

UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia (#DTG4ECA)

Implementation of WSIS Action Lines at the Regional Level

Digital transformation in Europe and Central Asia

26 April | Online Meeting

Organized by the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia

Facilitated by ITU and UNECE

Held within the framework of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2021

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/>

Biographies of Guest Speakers



Mr. Jaroslav K. Ponder, Head of the Office for Europe at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (Geneva, Switzerland), representing ITU in Europe and directing actions, projects, initiatives and experts groups targeting 46 countries of the Europe Region. His portfolio includes set of Regional Initiatives for Europe, designed by the European Member States and focusing on the ICT Infrastructure, Digitization, Digital Inclusion, Accessibility, Innovation and Cybersecurity. Along the professional career, Mr. Ponder held official positions in the public sector and was a contributor to the legislative projects having the impact on the public policy. Since 2014, Mr. Ponder has been working for ITU holding

diverse positions in the General Secretariat, Telecommunication Development Bureau, and Regional Presence, addressing complexity of information society development and digital transformation at national, regional, international level, including United Nations level. For several years he has managed ITU's work on the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process, leading towards the establishment of the annual WSIS Forum, WSIS Prizes, WSIS Stocktaking, others.



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Ms. Nargis Azizova is an **Intergovernmental Partnership, Normative and Knowledge Management Specialist** at **UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (ECA RO)**. She is an economist. Prior to commencing her work in a position at ECA RO in 2018, UN Women, Nargis worked for more than 15 years at the United Nations in various capacities as UNDP Assistant Representative, UNIFEM/UN Women Gender and Governance Advisor in Tajikistan, UN Women manager for the interagency regional migration programme. Prior to joining the UN, Nargis for more than 10 years worked at the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan. Nargis led preparations for B+25 regional and sub-regional reviews in 2019 and for other intergovernmental processes on GEWE.



Ms. Ivelina Borisova is **UNICEF's Early Childhood Development Advisor (ECD) for the Europe and Central Asia Region**. In this role she is responsible for regional technical assistance to 22 countries offices and results management for the regional priorities on early childhood development. Prior to this, Ivelina worked as UNICEF's global lead in the area of early childhood education. She was responsible for global advocacy efforts and partnerships, as well as strategic guidance aimed at achieving equitable access to quality pre-primary education by 2030. Ivelina has rich field experience across many regions and countries. Prior to joining UNICEF, she worked as the Director of Impact and Innovations for ECD at Save the Children, managing a broad portfolio of global initiatives, innovations and multi-donor funds. She is a national of Bulgaria and holds a Doctorate in Human Development and Education from the Harvard University.



Ms. Emma Honkala works as a **consultant in the Digital Health Flagship in the WHO Regional Office for Europe**. Emma provides assistance on all aspects of digital health to support health systems strengthening in the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region. She guides countries in their development of national digital health programmes and supports the strengthening of country capacity for digital health and integrated health information systems. Emma is a global health professional with strong personal interest towards working in the intersection of health and technology, advancing and advocating the public health agenda. She

is passionate about innovation, and the different ways in which technology can be used to increase equity in access to health services and accelerate progress towards universal health coverage.



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Mr. Marco Kamiya is **Chief of the Division of Innovation Strategies and Digitalization at UNIDO**, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The Division is working on frontier technologies, innovation ecosystems, and the digital economy. Marco Kamiya was the Coordinator of the Urban Economy and Finance Branch at UN-HABITAT. He has been a senior officer at CAF Development Bank for Latin America in Caracas, the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington DC, and senior economist of PADECO Co., Ltd., a development consulting firm in Tokyo. He has recently published “Global Production Chains” (Springer 2021), and “The Shenzhen Story: Innovation Policies in Practice (UN-Habitat 2020). At UNIDO are in preparation methodologies and toolkits on the readiness of SMEs on the digital economy, databases, and policy papers.



Mr. Mario Apostolov is **Regional Advisor for UNECE**. He provides advisory support for both the Economic and Integration and Trade Divisions. He has been servicing intergovernmental bodies of experts and policy makers on trade facilitation in the framework of the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), and networks in Southeast Europe and the Eurasian Economic Union for over 17 years. His expertise includes national trade facilitation bodies, the Single Window for export, import, and transit clearance, regional trade integration, and trade facilitation reform. Mr. Apostolov has a M.A. from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and a Ph.D. from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies at the University of Geneva. He teaches a course on the Dynamics of Regional Cooperation and Diplomacy at the International University in Geneva. Some areas of his published works include trade facilitation, regional cooperation and integration, and the geopolitics of Christian-Muslim relations.



Ms. Sophie Treinen is working at the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations** regional office for Europe and Central Asia, where she provides assistance to the countries of the region addressing the role of information, communication and knowledge sharing. Her major responsibility is to develop approaches for developing institutional and individual capacities. She supports the development of national digital agriculture strategy, and pays particular attention to systems, which make the most of digital and more conventional technologies to address stakeholders’ needs. She is also applying participatory approaches and examining gender issues linked to the introduction of new digital Information and Communication Technologies. With 30 years of



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experience, Sophie possesses a varied experience in raising awareness for sustainability issues within the UN, governments, private sector and civil society. She was the FAO Focal Point for the World Summit on the Information Society Action Line on e-agriculture and served as the Organization's Communication Lead for the UN Global Information Society Group.



Mr. Nabil Gangi is Deputy Regional Representative of FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. A national of Canada, he has a background in engineering (Ain Shams University in Cairo), project and financial management (American University of Cairo) and business administration (Henley Management College and Brunel University in the United Kingdom). He held the same post in FAO's Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa in Cairo, his city of birth. Before that, he headed the Organization's Shared Services Centre in Budapest, providing support to FAO's backbone operations, including human resources, financial servicing, and asset and travel management. During his career with FAO, Mr. Gangi assumed senior-level positions in its headquarters in Rome, managed staff benefits, pensions, human resources, and social

security for Rome-based UN agencies. Prior to joining the United Nations, he held senior management positions with multilateral and non-governmental organizations, managing programmes and projects funded by the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development. Nabil Gangi has travelled extensively and has led several organizational development missions in more than 25 countries throughout his professional career.



Mr. Milan Dacic serves as Representative for Europe of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). He spent a part of his career as researcher and another part in public administration and international organizations (some duties: Director of Hydrometeorological Service and Permanent Representative of Serbia with WMO, Head of International Relations of the Yugoslav Federal Hydrometeorological Institute, UNFCCC and IPCC Focal Point, Senior Officer of the Ministry of Environmental Protection working on climate related issues, Director of the Serbia's Country Office of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), WMO Consultant). Milan was instrumental in setting-up of sub-regional SEE Virtual Climate Change Center and worked on advancing its operational functions as science to policy interface. While working as WMO Consultant, Milan contributed to the design of the South East European Multi Hazard Early Warning System for the Western Balkans

and Turkey. At the country level, he was coordinating the creation, negotiation, and final adoption by the Parliament of the Law on Meteorological and Hydrological Activities in Serbia. He actively contributed to design of the legislative framework and operational practice in disaster risk management. While working



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in WMO, he engaged with eighteen countries of SEE to develop and agree the data policy for improved data sharing, supporting the global and regional data processing and forecasting centers in Europe.

