. The role of public

procurement, public procurement, everything that the public administrations buy that is technology and should be used by everyone, even by public servants, right, should be accessible, so including ICT accessibility provisions in all of these Terms of Reference, that's super, super important and we already have a guide, we already have guidelines and that's standard, the EN301549 to help us do that. Developing guidelines for people that are trained to know what they have to do next. Finally, very, very important, to include the private sector. Private sector here, of course, the non-profit organizations, by the private sector, that's one -- they will provide products and services.

Just to highlight one of the examples of the key area that we analyzed, reviewed, obtained recommendations, this is web accessibility that is basically being ran by the Office of Information technology, I want to really congratulate the Office of IT for the great, great work they are doing, the clarity, the clarity of how well they have all of the information structured, how well they're taking all of the necessary steps, definitely very, very commendable. All of the technical standards that they're introduce, following, and key recommendations would be to harmonize web accessibility requirements in the public sphere with other areas, of course, as specific legislations, public procurement, healthcare, eGovernment, so forth, and also including them in any antidiscrimination, equality legislation that the country may create.

Same thing with eGovernment, very, very commendable, what's been done so far, there's room for improvement, as I have said, in every country, this means every country. We wish to maybe make sure all policies include or highlight what needs to be done in eGovernment, related to eGovernment solutions so that they're accessible and they conform to the accessibility standards. We have included as I said at the beginning as I mentioned resources, very useful, I wanted to highlight a few of them from the International Telecommunication Union, from the ITU, the ITU G3ict model ICT accessibility policy report, this is the Holy Grail we have right now in terms of policy writing, policy writing, very, very important.

Pieces of legislation, pieces of language that can be used to build policies to write policies in different key areas.

Other really relevant resources that we can highlight towards building inclusive digital communities and this is



a self-assessment tool and can help government, other stakeholders, governments, others to support the development of policies as I said and also evaluate how well they are doing, how well they're fairing.

Finally, this is a really relevant resource that's published just recently by the ITU, this is the ICT accessibility assessment for the European -- for the Europe region, what's going on, what other countries are doing, what is working really well, what other requirements what, are the legal requirements being done out there. What are the best practices, again, let's not reinvent the wheel, let's see what others are doing out there and let's just, you know, reuse that. Okay. Or at least leverage that.

This is a short video that I wanted to show. I'm not sure if I'm running -- I think I'm running out of time.

This is the video from ITU that just highlights why is it important to build a digitally inclusive world. Let me just play just a bit.

>> ICT digital accessibility, the key to achieving a digitally inclusive world.

(Video playing with captions).

>> Thank you all for the time and patience.

If you want to reach out to ask any questions, please do, I will give you the address here. Thank you so much.

Thank you very much. It was a comprehensive presentation, and the support you have provided during the entire process and the work. As noted for any question, contact him through the email address if you from not able to catch, it we'll send it out through email and the study has details on the practices and resources that could be used for further work on this topic, so I invite you to find out more about the details of the study. The publication can be downloaded at the website of the Government of The Republic of Serbia, the website of the international communication Union and the social inclusion unit.

>> We're running out of time, I thank all of my colleague who is participated in the development of this study, thank you to all that made it possible to complete this and thank you for all that are present today. I firmly believe it will help us in the forthcoming period to continue work on this important topic with inclusion of all relevant stakeholders.

Thank you, everybody.

Have a good day.

\*\*\*

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning, and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document, or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

\*\*\*