



# Regional Innovation Forum for Europe 2021

## Scaling up innovative digital ecosystems that accelerate digital transformation of key sectors

22-23 September 2021

Organized within the framework of the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe on ICT-Centric Innovation Ecosystems and the 2021 ITU Global Innovation Forum. Also organized with the support of the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Republic of North Macedonia.



Republic of North Macedonia

Ministry of Information Society and Administration

More information and [registration](http://itu.int/go/ONAZ) at <http://itu.int/go/ONAZ>

### Day 1, Wednesday | 22 September 2021

<b>[09:30 – 09:45]</b>	<b>Opening and welcome remarks</b> Speakers: Jaroslav Ponder, Head of the ITU Office for Europe H.E. Mr. Jeton Shaqiri, Minister of Information Society and Administration, North Macedonia
<b>[09:45 – 09:55]</b>	<b>Special address</b> H.E. Mr. Iurie Turcanu, Deputy Prime Minister for Digitalization, Republic of Moldova
<b>[09:55 – 10:45]</b>	<b>Session 1 – Achieving the regional development priorities through digital transformation</b> This moderated session will bring together high-level stakeholders from the Europe region for a discussion on building collaboration around the regional priorities on innovation, entrepreneurship and ecosystem development. Panelists’ will share new initiatives and mechanism that can be leveraged to accelerate countries transformation and amplify the work of change-makers.  The session will answer the following question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What initiatives are accelerating entrepreneurship driven innovation?</li> <li>• What doesn’t work and should be avoided?</li> <li>• What works and should be amplified?</li> </ul> Session type: High level panel discussion (45 min) and Q&A session (15 min) Moderator: Jaroslav Ponder, Head of the ITU Office for Europe





	<p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valeriya Ionan, Deputy Minister for Eurointegration at the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine.</li> <li>• Milena Lipovina Bozovic, State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development, Montenegro</li> <li>• Florensa Haxhi, Director General of the Development Programs and Cooperation Unit, at the Prime Minister’s Office, Albania</li> <li>• Kosta Petrov, Director, Fund for Innovation and Technology Development, North Macedonia</li> <li>• Annie Vashakmadze, Head of Department for International Relations and Relations with Donors, Georgia’s Innovation and Technology Agency (GITA)</li> </ul>
<p><b>[10:45 – 11:45]</b></p>	<p><b>Session 2 – Building partnerships for a sustainable ecosystem development</b></p> <p>This session will explore in-depth some of practices and initiatives fueling innovation, entrepreneurship and digital transformation in their countries. It will also give a perspective on how different type of partnerships can help stakeholders contribute to this process.</p> <p>The session will answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you need to build an ecosystem around an initiative?</li> <li>• What support can be provided by other stakeholders/organizations?</li> <li>• What mechanisms can be used to partner with and among these organizations to support the entrepreneurship-driven innovation?</li> </ul> <p>Session type: Presentations (45 min) and Q&amp;A (15 min)</p> <p>Moderator: Agi Veres, Director, UNDP Representation Office, Geneva</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anthony Giannoumis, Associate Professor, Oslo Metropolitan University</li> <li>• Beatrice Scarioni, Head of Tech4Dec, EPFL</li> <li>• Christopher Baker-Brian, Co-Founder, Bboxx</li> <li>• David Maasz, Member of the Supervisory Board, INPUT Program</li> <li>• Manuel Costa Cabral, Senior Consultant, ANACOM, Portugal</li> </ul>
<p><b>[11:45 – 12:45]</b></p>	<p><b>Session 3 – Innovation journey – stories from the frontlines – COVID-19</b></p> <p>This moderated discussion will offer opportunities to discover what opportunities exist in the new normal and meet change-makers at the different stage of the entrepreneurial lifecycle to discover their innovation journey. They will be called to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does it feel like to be an innovator in their ecosystem?</li> <li>• How the pandemic affected their ecosystem?</li> <li>• What is currently missing to help innovators achieve their potential?</li> </ul>





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What community problems are innovators trying to solve and how they see their role in building a resilient community?</li> </ul> <p>Session type: Interactive panel  Moderator: Valentina Stadnic, Digital Ecosystem Expert, ITU Office for Europe  Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gerassimos Spyridakis, Managing director, Bank Julius Baer</li> <li>• Michel Arditti, CEO, SCSWORLD</li> <li>• Sarah Schwab, Founder &amp; CEO, The Experience Accelerator</li> <li>• Siew-Veena Sahi, CEO &amp; Co-Founder, Testmate Health</li> <li>• Radu Tintescu, Creative Entrepreneur, Co-Founder of [Flow] OS</li> </ul>
[12:45 – 13:00]	<b>Day 1 Closing</b>

**Day 2, Thursday | 23 September 2021**

<b>Session 4</b>	<p><b>In focus: Achieving a sustainable future for agriculture</b>  <i>Awards Ceremony of the “Digital Excellence in Agriculture: ITU-FAO Regional Contest in Europe and Central Asia”</i></p>
[09:30 – 09:40]	<p><b>Setting the context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vladimir Olegovich Rakhmanin, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, FAO</li> <li>• Jaroslaw Ponder, Head, ITU Office for Europe</li> </ul>
[09:40 – 10:20]	<p><b>Status of Digital Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia: Current innovation trends, opportunities and challenges.</b>  This session provides the context of the “Digital Excellence in Agriculture Contest” as well as an overview of the challenges and current technological trends identified through it, highlighting the role of Information and Communication Technologies to boost agriculture as an engine for development.  Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sophie Treinen, Information and Knowledge Management Officer and Digital Agriculture Team Leader, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</li> <li>• Mihaly Csoto, Digital Agriculture Expert</li> </ul>
[10:20 – 12:30]	<p><b>Pitching of the outstanding practices in digital transformation of the agricultural sector and Awards Ceremony</b>  During this segment, the 28 finalists of the “Digital Excellence in Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia Contest” will have the possibility to showcase their good practices and innovative solutions that have proven successful in advancing the digital transformation of the agricultural value chains in the region. The Award Ceremony</p>





	<p>will reveal the 7 winners of the special recognition of “Digital Excellence in Agriculture Contest” and 7 champion practices.</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valentin Nagy, Junior Technical Officer on Digitalization in Agriculture, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</li> <li>Sarah Delporte, Project Officer, ITU Office for Europe</li> <li>Them bani Malapela, Knowledge and Information Management Officer, FAO</li> <li>Farid Nakhli, Programme Coordinator, ITU Regional Office for CIS</li> </ul> <p>Pitchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28 finalists in 7 categories. Please find the detailed list of pitchers <a href="#">here</a></li> </ul> <p>Closing of the Awards Ceremony:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jaroslav Ponder, Head of the ITU Office for Europe</li> <li>Sophie Treinen, Information and Knowledge Management Officer and Digital Agriculture Team Leader, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</li> </ul>
[12:30 – 14:00]	Lunch Break
<b>Session 5</b>	<b>In focus: Generation Connect Session on Youth and Innovation</b>
[14:00 – 14:05]	<p><b>Setting the context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AnaMaria Meshkurti, Programme Coordinator, ITU Office for Europe</li> </ul>
[14:05 – 15:00]	<p>This moderated discussion will offer opportunities to meet change-makers at the different stage of the entrepreneurial lifecycle and the innovation journey. They will be called to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What does it feel like to be an innovator in their ecosystem?</li> <li>What is missing to help innovators achieve their potential?</li> <li>What community problems are innovators trying to solve?</li> </ul> <p>Session type: Fireside chat and Q&amp;A</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Luke Cavanaugh, Editor-in-Chief at European Student Thinktank and Co-Founder at STEAR - Student Think Tank for Europe-Asia Relations</li> <li>Ron Kremer, Chief Communications Officer, Messee</li> </ul> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priya Burci, CEO, Powercoders</li> <li>Sheraz Ahmed, Managing Partner, STORM Partners</li> <li>Yusuf Kerem Çalikoğlu, Co-Founder, Pixelized</li> <li>Zubair Junjuna, Founder of ZNotes, Diana Award Recipient, Entrepreneur-in-Residence at Bedford School</li> </ul>
[15:00-15:10]	Closing





# OPEN SIDE EVENT

Organized by



In cooperation with



*Note: Please note that this side event will be held on a separate platform.*

## Accelerating Digital Inclusion in the New Normal

<b>[15:10 – 15:15]</b>	<p><b>Setting the context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jaroslav Ponder, Head of the ITU Office for Europe, International Telecommunication Union</li> <li>Michael Fembek, Director, Zero Project</li> </ul>
<b>[15:15 – 16:40]</b>	<p><b>Overview of the enabling environment ensuring accessible telecommunications and ICTs for Persons with Disabilities in the Europe region</b></p> <p>The ITU regional office for Europe has joined forces with the Zero Project of the Essl Foundation to empower innovators in providing digital solutions and services designed for persons with disabilities. This session will offer an opportunity to learn the importance of making your products accessible for all, and to understand the current accessibility policies and strategies.</p> <p>The highlight of this session will be three interventions that will make the case for: Navigation for all, Business for all, and Communication for all.</p> <p>Session type: Firestarter chat</p> <p>Moderators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AnaMaria Meshkurti, Programme Coordinator, ITU Office for Europe</li> <li>Wilfried Kainz, Head of Research, Zero Project</li> </ul> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debra Ruh, CEO and Founder, Ruh Global IMPACT</li> <li>Eduardo Jauregui, CEO &amp; Co-Founder, Irisbond</li> <li>Klaus Candussi, Co-founder, atempo</li> </ul>
<b>[16:40-16:45]</b>	<p><b>Closing</b></p>

