IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE REPORT

Implementation of ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe

(January-April 2021)

ITU Office for Europe

eurregion@itu.int | @ITUEurope

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

This document outlines all activities undertaken or to be undertaken by ITU between January and April 2021, as a direct response to the expected results of the ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe Region, consisting of 46 countries. Activities presented in this document depict expected outcomes and generated impact per Regional Initiative as well as per activity. They are grouped in chronological order per Regional Initiative. All activities carried out under the ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe are directly linked to the corresponding BDT Thematic Priorities, strengthening their delivery and impact at the regional and national level. Simultaneously the outcomes of all activities contribute to the work of the ITU Study Groups, as well as ITUs contribution to the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines and Sustainable Development Goals.

Regional Initiatives are the five priority areas, that were elaborated and agreed by the Members of the Europe region and approved by the World Telecommunication Development Conference, held in 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and featured in the Buenos Aires Action Plan.

Regional initiatives are intended to address specific telecommunication/ICT priority areas that require special action of the ITU at the regional level. Under each regional initiative, a set of activities, initiatives, partnerships, and projects have been developed to meet the region's needs. The ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe include the following:

- EUR1: Broadband infrastructure, broadcasting and spectrum management
- EUR2: A citizen-centric approach to building services for national administrations
- EUR3: Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development
- EUR4: Enhancing trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies
- EUR5: Information and communication technology-centric innovation ecosystems

2. Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Europe (RPM-EUR), 19-21 January 2021, Virtual

The Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Europe (RPM-EUR) took place virtually from 18 to 19 January 2021. RPM-EUR was organized at the kind invitation of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic. The meeting was attended by 114 participants including 59 delegates representing 27 Member States from Europe region, 12 participants from Sector Members, 14 participants representing 11 Observer Member States, 2 United Nations and its specialized

agencies, and 30 guests. There were, 64 female and 50 male participants. The list of participants can be found here.

After considering all input documents and discussions RPM-EUR came to the following conclusions and outcomes of the meeting:

- RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on WTDC Preparations (TDAG-WG-Prep)** welcoming all innovations proposed so far and reiterating the importance of involvement of youth and equal participation of women in WTDC.

- RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on Resolutions, Declaration and Thematic Priorities (TDAG-WG-RDTP)** underlining the importance of the outcomes and proposals therein, considering strengthened involvement of Europe facilitated by CEPT.

- RPM-EUR considered the final Report of **TDAG Working Group on Strategic and Operational Plans (TDAG-WG-SOP)** drawing the attention to the importance of aligning BDT activities with the goals of the Union.

- RPM-EUR recognized that the ITU-D regional priorities constitute an effective mechanism for fostering implementation of the WSIS outcomes and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

- RPM-EUR approved five regional priorities for Europe for the period 2022-2025, for submission to WTDC-21 as follows:
    o   RP-EUR 1: Digital infrastructure development
    o   RP-EUR 2: Digital transformation for resilience
    o   RP-EUR-3: Digital inclusion and skills development
    o   RP-EUR-4: Trust and confidence in the use of digital technologies
    o   RP-EUR-5: Digital innovation ecosystems

- RPM-EUR welcomed the "Digital trends" report as the new series of BDT, highlighting of developments at the regional level in field of ICTs.

- RPM-EUR launched the Network of Women (NoW) for the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector, paving the way for involvement in WTDC-21.

- RPM-EUR recognized that RPM-EUR was the first meeting to have a majority of women participating.

- RPM-EUR welcomed the Youth Declaration developed by the Generation Connect – Europe Youth Group as the meaningful engagement, empowerment and participation of youth in the work of the ITU.

- RPM-EUR recognized the important work of the ITU Centres of Excellence in capacity building in Europe region and noted the launch of the 2021 CoE training catalogue providing over 20 training opportunities in the field of broadband, cybersecurity and digital services.

3. ITU Office for Europe and the United Nations

ITU Office for Europe plays an essential role at the regional level advocating for strategic role ICTs play in accelerating the achievement of SDGs. Europe Office proactively contributes to regional and national coordination mechanisms while strengthening strategic partnerships with a series of UN Agencies, including FAO, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNECE, UN Women, UNESCO, UNIDO, others. Also, Europe Office leads two special task forces aiming to strengthen the UN contribution and support to the digital transformation in Europe.

3.1 UN Digital Transformation for Europe and Central Asia

Digital transformation and ICT development can be achieved through fostered multi-stakeholder cooperation and inter-agency coordination. This will occur through the engagement of multiple stakeholders in the digital sector and the exchange of best practices within the UN system. Joint actions related to information and communication technologies for achieving the SDGs should be targeted to regional needs and priorities, in the view of strengthening the implementation of cross-cutting interventions by diverse agencies operating within the UN system. The ongoing reform of the regional UN Development System offers a unique opportunity for the UN System in Europe and Central Asia to achieve the objective of improved cooperation in the digital sector.

This ambitious purpose led to the foundations for the creation of the United Nations Group on Digital Transformation for Europe and Central Asia (UN-DTG4ECA). The Group's mandate aims at facilitating cooperation between different UN agencies in the field of digital transformation. It further promotes coordinated UN support to Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda through ICTs. It strengthens information sharing on activities of the UN System in Europe and Central Asia, while providing support to the work of the Issues Based Coalitions and the Regional Knowledge Hub covering both the Europe and the Asia regions.

In March 2021 a special [stocktaking report](#) on the UN contribution to the digital transformation has been released on the occasion of a special [crosscutting session](#) held within the framework of the UN Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for UNECE Region. This living document provides a comprehensive overview of scalable initiatives and projects implemented at the national and regional level by the UN in order to advance digital transformation in the Europe and Central Asia regions. The stocktaking report has been updated on the occasion of the [UNDTG4ECA Thematic Workshop](#) held in April in the context of the WSIS Forum.

More information, including the 2021 work programmeand Stocktaking Report can be found at https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Projects/DTG/Default.aspx

In April a special working group has been established with the aim of coordinating the UN preparations for and contribution to the Western Balkans Digital Summit 2021 to be held in October 2021 in Montenegro. A series of interagency proposals have been elaborated and submitted to the steering committee. Working Group involves all UN agencies as well as UN Resident Coordinators of concerned countries.

3.2 UN Brussels Team and TaskForce on Digitalization for Sustainable Development

With the objective to strengthen its cooperation with the EU structures and collaboration on the ICT projects advancing achievement of SDGs, ITU has recently joined the UN Brussels Team (UNBT). UNBT includes 27 expressions of the UN across the development, humanitarian and political mandate, and is composed of agencies, regional offices, and departments of the Secretariat.

Considering the new overarching priorities of the European Commission, the UN Brussels Team (UNBT) created various tasks Forces, allowing the agencies to have an informed and coherent engagement. Among the different task forces, the "UN Brussels Task Force on Digitalization for the SDGs" (September 2020) is co-facilitated by ITU Office for Europe together with UNIDO and UNESCO Office in Brussels and includes about 20 UN organizations. The UN Brussels Office also supports UN-EU high-level engagement and RCs/HCs missions to Brussels.

In December/January 2021, a special executive brief on EU programming was elaborated and serves as a guiding note for discussions of all UN Resident Coordinators with the Country EU Delegations on priorities of countries in field of the digital transformation. Between January and April, TaskForce organized a series of coordination meeting with DG INTPA, DG CONNECT, EEAS, DG NEAR, UN Tech Envoy etc. Moreover, UN Brussels facilitated a series of regional coordination meetings to facilitate programming exercise of EU INTPA. Within the course of April 2021, the EU Brussels Task Force elaborates a strategic note on the value proposition of UN system for advancing implementation of the EU Strategy on the Digital "EU Digital Compass". This Strategic Note, intended to the EU (DG INTPA, DG CONNECT, EEAS, DG NEAR, DG ECHO), allowed to give a brief overview of UN's capacities

and support to partner countries on digital transformation and position the UN as an important partner when supporting third countries in advancing on the digital transformation across the world.

3.3 Cooperation with the UN Regional Development Coordination Office for Europe and Central Asia and UN Resident Coordinators / UN Country Teams

Pursuing the decision on strengthening the cooperation of ITU with the UN Sustainable Development System, ITU Office for Europe regularly coordinates its operations with the UN Development Coordination Office for Europe and Central Asia.

In addition, several steps were undertaken in order to join, as the non-resident agency, the workflow of the UN Country Teams, strengthening their capacities on digital. As of today, UN operates in nine non-EU countries, as follows: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine. Taking into account the capacity of the Europe Office, three countries, namely Albania, Montenegro, and Moldova, have been identified as the priority countries, and Georgia was added as a focus country. Support to other UN Country Teams depends on the necessity.

3.3.1 Albania

ITU joined and signed the UNCT 2021-2025 Cooperation Framework (CF) and engaged itself to provide support in a range of areas, upon the need of the UNCT in order to achieve defined priorities. Potential areas include: ICT infrastructure leading towards universal access to internet and ICT services, digital skills assessment and national strategy, digital accessibility, e-agriculture, e-health, circular economy and implementation of smart cities, ICT centric innovation ecosystem development, CSIRT, child online protection, digitization of governmental services, capacity and fostering equal opportunities for girls and women in STEM sector. ITU Office for Europe follows regular meetings of the UN Country Teams. A special session on digital transformation will be held in Q2/2021.

3.3.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the follow up to the coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator, ITU will be joining the UNCT meeting to provide an overview of its work and intended support at the country level. ITU cannot join the UNSDCF formally until its next update. However, ITU will join the joint work plan for the period 2020-2025.

3.3.3 Georgia

ITU joined the Joint Work Plan of the UNCT and takes active participations in the regular UNCT meetings. ITU is currently developing a national digital profile providing the knowledge basis to the UNCT in the context of rolling out the UN Roadmap for Digital Cooperation in Georgia.

ITU contributed to the Common Country Analysis 2021.

3.3.4 Moldova

ITU signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDCF) and takes active participations in the regular UNCT meeting. ITU is to support operations of the digital task force. ITU is currently in the process of conceptualizing intervention in the field of digital accessibility. To this end, ITU has joined the Interagency Disability Inclusion Task Force and RCO is currently identifying the possibilities for ITU to support agencies part of the UNPRPD trust fund. Other areas reported as of interest are the following: 5G implementation, regulatory field, cybersecurity.

3.3.5   Montenegro

ITU joined UN Country Team in February 2021. While operationally, ITU has already started to provide inputs to the work of the UNCT and to coordinate all operations in the country. Elaboration of a New Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework has been postponed upon the request of the Government. New timeline is still to be provided.

A series of actions are planned to be undertaken with the members of the UNCT, including those focusing on digital accessibility, child online protection, gender, connectivity.

ITU will hold a special coordination session "Digital Transformation in Montenegro" within the framework of the UNCT Retreat to be held by May/June. This session will aim to identify the key priorities related to digitalization and digitization processes in the country and the potential for collaboration among UN agencies on the digital component. Based on the 2021 Common Country Analysis, the session will focus on: ensuring resilient ICT infrastructure, digital skills, ICT Accessibility for persons with disabilities, digital inclusion, and innovation.

Moreover, ITU launched coordination with the UN Country Team to facilitate preparations towards the Western Balkans Digital Summit to be held in October in Montenegro.

3.3.6   North Macedonia

ITU joined the UN Country Team. Recently within the framework of the UNCT Retreat, ITU held a special session on Digital Transformation and Innovation, providing a platform for all UNCT members to jointly reflect and strengthen digital components in the UNCT strategy towards achieving defined 2021 priorities. Prospects for specific actions might consider eHealth, connectivity, digital accessibility, digital skills, digital inclusion (youth and gender), digitalization of all governmental services. Based on the outcome of this session, ITU proposed to hold a special webinar on digitalization to agree on the 2021 approach. Additionally, the office takes active participation in the regular UNCT meetings. Upon the request of the UNCT and RCO, ITU will hold one or several coordination meetings (upon decision of the Resident Coordinator Office) to provide guidance to the UNCT and related Results Groups in order to capture the full potential of ICTs as enabler to achieve the target set in the UNSDCF and subsequently the SDGs.

3.3.7   Serbia

ITU joined the UNCT 2021 Cooperation Framework (CF) for 2021-2025 and engaged itself to provide support in a range of areas, upon the need of the UNCT in order to achieve defined 2021 priorities. Potential areas include: circular economy and implementation of smart cities, digital agriculture transformation in the country, e-health, digital skills development for creating equal opportunities for girls and women in STEM sector, the national assessment on digital skills, capacity building to ensure access to internet for all, digital skills and digital literacy, child online protection, fostering the development of the digital innovation ecosystem, ICT infrastructure leading towards universal access to internet and ICT services, digital accessibility, and digitization of governmental services.

3.3.8   Ukraine

In the follow up to the coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator, ITU will be part of the upcoming Cooperation Framework. A special taskforce on digital will be organized at the level of UNCT. Possibly a UN

position paper might be produced in the second semester of 2021. Europe Office continues to contribute to the UNCT work and meetings.

3.3.9 Turkey

In line with the coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator, ITU Office for Europe will be providing support to the UN Country Team upon request and need. Regular briefings for the UNCT on digital transformation are going to be held.

3.4 UN Regional Forum for Sustainable Development for Europe and Central Asia, 17-18 March 2021

The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for UNECE Region is organized every year by UN Economic Commission for Europe, in close cooperation with the regional UN agencies, including ITU. In 2021 the forum took place on 17 and 18 March 2020 in a hybrid format and was preceded by virtual peer learning round tables from 10 to 16 March 2021. This yearly forum was meant to follow up on and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs – in the UNECE Region. As the UN Agency for ICTs, ITU continues to advocate for the enabling role of ICTs in achieving SDGs. More information can be found at https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2021/RFSD/Default.aspx

This year, ITU co-leaded and contributed to a series of side event and roundtables as follows:

Cross-Cutting session on Digitalization "Digital Transformation for Sustainable Development Goals in the Wake of COVID-19" on the 15th March 2021, from 10:00 to 12:30 CET, virtual.

The session covered three focus topics: ensuring universal digital inclusion, accelerating the digitalization of services, creating an enabling environment for digital trade. The Cross-Cutting session, resulting from the joint efforts of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia, constitutes an enhancing opportunity for stakeholders who directly contributed and benefited from the implementation of UN projects to share their experiences and effective best practices in the field of digital transformation for the SDGs.

Side event on gendered digital divide: Digitally Empowered Generation Equality in the wake of COVID-19

9th March 2021, 10:00-12:00 CET, virtual. This event, organized by ITU and UN Women, focused on sharing recommendations and best practices that addressed the root causes of the gendered digital divide. These recommendations and best practices were drawn from ITU and UN Women Digitally Empowered Generation Equality Report, that was launched during this session. The event also provided an overview of the current ecosystem when it comes to Women, Girls, and ICT in the context of COVID-19 in selected countries of the ITU Europe region.

Roundtable on Cluster 1 "People": Strengthening health, food and social protection systems towards COVID-19 recovery and resilience 10th March 2021, 14:00-16.00 CET, virtual. Session 1-1: Health and social protection

This session presented and discussed innovative ways on how governments have taken action to reduce the COVID burden, while aiming at sustainable development. Specifically, it focused on strengthening health governance capacities for emergency preparedness and bettering health securities and resilience building during and after COVID 19 to achieve the SDGs; strengthening social protection to avoid further impacts of emergencies; as well as strengthening intersectoral collaboration for emergency preparedness to build back better after COVID- 19.

Roundtable on Cluster 2 "Prosperity": Building back innovative, inclusive and sustainable economies and providing decent and productive jobs for all 11th March 2021, 10:00-12:00 CET, virtual. Session 2-2: The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on youth

COVID-19 impacted all segments of society, especially young people, who are disproportionately affected by the crisis. The roundtable showcased innovative governmental, youth and youth-led responses to address the challenges faced by the young people due to COVID-19. The central objective was to harness the rapid move towards digitalization to build resilient economies and communities, close the digital divide, enhance social cohesion and ensure that all young people benefit from a meaningful and inclusive digital world. In this context, a member of the Generation Connect-Europe Youth Group (GC-EUR) shared its experience of its country and of other GC-EUR Members' countries initiatives to tackle Covid-19 related issues directly affecting the youth.

3.4.1 Cross-Cutting Session on Digitalization: Digital Transformation in the Wake of COVID-19, 15 March 2021

Within the framework of the 2021 Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, ITU is leading, together with UNECE, a Cross-cutting Session on Digitalization: Digital Transformation in the Wake of COVID-19, which was held virtually on 15 March 2021 from 10:00 to 12:30 CET. The meeting benefited from English-Russian translation and captioning services.

UN agencies contributing to this session were members of the UN Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia (UNDT4ECA), which aims to strengthen the prioritization of digitalization for the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This session focused on the urgent needs of accelerating digital transformation across different sectors as an immediate response to COVID-19. It provided an opportunity for representatives of UN agencies and partners to highlight a series of actions, activities, initiatives and partnerships that advance digitalization and digitization processes in capacity building and skills development, health, trade, agriculture, governance, and urbanization, among others. The session also highlighted the importance of meaningful connectivity, equal access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), as well as digital skills and literacy amongst different groups of society.

Overall, this session aimed to promote the coordinated approach of UN agencies to support Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda through ICTs. In particular, the session had a cross-cutting character and targeted all SDGs of the 2021 focus, namely: SDG 1, "No poverty"; SDG 2, "Zero Hunger"; SDG 3, "Good health and well-being"; SDG 4, "Quality education"; SDG 8, "Decent work and Economic growth"; SDG 9, "Industry, innovation and infrastructure"; SDG 10, "Reduced inequalities"; SDG 12, "Responsible consumption and production"; SDG 13, "Climate action"; and SDG 17, "Partnerships for the goals".

Focus areas:

- Bridging digital divides in the time of COVID-19, ensuring universal meaningful connectivity across Europe and Central Europe.

- Developing digital skills and building human capacities to match the needs of gigabit society, thus empowering different groups of society, strengthening employability, and creating new job opportunities.

- Ensuring the participation of girls and women in ICT and its dynamics, and women's participation in the digital world; with a special focus on the repercussions of COVID-19 for women and girls in ICTs.

- Creating a safe and empowering cyberspace for children and youth through capacity building, skills development and the adoption of a multi-stakeholder approach to address the new challenges related to the current global pandemic.

- Highlighting the emerging role of ICTs as an engine for agriculture development in Europe and Central Asia, as well as pathways to ensure coordination amongst stakeholders and best practices to be scaled-up across the regions.

- Spotlighting the importance of new technologies to support trade and trade facilitation for more resilient and responsive economies in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Strengthening sustainable trade through ICTs to promote inclusive, transparent, and traceable value chains that foster responsible consumer choice, eco-design, planning, recycling processes, and effective waste prevention and management.

- Underscoring the importance of ICTs in pursuing trade-related environmental objectives, including fighting illegal, underreported, and unregulated fishing and the illegal trade of CITES-protected species, promoting the sound management of hazardous waste, and reducing food waste.

- Strengthening national capacities in implementing mobile health in the European region, with a special focus on the development of solutions to manage the COVID-19 outbreak.

- Strengthening the ICT´s contribution in making cities smarter, more sustainable, and more resilient in time of the pandemic.

3.5   ITU Office for Europe and the World Summit on the Information Society Forum

ITU Office for Europe continues to proactively contribute to the WSIS Process. Both regional contests (Innovative Digital Solutions for Accessible Europe and Digital Excellence in Agriculture) have been designed in the way to create synergies with the ongoing WSIS Stocktaking/Prizes. A special publication on ICT Projects and WSIS Action Line Related Activities in Europe was prepared and released at the Regional Preparatory Meeting. In addition Europe Office facilitated two special sessions within the framework of the WSIS Forum 2021, as follows:

3.5.1   ICTs for Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Societies and Economies (WSIS Action Lines for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals) – Europe Region

Focusing on the Europe region, this thematic workshop held on the 16 April 2021 aimed to draw attention to the ongoing efforts of ITU and its partners in implementing the ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe, whose objectives are directly linked to the WSIS Action Lines and the 17   UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, achieved results effectively contribute to both WSIS and SDG processes. The workshop presented a series of flagship actions undertaken recently by the ITU Office for Europe in the areas of Connectivity,

Digital Skills, Child Online Protection, Digital Accessibility and Digital Services through the presentation of a series of country-based case studies and best practices.

Learn more about the workshop: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/Agenda/Session/307

3.5.2 UNDTG4ECA: Driving the WSIS Action Lines to foster digital transformation in Europe and Central Asia

This thematic workshop held on the 26 April 2021 was organized by the United Nations Digital Transformation Group for Europe and Central Asia (UNDTG4ECA), and facilitated by ITU and UNECE, co-leader of the group. The UNDTG4ECA is a multiagency platform facilitating coordination of the efforts of the UN system in accelerating digital transformation across the regions to achieve the SDGs. This workshop built upon the Cross-Cutting Session on Digitalization, held within the framework of the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, where increasing multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral and inter-agency coordination at national and regional levels has been recognized as key to capture the enabling potential of ICTs in achieving the SDGs. Through interactive panel discussions and the participation of multiple representatives of UN agencies, the workshop drew attention to projects, initiatives and efforts aiming at advancing implementation of the WSIS Actions Lines. This workshop also provided a platform for multi-stakeholder discussion on challenges and opportunities identified at the national/regional level. Each of UN agency had the opportunity to draw attention to the flagship initiative advancing digital transformation.

Learn more about the workshop: https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2021/Agenda/Session/308

4. ITU Regional Initiatives for Europe 2021

The following presents all activities planned or carried out during the period of January to April 2021. Activities are presented per Regional Initiative and in a chronological order.

4.1   EUR1: Broadband infrastructure, broadcasting and spectrum management

4.1.1 Technical Assistance to Albania on Frequency Planning

The technical assistance to Albania supported the country in the elaboration of a new frequency plan that would enable interference-free de-allocation of the 700 MHz band from broadcasting to mobile communications. The assistance was carried out in the form of twinning with the National Media and Infocommunications Authority of Hungary over a period of three months.
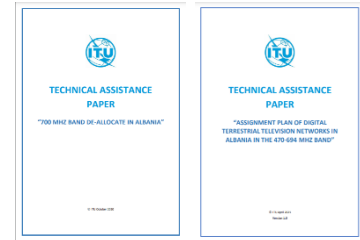
As part of the activity closure, it was agreed with the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure of Albania to hold a national workshop on 13 April 2021, organized with the support of the ITU Office for Europe. This workshop was aimed at raising awareness at the national level with regards to the importance of coordinated and detailed frequency planning. It showcased the work undertaken over the past 6 months to elaborate a frequency plan for Albania aimed at freeing up of DD2 in line with the Radio Regulations agreed at WRC-19.

Beyond providing an overview of the plan and its relevance for the country, the workshop also addressed the perspective of different stakeholders involved in the elaboration process at the national level, including AMA, MIE, and AKEP, which discussed how the plan will enable progress in the respective areas of competence and mark a step forward from the previous status quo.

The workshop featured the perspectives of the supporting agency in the technical assistance project, NMHH of Hungary, which will provide further recommendations and key areas of focus for the future. Finally, participants also benefited of intervention of the ITU on the wider WRC process and developments affecting frequency planning and coordination.

The workshop was targeted at all interested stakeholders at the country level, representatives of industry, and academia, who had dedicated space to intervene with questions and comments.

4.1.2 Technical Assistance to Montenegro on IPv6

The technical assistance to Montenegro on IPv6 is focused on equipping the country with the necessary equipment, technical knowledge, and strategic approach to IPv6, thereby enabling the transition from IPv4 to IPv6.

The Assistance is composed of three main pillars, a national workshop for policymakers to be held on 20-21 April 2021 and a Training of national experts to be held on the week commencing the 10th of May 2021 and the Strategic plan to establish an IPv6 Laboratory at the country level.

National Workshop

This workshop was aimed at raising awareness at the national level with regards to the transition from IPv4 to IPv6. It showcased the work of the ITU undertaken over the past years and brief policymakers on the importance of this activity.

Beyond providing an overview of IPv6 and its relevance for the country, the workshop also addressed the main technical challenges foreseen for a successful implementation of IPv6 at the national level and elaborate on the strategic approach needed among key players to make this step forward.

The workshop also presented the steps ITU and EKIP are taking to initiate the transition to IPv6 and presented the forthcoming training of experts that will be held in the month of May. The workshop is targeted at all main policymakers at the country level, but also at representatives of industry, and academia, who will have dedicated space to intervene with questions and comments.

Training of Experts

The training of experts aims at training around 25 experts in the countries with the in-country support of EKIP. This will entail 5 days of training with 4 hours of practical training per day during May 2021. The training will also be delivered with the support of MUST University of Malaysia, building upon previous technical assistances delivered by the ITU.

Establishment of the IPv6 Laboratory

Based on the Strategic plan to establish the IPv6 Laboratory in the country, ITU will support the development of the laboratory with the purchase of the needed equipment. The laboratory will support the country in developing capacity and train experts at the national level.

4.1.3 Memorandum of Cooperation on ITU Interactive Transmission Maps with Ukraine

As part of the project on ITU Interactive Transmission Maps aimed at gathering data on global backbone networks, ITU and the Ministry of Digital Transformation of the Government of Ukraine signed a Memorandum of Cooperation. According to the MoC, the two organisations will strengthen cooperation in the field of mapping and the Ukraine will support the ITU collection, validation and transferring data on backbone networks at the national level to the ITU. The MoC is the last of a series of Letters of Engagement (LoEs) which institutionalized cooperation with a number of administrations in charge of broadband mapping at the country level, including Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia, with more in the pipeline for 2021.

4.1.4 Collaborative Regulation Case Studies: Romania and Moldova

The Regulatory and Market Environment Division of BDT has launched a series of country case studies on regulatory and institutional frameworks and collaborative governance in selected countries from

different regions. The case studies will highlight diverse experiences and different policy and regulatory patterns in order to explore the challenges, new ideas and lessons learnt by regulators on the path towards collaborative regulation. The case studies will also focus on developing a better understanding of the role and impact of collaboration and collaborative governance, and the use of new tools for regulating ICT markets.

The case studies are being developed based on a four-fold methodology based on the following components:

1. Questionnaire on fifth generation regulation (G5 Benchmark)
2. Interviews with key national stakeholders
3. Case study narrative
4. High level policy brief

The library of case studies will be launched at GSR-21 and featured on the ITU website. The findings and insights generated during the process will be integrated into a global project on the transition to collaborative regulation, to be released at WTDC-21. The individual case studies will also be leveraged in other ITU and partner initiatives.

As part of the initiative, the ITU Office for Europe identified Moldova and Romania as countries where to conduct the first case studies in the region. Within this context, two national workshops are being organized together with the respective NRAs to present the case studies at the national level and engage the wider audience of institutions and stakeholders involved in ICT regulation.

- National workshop for Moldova – "Towards GSR-21: the road to collaborative regulation", 27 May 2021;
- National workshop for Romania – "Towards GSR-21: the road to collaborative regulation", 3 June 2021.

4.1.5 Regional Assessment on EMF and Risk Communication Challenges

During several initiatives organized in 2020 on the topics of 5G and spectrum management, the issue of EMF emerged of primary importance. In response to national and regional stakeholders' concerns about the issue, and in response to the increasing attention attracted in Europe region, the ITU Office for Europe designed a Regional Assessment on "EMF limit levels and risk communication challenges in Europe" that prompted ICT Ministries or Regulatory Authorities in charge of EMF to respond to a questionnaire.

The questionnaire included 14 questions distributed in 5 main areas including:

1) EMF national regulation
2) Approval procedures prior to building / planning permission
3) Measurement of EMF
4) Acceptability by the public
5) Risk Communication

31 institutions from 29 countries responded to the questionnaire and provided the basis for the elaboration of the Executive Report – ITU Regional Assessment for Europe on EMF limit levels and risk communication challenges" which contains 5 recommendations relating to the 5 areas of the questionnaire. . The report also serves as a reference point for the wider stakeholder community in Europe during future capacity building initiatives undertaken by the ITU Office for Europe and beyond.
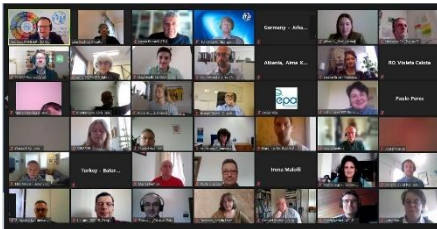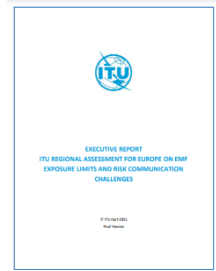
The Executive report wa been presented during a 2 hour operational meeting held on 27 April 2021 featuring representatives of ICNIRP and WHO as well as the focal points and relevant institutions from over 25 countries. The presentation was followed by an interactive discussion with participants to identify remaining gaps and the way forward for capacity building initiatives undertaken by the ITU Office for Europe, and possible technical assistances on this matter.

The report also complements the Report on "Implementing 5G For Good: Do Emfs Matter?" launched in October 2020 and which is now for publication as ITU report.

4.1.6 ITU Regional Forum for Europe on Meaningful Connectivity, 8-9 March 2021, Virtual

The ITU Regional Forum for Europe on Meaningful Connectivity was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with the support of Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia. Originally planned in Ljubljana, Slovenia, the Forum took place virtually from 8-9 March 2021. The Forum was held as a follow up to 2020 activities aimed at capacity building and advancing the connectivity agenda in Europe region, including the ITU Regional Regulatory Forum for Europe and the ITU Regional forum for Europe on 5G strategies, policies and implementation. Moreover, the event was held in follow up to the Global Symposium for Regulators 2020 (GSR-20) and

the GSR-20 Best Practice Guidelines and the GSR-20 Regional Regulatory Roundtable Discussion for Europe and CIS.

It provided a unique opportunity for dialogue between stakeholders on strategies and policies aimed at connecting the unconnected and at ensuring that connectivity is leveraged meaningfully, thereby contributing to social and economic development and accelerating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Forum focuse on:

- The Digital Divide in Europe: Ensuring meaningful and inclusive connectivity

- Connecting Rural Areas in Europe: Regional and national approaches

- Use of ICTs in Public institutions: A focus on connecting schools

- Fostering Digital Skills development: Supporting demand creation for connectivity.

The outcomes of this Forum contributed to the work of ITU, including the activities undertaken by the Study Group of the Development Sector, as well as other initiatives undertaken in line with the UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation. Moreover, the outcomes of this forum are relevant for ITU's workstreams relating to the following projects:

- ITU Interactive Transmission Maps

- Giga – Connecting every school to the Internet

The Regional Forum for Europe brought together around 140 attendees including European policymakers, government officials, international organizations, business leaders, industry experts and academia.

4.1.7 Special Training for Europe on "ICT Infrastructure Business Planning", 15 March – 14 May 2021 (Online, instructor led)

The Special Training for Europe on ICT Infrastructure Business Planning was organized by ITU Regional Forum for Europe with the support of the Telecommunication Networks and Spectrum Management Division (TNS), the Regulatory and Market Environment Division (RME) and the Capacity and Digital Skills Development Division (CDS) of the Telecommunication Development Bureau.

The Training on ICT Infrastructure Business Planning offeredmore than 30 regulators, policymakers, and stakeholders from 14 countries a practical approach for the accurate economic evaluation of broadband infrastructure installation and deployment plans in urban and rural areas. This will support the countries in the planning and implementation of broadband projects, thereby contributing to social and economic development and accelerating the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition to the course, some participants attended the Clinic, a three week hands on training on a specific project of choice. 6 projects were presented at the concluding meeting of this activity.

The expert guidance offered in this course is based on the ITU ICT Infrastructure Business Planning Toolkit and has the aim at facilitating the development of a credible and coherent business plan adaptable to a wide range of broadband infrastructure deployment projects. The main objective of this hands-on training is to build knowledge and skills of participants on the principles of business planning and practicing it, in the context of supporting policy and regulatory decision-making on infrastructure development. It will discuss on the main aspects related to the theme, such as: estimation of demand, expected revenues and operational costs, definition of parameters related to investments and definitions related to the Weighted Average Cost of Capital (WACC) and finally, calculation of the Net Present Value (NPV). There is also a specific section aimed at identifying public mechanisms for financing ICT infrastructure projects.

4.1.8 Publications

Two papers have been completed and will be published in the second quarter for this regional priority, namely:

- **5G implementation in non-EU countries of Europe region**
- **Implementing 5G for Good: Do EMFs matter?**

Beyond the Regional Assessment on "EMF limit levels and risk communication challenges in Europe", other two reports have been drafted and will undergo the usual ITU validation as well as validation with the countries and other stakeholders. These include:

- **Connectivity in Education: Status and recent developments in 9 non-EU countries**
- **The Status of Connectivity in 9 non-EU countries of Europe region**

The two papers are published as "living documents" until final versions will be elaborated. ITU Office for Europe is in discussion with UNICEF to achieve a joint

publication of the report on "Connectivity in Education: Status and recent developments in 9 non EU countries" with expected timeline for publication set for September 2021.

4.1.9 ITU Global Symposium for Regulators Plus (GSR+): Regional Regulatory Roundable for Europe and Africa, 14 April 2021

The ITU GSR-21 Regional Regulatory Roundtable for Europe and Africa was organized on 14 April 2021 within the framework of GSR-21, and engaged more than 550 interested stakeholders. The roundtable was aimed in particular at representatives of the National Regulatory Authorities from Europe and Africa regions, as

well as other stakeholders to advance discussions on regulation for digital transformation aimed at accelerating inclusive connectivity, access and use.

Special focus was be dedicated to the role of NRAs in shaping an enabling environment for the development of resilient digital connectivity for all. The discussion also touched upon collaborative regulation, facilitating investment in broadband networks and strengthening interregional cooperation between Europe and Africa regions.

In addition, the meeting featured a dedicated session on Collaborative Regulation which showcased and provided the space for discussion on the work being carried out with the country case studies in both Europe and Africa regions. The meeting also saw a special session informing delegates on the process that will lead towards the elaboration of the GSR Best Practice Guidelines, being an outcome document of the Global Symposium for Regulators scheduled for the end of June 2021.

4.1.10 Elaboration of European Mapping Guidelines

In the context of the ITU Regional Regulatory Forum for Europe on Regulation Supporting Digital Transformation, held virtually on 30th November and 1st December 2020, two background papers were produced on the following topics:

1. Broadband Mapping Systems in Europe and Regional Harmonization Initiatives
2. Infrastructure sharing and co-deployment in Europe: good practices based on collaborative regulation

The first paper outlining the European Union's regulatory framework on broadband mapping attracted stakeholders' attention, particularly from those countries in South Eastern Europe which are seeking to frame regulations and technical systems for broadband mapping on those of the European Union.

For this reason, the ITU Office for Europe is currently strengthening this paper by elaborating European Mapping Guidelines. The Guidelines will not only consolidate the strategic, institutional and policy requirements of efficient broadband mapping, but also guide on the design and implementation of projects aimed at constructing technical systems at the country level. In doing so, the Guidelines aim at setting clear steps required for a successful implementation of broadband mapping systems from all angles, to be used in non-EU countries and other countries seeking to mirror, to some degree, the European experience.

This exercise is carried out in close coordination with European Commission, BEREC, EaPeReg, World Bank and benefits from the support of UKE, AKOS, and others NRAs.

4.1.11 (forthcoming) ITU-EKIP Regional Regulatory Forum for Europe, 27-28 September 2021

In follow up to previous editions [2019 ; 2020] of this event, ITU is partnering with the Agency for Electronic Communications and Postal Services (EKIP) of Montenegro, to organize the Regulatory Forum, a point of reference for the Western Balkans, Suth Eastern Europe and beyond, for ICT regulatory matters. More information will be made available soon.

4.1.12 (forthcoming) ITU Regional Forum on the Future of Television for Europe, 19 November 2021

In follow up to past workstreams on broadcasting and television [2018 ; 2019], the ITU will organise a regional forum together with TSB and ETSI to advance the discussion in the region on the latest policy, technical and market developments in the field. More information will be made available soon.

4.2 EUR2: A citizen-centric approach to building services for national administrations

E-agiculture

4.2.1 Excellence in Digtial Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia

The ITU-FAO Study on the Status of Digital Agriculture in 18 countries Europe and Central Asia highlighted the need for coordination among stakeholders, as the use of ICTs in agriculture has spawned a consistent wave of innovation. Following this observation and as an integral part of this cooperation, in November ITU and FAO launched a call for good practices in the field of digital agriculture.

This call aims at overcoming the various challenges of sustainable and resilient food systems. In accordance with the core principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this call aims at closing the digital, rural and gender divides, known as the triple divide, in order to include all members of society in this unprecedented transition.

Call resulted in receiving almost **200 digital solutions** advancing digitalization of agriculture in Europe and Central Asia. Identified good practices constitute the basis for the Stocktaking Report to be launched in April 2021.

Submitted practices are being currently evaluated by a special committee that will identify set of projects and initiatives to be awarded with a special recognition of Excellence in Digital Agriculture.

The awarding ceremony, providing special recognition to winning practices, will take place on 23 June 2021, within the framework of the Digital Innovation Forum for Europe 2021.

4.2.2 Technical Assistance to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey in the development of the Digital Agriculture Strategies

Building upon the outcomes of the „ITU-FAO study on the Status of Digital Agriculture in 18 countries of Europe and Central Asia" ITU continues supportting FAO in providing technical assistance to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey.

4.2.3 Development of the Guide for EU Accession Countries on the Digital Agriculture Development

With the aim of acceleration of the implementation of digital agriculture and providing support to the EU Accession Countries a special guide has been developed in partnership with FAO and upon consultation with the European Commission. Upon finalization the Guide will be launched in April/May 2021 to provide necessary foundation for the technical assistance to be provided to the countries in need, facilitating their process of alignment of the national policies, strategies and regulations with the EU standards.

4.2.4 m-Health Knowledge and Innovation Hub for Europe (ITU-WHO- Andalusian Public Health Service (SSPA/FPS) – Project funded by European Union

mHealth Innovation and Knowledge Hub is a project funded by the European Union ("EU") through the Horizon 2020 program, with a total funding of 3 million Euros. The European m-Health Hub is intended to serve as a mechanism to share success in mHealth across the European region and boost uptake of mHealth solutions amongst national governments. At a high level, the mHealth Hub will provide services in areas of operational research, training and education, identifying standards, regulatory and policy goals, and implementation support. It will have a dual focus on knowledge management & innovation, and on practical implementation.

Andalusian Public Health Service (SSPA/FPS) has been identified as the stakeholder in charge of establishment and management of the Hub. The Consortium consists of 20 partners from 12 EU countries, representing both the public and private sector. Implementation of the European mHealth Knowledge and Innovation Hub began in February 2020.

A series of activities have been carried out since February 2020. The first face-to-face workshop to kick off Hub activities took place at the ITU HQ in Geneva between 17-19 February. The Hub's website and Social Media Channels were established and a series of outreach activities have been carried out and synergies with existing operations frameworks have been launched, including EC, eHealth Network, eHAction, CEN/ISO, Technical lab & others. Mechanisms for attracting additional funds have been defined. Special efforts were dedicated to engage countries.

In March 2020, a special call for the expression of interest was sent out to countries inviting Member States, regional authorities and public health organizations to take an active role in the operationalization of the Hub and become a catalyst for the deployment of mobile digital health innovations in European countries and beyond. Expressions of interest from 10 countries have been received, including the following: Iceland, Montenegro, Poland, North Macedonia, Czech Republic, Turkey, Croatia, Spain, Moldova, Norway. The implementation support work and collaboration with these countries is channelled to achieve the Hub objectives aligned to COVID-19 goals.

The Hub has received the expressions of commitment on engagement from the following countries: Hungary, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Austria and Turkey. Other countries that have shown an interest in engaging include Croatia and Poland. In the context of the integration of mHealth into health systems, a series of national or regional initiatives have been gathered from the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Montenegro, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.   In the context of COVID-19 a compilation of public and private initiatives in Europe using digital and mobile applications has been established.

Last 28th January, the European Innovation and Knowledge mHealth Hub launched the series **Hub Talks 2021, a dialogue organised together with WHO, ITU and the European Commission**, to discuss on different mHealth aspects.

This first webinar focussed on the **integration of mHealth into health systems**, with the participation of experts from different countries, like Estonia, Germany and Austria, that shared diverse experiences. The event was well received by the public and more than 90 people attended and participated in the discussion generated.

Few Technical Papers providing an overview at country level on Policies related to mHealth have been produced as a result of fast tracking approach taken in response to COVID-19.

> ➤ "[Case Study: Overview of mHealth Policies in Portugal](#)"
> ➤ "[Case Study: Overview of Policies in Enabling Digital Health in Austria](#)"
> ➤ "[Case Study: Overview of mHealth Policies in Italy](#)"

In 2021 the Hub continues to offer:

- Knowledge library of success factors, initiatives, solutions and evaluation evidence
- Networking resources
- Expertise resources in the form of Personalised advice and consultancy, recommendations and assessments on key mHealth aspects or Training courses offered by Hub experts
- Catalogues of Health solution suppliers, testimonies, B2B and B2C connections

The Hub Consortium invites Member States, regional authorities, institutions or public health organizations to:

- Take an active role in the operationalization of the Hub and become a catalyst for the deployment of mobile digital health innovations in European countries and beyond.
- Collaborate with the Hub to support countries and regions in setting up large-scale mHealth programs.
- Replicate these collaboration models to support other countries and regions in the future.
- Bring in interested parties who wish to contribute to the capacity building and the operationalization of the Hub.
- Share with us any experiences related to the development and adoption of large scale national mHealth programs.

More information is available on the project's [webpage.](#)

4.2.5 Digital Transformation and digitalization of government services for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals: Initiative by ITU, Estonia, Germany and DIAL

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia (MFA Estonia), the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany (BMZ), and the Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL) at the UN Foundation are collaborating to accelerate digital transformation and digitalization of government services for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly in low-resource settings. The collaboration aims at establishing a global high-level framework for digital government cooperation to assist countries in learning and implementing scalable digital services and applications in a cost efficient, accelerated and integrated manner and that are built applying best software development principles and best countries' experiences and practices.

A related project between ITU and Estonia and with a value of 400'000 Euros was signed in December 2020 and project kicked off in January. It complements other works of the consortium financed by Germany and DIAL.

In 2021, the necessary steps have been undertaken towards the development of a "Reference Digital Government Platform" as a "Digital Public Good" based on reusable, standards-based, secure and interoperable building blocks available to the whole-of-Government agencies to build and deploy their digital services and applications. This will reduce the time and effort needed to introduce new digital services and will allow digital services to be scale up and upgraded in a more agile and cost-effective manner. This will facilitate also delivering solutions that best meet citizens' needs who expect to have a seamless, consistent and connected experience across the spectrum of government digital services wherever they are and regardless of their income or literacy levels.

The collaboration implements the following steps:

- Development of Building Blocks (e.g., Identification/authentication, registries, security, information exchange, payments services, etc.) requirements based on selected SDG Use Cases and common experiences across countries
- Development of a Blueprint of a "Digital Government Platform Reference Implementation"
- Implement a "Digital Government Platform Reference implementation Proof-of-Concept (PoC)"
- Leveraging of the Reference Implementation for learning and possible country replication and adoption
- Expansion of the Reference Implementation to include additional Building Blocks and to be self-sustainable.

More information is available on the project's [webpage](#).

4.2.6 Special sessions on "GOVSTACK: Scalable e-Government Solutions for Developing countries" within the framework of WSIS Forum 2021 (19 May) and ITU Emerging Technologies Week, (5 July)

Digital government services are vital for developing a digital economy that benefits all citizens by expanding access to critical services such as health, education and social protection. Countries seeking to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the next ten years are increasingly looking to national digital strategies and agendas to transform the way they do business and improve the lives of their citizens.

A "Whole-of-Government" platform approach to developing government services through the reuse and minimal customization of quick and easy to adopt building blocks is at the heart of the success of digital government services projects. Open-source models for a government platform that is built from modular and reusable components, leveraging a secure and standards-based approach, are an optimal solution to solving these issues in a cost-efficient and scalable manner.

Special sessions on "GOVSTACK: Scalable e-Government Solutions for Developing countries" will be held within the framework of WSIS Forum 2021 (19 May) and ITU Emerging Technologies Week, (5 July).

These sessions will provide a stage to gather, present and discuss best practices in this area and discuss the main challenges to implementation in Europe, and beyond, including Developing countries, LDCs, SIDs and LLDCs.

4.3 EUR3: Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development

Digital Accessibility

4.3.1 How to ensure inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations (on-line self-paced training), 1 January to 31 December 2021

This self-paced online course on inclusive digital communication during crises and emergency situations has been developed in response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic. It is in line with, and in support to the UN Secretary General Policy on Disability Inclusion and the BDT work in ICT/digital accessibility to ensure digital inclusion. It comprises one module and aims to provide direction and practical guidance on how to develop and deliver inclusive digital communication during times of crisis or emergency. This course is an introduction to inclusive digital communication. It highlights the importance of delivering accessible digital information and communication across a range of digital

platforms, and in multiple formats. It focuses on the importance of incorporating ICT accessibility when developing contingency and national emergency telecommunication plans at local, regional, and national levels. ICT accessibility not only addresses the needs of persons with disabilities, but it also ensures vital information and communication can be accessed, understood, and used other persons including those with specific needs, older citizens, women, girls, refugees, and migrants. It is estimated this course will take approximately one and a half hours (1.5hrs) to complete.

A completion certificate will be awarded by the ITU Academy upon successful validation of the learner's knowledge. Target audience This course is recommended for all personnel working in public communications. It is also recommended for personnel who are called upon to provide emergency information. Goals The goal of this knowledge resource is to strengthen ITU Members and stakeholder's capacity on the topic of inclusive digital communication. This resource also aims to build capacity in terms of ensuring vital information, products and services are developed and delivered in accessible and multiple formats. This will ensure the inclusion of all persons, including those with disabilities.

More information: https://academy.itu.int/index.php/training-courses/full-catalogue/how-ensure-inclusive-digital-communication-during-crises-and-emergency-situations

4.3.2 Web Accessibility - The cornerstone of digital society (on-line self-paced training), 1 January to 31 December 2021

This on-line certificate based self-paced training course, Web Accessibility: The cornerstone of an Inclusive Digital Society is composed of 3 modules: - Module 1: Executive tools for developing a web accessibility policy - Module 2: Essentials of implementing a web accessibility evaluation - Module 3: Technical skills for designing and developing accessible websites. The learner will develop an overall understanding of the main issues relating to web accessibility, including web accessibility policy development, the creation of accessible digital content, the evaluation of level of accessibility of the websites, principles related to the design and development of accessible websites and maintenance of accessible websites, in line with the international standards related to web accessibility.

More information: https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/web-accessibility-cornerstone-digital-societyon-line-self-paced-training

4.3.3 ICT Accessibility: the key to inclusive communication (on-line self-paced training), 1 January to 31 December 2021

This free of charge self-paced course has been designed to be accessible for everyone including by persons with disabilities. To access the course, you should previously register in ITU Academy. The course, estimated to about 8h, provides a holistic knowledge on the topic of ICT accessibility through 3 Modules as follows: 1) Module 1: Enabling communication for all through ICT Accessibility. This module aims to provide learners with an introduction to ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities. It an overview of the global Digital Inclusion policy agenda that requires persons with disabilities can access and use mainstream ICTs on an equal basis with others and are consequently enabled to participate fully in society. It describes the legal, economic and social imperative for making everyday

ICTs more accessible and describes many of the main accessibility features available in technology today that benefit persons with disabilities, older people and others. 2) Module 2: ICT Accessibility policy regulations and standards. This module aims to provide learners with a knowledge and understanding of policies and laws from around the world that support ICT accessibility, the role and development of international ICT standards that specify in detail accessibility features and functions for everyday ICTs, and how public procurement is being leveraged to encourage innovation and improve the quality, availability and affordability of accessible ICTs. 3) Module 3: Achieving ICT accessibility through public procurement. This module aims to assist learners specify accessibility for persons with disabilities in the public procurement of everyday ICT products and services such as websites and computers, address accessibility during the main stages of the public procurement process, and to ensure the procured ICTs conform with the required accessibility standards.

The course's modules aim to provide learners with an introduction to ICT accessibility, on overview of relevant ICT accessibility standards, regulation and policy and practical advice on the public procurement of accessible ICTs. The successful validation of the knowledge achieved as a result of this course completion led to an ITU certificate.

More information: https://academy.itu.int/training-courses/full-catalogue/ict-accessibility-key-inclusive-communication-line-self-paced-training

4.3.4 Special session on Fostering Digital Innovation Ecosystem for Accessible Europe – part of Zero Project Conference 2021, 10 February 2021

ITU facilitated a Special Session on "Fostering Digital Innovation Ecosystem for Accessible Europe", which was held virtually as a co-conferencing session (Channel 3) of the Zero Project Conference 2021, on 10 February 2021 from 17:00 to 18:00 CET. This session was held within the framework of the Accessible Europe initiative, more precisely its work stream on fostering of the ICT centric innovation ecosystem and "Regional Competition for Innovative Digital Solutions for an Accessible Europe 2021".

Five European innovators presented their innovative solutions and joined this interactive panel discussion to explore what is needed to further strengthen the ecosystem supporting the development of the ICT accessibility innovations. It also explored and covered the types of issues, solutions and challenges these organizations faced when starting up, adhering to this year's conference theme of ICT & Employment to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced in developing Accessible ICT solutions. This event benefitted from International Sign Language interpretation and live captioning.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2021/ZeroCon/Default.aspx

4.3.5 Accessible Europe 2021, 23-25 March 2021

Accessible Europe: ICT for ALL was organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the European Commission, and hosted by the Government of Portugal in the context of the 2021 Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The event took place virtually from 23 – 25 March 2021 and was held within the framework of the ITU European Regional Initiative on "Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development", adopted by the ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference 2017 (WTDC-17).

Accessible Europe was held virtually, attracted more than 240 participants from over 40 countries, representing around 100 organizations from Europe and beyond. Hosted virtually by the Government of Portugal, the event saw over 1300 stakeholders following live streams online and engaging actively with #AccessibleEurope on social media. Almost 50 expert speakers and moderators, sharing the virtual stage across 8 sessions, identified priority actions to advance the ICT accessibility agenda in Europe. A total of 97 individual interventions, ranging from high-level speeches to expert presentations and innovation pitches, contributed to the proceedings. Captioning and interpretation in both International Sign Language and Portuguese Sign Language were provided throughout the entirety of the event. Here are the links to the full agenda for this event, the link to the presentations, the link to the full event webpage, and the link to the recorded live stream.
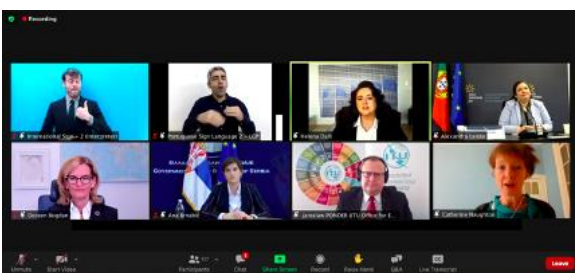
This event showcased the "ICT Accessibility assessment for the Europe region" (the link to download the report), which is designed to provide ITU members and stakeholders from the ITU Europe region with a holistic view of ICT accessibility requirements and of the implementation status of ICT accessibility laws, regulations, policies and institutional frameworks across the 46 countries of Europe region. It also serves to provide advice to policy-makers and stakeholders throughout the region in the form of good practices and recommendations.

It was identified that accessibility gaps remain between and within member states of the Europe region, and while COVID-19 did not cause access barriers to digital technologies, it has served to exacerbate them. For example, countries with higher accessibility standards were better equipped to enable all—regardless of ability levels—to continue activities in the transition to telework and

distanced education necessitated by the pandemic. It has now become urgent for governments, civil societies, multilateral agencies, and private sector partners to work in unison towards the full accessibility of all areas of the digital world—from eGovernance services to private sector online enterprise—thus harnessing the digital transformation and the enabling power of ICTs toward a more equal, just, and secure future for all.

Concrete initiatives and good practices were shared in ensuring accessibility for individuals, schools, private-sector enterprises, and public-sector administrations. Speakers called for establishing multistakeholder strategies that are translated into action and the creation of long-term, sustainable solutions to achieve fully accessible digital services and opportunities for every individual, regardless of different abilities.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2020/AE21/default.aspx

4.3.6 The Regional Competition for Innovative Digital Solutions for Accessible Europe

ITU is holding the third edition of the Regional Competition for Innovative Digital Solutions for an Accessible Europe – a competition aimed at promoting the development of innovative and creative digital solutions to benefit persons with disabilities (PwD), bringing more social inclusion and interaction, comfort and quality of life to their daily routine through mobile technologies. ICTs have a vital role for ALL people's empowerment and represent an enabler for an inclusive society. For Persons with Disabilities (PwD), ICTs are essential barrier removers which help them live an independent life, participate in cultural events or political processes, benefit from education or entertainment, or obtain a job.

Therefore, it is crucial to join efforts at an institutional and international level to identify and remove accessibility barriers to enable human development and social inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) – and promote innovative solutions that leverage the opportunities of ICT to foster equal inclusion of all and reduce the digital divide, particularly for Persons with Disabilities, enabling them to participate in and benefit from the Information and Knowledge Society.

The Regional Competition for Innovative Digital Solutions for an Accessible Europe promotes the goals and objectives of ITU, as well as Sustainable Development Goals, in the specific context of

Europe. The competition aims at fostering the research and development of new digital solutions which seek to bring more social inclusion and interaction as well as comfort and quality of life to the daily routine of persons with disabilities, in line with SDG 10 (reduced inequality). Simultaneously, it aims at fostering the innovation ecosystem with a focus on ICT Accessibility, in line with SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure).

The call for Regional Competition for Accessible Europe has now closed. We are pleased to announce we have received **97 submissions from 29 countries across Europe**. The Evaluation Phase has taken place until 24 February 2021, when shortlisted 15 finalists have been announced and presented their solutions at the **ITU-EC Forum for Europe "Accessible Europe: ICT for ALL".** i The identified finalists and five winners, which have been awarded with special recognition of Accessible Europe, are as follows:

- Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing: Visualfy (winner), SignLab, and World In Sign EU GmbH
- Persons with visual impairment: RemmedVR (winner), Project Ray and Feelif
- Persons with speech impairment: Voiceitt (winner), APP-SEC-NETWORK and Pictogram
- Persons with cognitive and intellectual disabilities: Tu Dortmund University (winner), Capito App and Claro Software
- Persons with physical disabilities: Magicview (winner), Travaxy and Lifetool

All winners would be included in the ITU Smart Incubator's capacity building program, becoming active participants in the policy discourse, standardization, and programming processes of ITU. Moreover, all finalists, providing innovative digital solutions for Accessible Europe, will benefit from the Curation Programme where ITU and its partners will actively promoting and connect innovators to its network.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2020/AE21/Regional-Assessment.aspx

4.3.7 Curation Programme for Accessible Europe Innovators

ITU is joining forces with the Zero Project of the Essl Foundation, in order to launch an initiative, which aims to build a supportive ecosystem for digital innovation in accessibility and to strengthen a special digital centric innovation ecosystem for Accessible Europe. Through this initiative, ITU and the Zero Project will work closely with start-ups and SMEs, and other relevant stakeholders to enhance regional cooperation in Europe, and engagement in the innovation ecosystem for Accessible Europe.

As the first step of this initiative, ITU and Essl Foundation will hold an open consultation webinar,

which will be held virtually on Monday, May 10, 2021, with select innovators from the Regional Competition for Accessible Europe and select Zero Project Awardees. On this occasion both organizations will seek to gather information and better understand the current needs of innovators, thus, directly informing, designing, and inspiring the initiative's key activities and formats. As a result, the initiative aims to offer a direct added value–by and for–accessibility entrepreneurs in Europe.

4.3.8 Regional Assessment of Enabling Environments Ensuring Accessible ICT for Persons with Disabilities in the Europe Region

The ITU Office for Europe has been carrying out a regional assessment of enabling environments ensuring accessible telecommunications and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for Persons with Disabilities in the Europe Region consisting of 46 countries. The assessment is designed to provide ITU members and stakeholders from the European region with a holistic vision regarding the current implementation status on ICT accessibility laws, regulations, policies and strategies. ITU also intends to provide advice to policy makers and stakeholders throughout the region through good practices and recommendations, and support ITU members' efforts in ensuring that information and communications, as well as ICT products and services, are available and accessible to all citizens without any discriminations of gender age or abilities, so including to persons with disabilities.

The assessment is an important part of the implementation of the ITU Regional Initiative on "accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development". In particular, it will contribute to the Accessible Europe initiative, Connect 2030 Agenda, and the ITU strategic goal number 2, target 2.9, calling on Member States to establish accessible ICT environments for persons with disabilities in all Member States by 2023.

Additionally, the assessment is fully in line with the requirements for the transposition of the European Union (EU) legislation regarding disability inclusion as indicated in the European Accessibility Act and other Directives that deal with ICT accessibility, and aims at facilitating ITU Members' understanding of the related requirements and fulfilment with the deadlines.

The outcome of the assessment is used as a background document for Accessible Europe 2021, a regional needs assessment and tool for directing targeted technical assistance to the countries in need, as well as an input document to discussions on ICT Accessibility under the EU Presidencies 2021 and a preparatory process leading towards the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21).

ITU Office for Europe would like to thank Members States that provided inputs for the assessment of ICT accessibility for persons with disabilities in their respective countries. Report was launched on the occasion of the Accessible Europe on 23 March 2021.

Download the report: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Documents/Events/2020/AE20/event/D-PHCB-ICT_ACCESS_EUR.01-2021-PDF-E.pdfink

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2020/AE21/Regional-Assessment.aspx

4.3.9 Technical Assistance on ICT Accessibility Policy Review of the Republic of Serbia

The lack of accessibility in any forms of digital technology prevents persons with disabilities from accessing critical information affecting their health, security, and social protection as well as social and economic activities. The trend becomes worse when the COVID-19 pandemic has created a new working and educational and socializing culture whereby people utilize online conference tools, and many online platforms remain inaccessible for persons with disabilities, including those who need accurate real time captioning, such as persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Ensuring accessibility benefits not only persons with disabilities but also older persons who might not be adept at utilizing ICT, and those whose native language are not language used in the country and areas they live in. The design approach supporting this idea is universal design. Therefore, the COVID-19 pandemic made it all the more evident that the ICT must be accessible and, to achieve this goal, Governments shall include ICT accessibility considerations in their laws, policies, regulations, strategies, and standards as the key enabler to guarantee equal and equitable access to public information and services.

In this context ITU provided technical assistance on the Assessment of Digital Accessibility Policies of the Republic of Serbia. Assistance consisted of several phases, including desktop research, series of interviews with key national stakeholders, a series of consultations and legal reviews, and others.

A national launch event presenting results of review will conclude the exercise paving the way for the development of the national strategy and plan of action. The launch event aimed to disseminate the main findings of the assessment and raise awareness at national level with regards to the importance of ICT accessibility and disability inclusion. It will showcase the joint-work undertaken over the past five (5) months to provide an updated overview on 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 the inclusiveness perspective is taken into account in several key domains. Final report will be officially handed over to the Prime Minister Office of Republic of Serbia in June 2021.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Events/2021/SNS/Default.aspx

4.3.10 (Forthcoming) ICT Accessibility Policy Review of the Republic of Lithuania

The development of the National Assessment of the ICT Accessibility in Lithuania is planned for 2021. Particular focus will be dedicated to the focus on the role of the National Regulatory Authority in creating enabling environment facilitating the development of digital accessibility.

Gender Equality

4.3.11 Gendered Digital Divide "Digitally Empowered Generation Equality in the wake of COVID-19", 9 March 2021
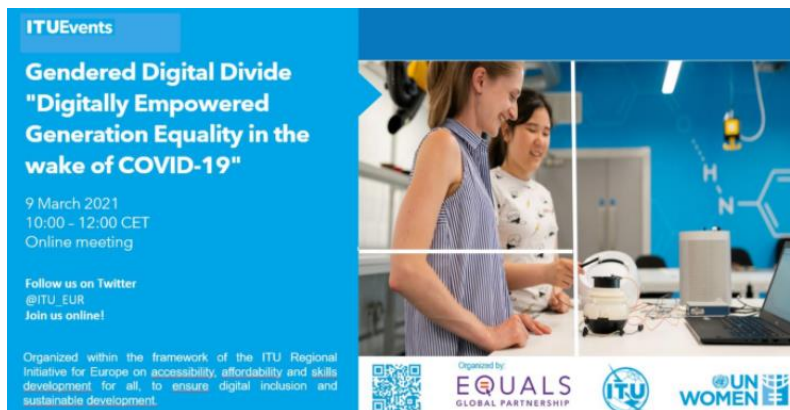
The special session "Gendered digital divide: Digitally Empowered Generation Equality in the wake of COVID-19" was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) and EQUALS. This event took place virtually on 9 March 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00 CET and it was held within the framework of the 2021 UN Regional Forum for Sustainable Development for UNECE Region and the ITU Regional Forum for Europe on Meaningful Connectivity (8-9 March 2021). This session focused on solutions and best practices to address the root causes of the gendered digital divide. The session also provided an overview of the current ecosystem when it comes to Women, Girls, and ICT in the context of COVID-19 in selected countries of the ITU Europe region. The session provided an opportunity for the representatives of UN agencies (ITU, UN Women) and partners to highlight a series of key actions, activities, initiatives, and partnerships that address the gendered digital divide.

The ITU and UN Women Digitally Empowered Generation Equality Report was launched and inform the planned discussions at this session. The Executive Summary - Report on "Digitally Empowered Generation Equality" is available. Full version of the report is available here. This session targeted several SDGs, namely: SDG 1 "No poverty", SDG 4 "Quality education", SDG 5 "Gender Equality", SDG 8 "Decent work and Economic growth", SDG 10 "Reduced inequalities", and SDG 17 "Partnerships for the goals".

4.3.12 Network of Women – Europe

The Network of Women (NoW) was created to encourage gender balance in the activities leading up to the World Telecommunication Development Conference, WTDC-21, scheduled to take place from 8 to 19 November 2021 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The first Network of Women (NoW) for Europe meeting was launched on 19 January 2021 at the Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Europe (RPM-EUR).

The Network's vision is to provide a neutral platform for exchange of information between new and experienced female delegates, as well as for advice and support from women who have successfully ascended to leadership positions in ITU-D. NoW Europe is own and led by ITU-D women delegates with the support of the ITU-D.

The Network's Objectives to:

- build, in the medium and long term, a community where female delegates support each other, expand their network, advocate and share experience and knowledge;
- promote the active participation of women in the activities of ITU-D and the development sector in general;
- give visibility to women and empower them for larger responsibilities in their respective delegations, at WTDC-21 and in future similar platforms;
- encourage experienced female delegates to mentor ICT professionals in order to create a stronger base for women in the digital space.

ITU Office for Europe, will continue providing operational support to the activities carried out by the network of women in order to ensure vibrant implementation of this platform while seeking synergies with the actions carried out under the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe related to Gender Equality.

On 5 May 2021 (13:00 – 14:00 CEST) the Network of Women (NoW) Europe will be holding a virtual **Get Together** at the CEPT COM-ITU meeting to discuss next steps as well as reflect on the Girls in ICT Day 10 year anniversary celebration that took place on 22 April 2021. The event will be an opportunity for NoW national networks to share their experiences and raise awareness on the importance of women leadership and girls empowerement in the ICTs. Several national NoW's organized Get Togethers in the month of April 2021 in celebration of the Girls in ICT Day 10 year anniversary.On 4

June 2021 (10:00 – 12:00 CEST) the Network of Women (NoW) for Europe will be organizing a virtual leadership training for all NoW Europe women.

4.3.13 Girls in ICT Celebration

International Girls in ICT Day 2021 was observed on 22 April 2021. The ITU "European celebration of Girls in ICT 10-year anniversary" was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and EQUALS-EU, with the support of UN Women and CEPT and included high level messaged from the European Commission (EC) and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and Generation Connect Europe Youth Group. It was held within the framework of the ITU Girls in ICT day initiative, which aims to empower girls and young women through ICTs, as well as the ITU regional initiative for Europe on accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development. This virtual celebration was held on 22 April 2021 from 13:30 - 15:30 CEST.

The virtual event was followed and viewed by over **1500 individuals** and supported with captioning. The full event webpage can be accessed here. The agenda for this special event can be accessed here, and the recorded live stream is available here. In the course of the event, more than 25 individuals submitted their contributions to a **video campaign** giving advice to their 10-year-old selves, which can be accessed here.

It was identified that a significant gender gap for women and girls assuming roles and pursuing education in the ICT field is still pervasive. Perspectives gained by girls throughout their stages of growth and development from family and education institutions could assist or deter them from pursuing studies and careers in STEM.

Throughout the event, a call for building supportive communities for women and girls who are already in and want to enter the ICT field resonated among speakers. The support from the ICT community is an important starting place where young girls can learn about technologies and gain a broader perspective on ICTs and their impact on society. Having role models and seeing directly that more girls are pursuing careers in STEM and joining local ICT communities is highly motivating for other girls to start education or careers in technologies.

All Member States, Sector Members, Associates, Academia and other stakeholders joined the global movement to empower girls and young women through ICTs by organizing activities to celebrate the day on and around 22 April 2021 as seen from the map of Europe, where all countries highlighted in blue organized one or more activities to celebrate this important day for women and girls.

Over the years, Girls in ICT Day was celebrated in more than 170 countries with over 11,000 events worldwide by engaging key stakeholders and partners to inspire girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers through trainings, information sharing, capacity building activities and role models. Adolescent girls with job-specific skills related to STEM – such as engineering, computer programming, cloud technology, robotics, health sciences and technologies – are better equipped to equally and actively participate in changing economies and evolving labour markets. Currently, traditional employment sectors are declining in response to automation, while innovation opens new ones demanding different skills. Without STEM skills – critical thinking, problem-solving and digital skills– girls and women will be further left behind from equal economic and social participation.

More information on the Girls in ICT initiative see here: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/GirlsInICTDay/2021/GICT-2021.aspx

Digital Skills

4.3.14 ITU Regional Forum for Europe on Digital Skills Development, 16 March 2021

The ITU Regional Forum for Europe on Digital Skills Development was held within the framework of the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe on "Accessibility, affordability and skills development for all to ensure digital inclusion and sustainable development". This one-day event was held on 16 March 2021 and is organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

As the transformative role of digital technologies becomes mainstream in an increasing number of sectors, its advancements have resulted in an important change in the capacities and skills of the workforce required today. The current pandemic has played a key role in accelerating the need for prioritizing digital policy, which is no longer a concern to be deferred to the future.

In this context, the Forum provided a platform for all stakeholders to actively exchange their approaches related to fostering digital skills development, with the objective to strengthen regional and national mechanisms. It also offered an opportunity to the countries participating to present progress made so far and exchange their national practices. The forum was an opportunity to reach out to other stakeholders and inspire them to undertake concrete actions on fostering digital skills development. The forum was addressed to representatives of ministries, regulators, digital skills development entities, telecom operators, academia, R&D institutes and other interested stakeholders of the ITU Member States, Sector Members and Associates from Europe.

4.3.15 Regional Assessment of the National Approaches towards Digital Skills Development

With the aim of identifying gaps and areas of intervention at the national level, a regional macro assessment of the national approaches for digital skills development is being carried out in nine countries, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine. The assessment builds upon the framework of the ITU Digital Skills Assessment Guidebook and should lead to country assistance in 2021. Selected countries will undergo the process of a fully-fledged national digital skills assessment, and followed by a national digital skills strategy.

4.3.16 Technical Assistance on Development of the National Strategy on Digital Skills Development in Albania

Upon request by the country, ITU will launch technical assistance leading towards the development of the national strategy on digital skills development. The six months process will consist of several phases, including series of interviews, national workshops, assessments, public queries, others.

4.3.17 Technical Assistance on Development of the National Strategy on Digital Skills Development in Ukraine

Upon request by the country, ITU will launch technical assistance leading towards the development of the national strategy on digital skills development. The six months process will consist of several phases, including series of interviews, national workshops, assessments, public queries, others.

4.3.18 Generation Connect – Europe Youth Group

The ITU Youth Strategy aims to improve and have a real impact on the lives of young people around the world, and to ensure meaningful participation of youth in ITU as key stakeholders in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In line with the ITU Youth Strategy and within the framework of the "Generation Connect" global initiative, European Youth were called upon to contribute to the preparatory process for the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-21), in particular the Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM) for Europe, through the establishment of the **Generation Connect - Europe Youth Group (GC-EUR)**.

Since December 2020, the Members of the Europe Youth Group, consisting of 24 young people aged between 18 and 24, coming from all around Europe, have been working towards the elaboration of a **Youth Declaration,** providing their views on the challenges and opportunities related to digital development and sharing the actions they would like to see happening in regards to the regional priorities of the Europe region, as an input to the RPM for Europe.

The Youth Declaration developed by the group identifies five thematic priorities as primary (capacity development, policy and regulation, cybersecurity, environment, and digital inclusion) while recognizing the importance of several other thematic priorities. Declaration was presented by GC-EUR representatives at the RPM for Europe, held virtually on 18-19 January 2021.

GC-EUR continues its work, providing valuable contributions related to the organization of the WTDC-21 Generation Connect Global Youth Summit to be held on 6-7 November 2021, back to back with WTDC-21, on 8-19 November 2021, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Members of the Group do engage in different meetings, presenting the declaration and advocating for meaningful youth engagement. For instance, four GC-EUR Members spoke at the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region-2021:

- Cross-Cutting Session 4-2 on Digitalization (15 March 2021, 10:00-12:30 CET), co-led by ITU and UNECE

- Session 2-2 - The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on youth (12 March 2021, 10:00-12:00 CET)
- Side event - Gendered digital divide: Digitally Empowered Generation Equality in the wake of COVID-19 (9 March, 10:00-12:00 CET), organized by ITU and UN Women.

Additionally, representatives of the group hosted a Girls in ICT 10 year anniversary celebration and engaged in the ITU "European celebration of Girls in ICT 10-year anniversary" as well as its twitter campaign named "Advice to you 10 year old self".

On 28 April 2021, the group hosted a structure brainstorming session to set the plan of activities and engagements for the months to come leading to WTDC-21. Outcomes of the brainstorming concluded in the creation of activities around the themes of the youth declaration presented earlier in the year. The group will be working towards the ITU Regional Youth Forum for Europe to be tentatively hosted in December 2021.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Projects/GCEUR/About.aspx

4.4 EUR4: Enhancing trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies

4.4.1 Roll Out of the COP Guidelines at the National Level in Europe Region

ITU firstly developed the Guidelines for Child Online Protection (COP) in 2009. Upon the request of the Member States, the COP Guidelines have been updated and launched officially in June 2020 in all six UN Official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian Spanish).

With the aim of facilitation of the roll-out of the COP Guidelines at the national level, significant efforts have been dedicated in order to release materials in other languages than the official UN ones. ITU Office for Europe thanks all administrations and stakeholders who made it possible and encourages others to engage in this process as well.

Albanian language:

COP Guidelines for Parents and Educators in Albanian language

Bosnian language:

ITU COP Guidelines and related materials in Bosnian language

Croatian language:

ITU COP Guidelines and related materials in Croatian language

Serbian language:

ITU COP Guidelines and related materials in Serbian language

Hungarian language:

COP Guidelines for Parents and Educators in Hungarian language

Executive summary COP Guidelines for Parents and Educators in Hungarian language

Executive summary COP Guidelines for Policymakers in Hungarian language

Executive summary COP Guidelines for Industry in Hungarian language

Romanian language:

Storybook for children under 9 years old in Romanian language

Workbook for children aged 9 to 12 years old in Romanian language

Social media campaign in Romanian language

Ukrainian language:

COP Guidelines and related materials in Ukrainian language

4.4.2 2021 Launching Events of the ITU COP Guidelines translated into National Language (Ukraine, Albania)

Ukraine: The Ukrainian version of the ITU COP Guidelines have been released during the movie format conference "Online Safety: Contemporary Challenges" organized by The Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine and co-organized by ITU and taking place on **19-20 January 2021.**

The Albanian version of the ITU COP Guidelines have been launched during the session "National policies to increase child online safety", held within the International Safer Internet Day, on the **9 February 2021** and organized by the National Authority for Electronic Certification and Cyber Security (AKCESK) of Albania and co-organized by ITU.

More information: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regional-Presence/Europe/Pages/Projects/NCOPGUIDELINES/Default.aspx

4.5 EUR5: Information and communication technology-centric innovation ecosystems

4.5.1 Digital Innovation Profile for Georgia

Assistance in building an ICT-centric innovation ecosystem is currently provided to Georgia, which includes desktop research, the organization of national consultations, engagement of relevant stakeholders, processing a series of interviews, building a Digital Innovation Profile, including a series of recommendations and projects. The finalization of the work is planned for Q2/2021. Special feature of this assessment is additional focus of the assessment on the innovation ecosystem in the field of Artificial Intelligence, supported by the by Slovenia, International Research Centre On Artificial Intelligence, that had seconded experts to support the component of investigation focusing on AI.

4.5.2 Regional Good Practices: Accelerating innovation, entrepreneurship and digital innovation

Report on 'Regional Good Practices: Accelerating innovation, entrepreneurship and digital innovation' is under completion. This report provides an overview of the comparative innovation capacity of the European region through ICT-centric innovation policy monitors and insight on how good practices can strengthen capacity to integrate ICT innovation into national development agendas. Release of the report is planned for Q2/2021.

The ITU Regional Innovation Forum for Europe will be virtually hosted from 22-23 September 2021. The forum will comprise of knowledge sharing and good practices sessions as well as stories from the frontlines. The forum will give an opportunity to European innovators to pitch their solutions and engage in meaningful conversation. All stakeholders are invited to save the date for this important event.

5. ITU Centres of Excellence for Europe
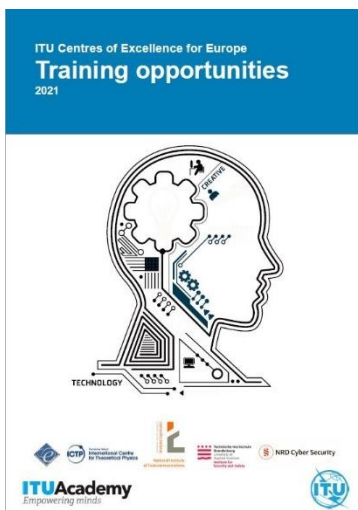
The ITU Centres of Excellence (CoE) programme offers continuous education to ICT professionals and executives in the public and private spheres through face-to-face or distance learning programmes. The Centres serve as regional focal points for professional development, research, and knowledge sharing, as well as provide specialist training services to external clients. With the support from multilateral and regional organizations, CoE networks have been established in all ITU regions. The current network is composed of 29 Centres across the globe, including 6 in Europe. In 2021 the ITU Centres of Excellence for Europe are offering 21 trainings. All trainings conclude with testing component. A certificate of achievement is awarded to candidates who successfully complete the end-of-course assessment(s). The following table presents all training opportunities offered in 2021 and displayed in chronological order.

In 2021 the ITU Centres of Excellence for Europe are offering 21 trainings. All trainings conclude with a testing component. A certificate of achievement is awarded to candidates who successfully complete the end-of-course assessment(s). All currently available training opportunities offered in 2021 are displayed in chronological order in the Europe Training Opportunities 2021 catalogue available here.

List of Courses:

Dates	Title of the Course
1-8 February	Strategic aspects for internet governance and innovations
1 March - 31 December	Cyber incident response
1 March - 31 December	Cybersecurity techniques
1 March - 31 December	Information security management system
8-15 March	Wireless access technologies to internet network
12-19 April	Security and OoS in internet network
25 May - 21 June	Future broadband: ultra-broadband Internet, clouds, IoT and artificial intelligence
1 June - 31 December	Cyber Risk Management
7-8 June	5G technologies for IoT
14-21 June	Legal, regulatory and technical aspects of cloud computing in international data transfers
23-30 August	Technical, business and regulatory aspects of 5G networks
27 September - 4 October	QoS technologies and regulation for fixed and mobile
15-16 November	Applications of satellite based IoT networks
16 November - 13 December	Future mobile and wireless broadband: LTE-A-Pro, WiFi, satellites, 5G NR and AI

6. Flagship reports launched in 2021

The following presents a series of publications that have been launched in 2021 and/or to be launched shortly. All reports and publications are an important milestone of the implementation of the ITU Regional Initiatives ensuring evidence based approached applied in the actions undertaken across the region. More informaiton on publications and reports relevant to the Europe region can be consulted here.

6.1 Digital trends in Europe 2021: *ICT trends and developments in Europe, 2017-2020*

ITU Report on Digtial Trends in Europe 2021 was launched on 18 January and is available for download here. This report provides an overview of trends and developments in ICT infrastructure, access and use in the Europe region, which includes 46 ITU Member States and is home to a population of 686 million people. The report highlights changes in ICT adoption since the last World Telecommunication Development Conference in 2017 (WTDC-17) and during the COVID-19 pandemic, tracks the evolution of regulation, and reviews progress and challenges of the ITU regional initiatives for Europe. Its objective is

to serve the ITU membership as a reference for reviewing progress and identifying ICT development priorities in the Europe region.

6.2   ICT Accessibility Assessment for the Europe Region

ITU Report on the ITU Accessibility Assessment for the Europe Region was launched in on 25 March and is available for download here. The ICT accessibility assessment for the Europe region was launched in the midst of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has reinforced the importance of ICT accessibility. It has been designed to provide ITU members and stakeholders from the ITU Europe region, consisting of 46 countries, with a holistic view of ICT accessibility requirements, the implementation status of ICT accessibility laws, regulations, policies and institutional frameworks, and with good practices and recommendations.

6.3   Digitally empowered Generation Equality: Women, girls and ICT in the context of COVID-19 in selected Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries

ITU Report on *Digitally empowered Generation Equality: Women, girls and ICT in the context of COVID-19 in selected Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries* was launched in on 9 March 2021 and is available for download here. This report has been prepared jointly wiht UN Women. Digital technology has never been more integral to people's lives. Over 90 per cent of jobs worldwide already have a digital component, and many will soon require sophisticated digital skills. During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital technology has become a lifeline for millions around the world and a critical tool for coping with the crisis and its aftermath. While the pandemic is causing dual health and economic crises, it also represents a historical opportunity to accelerate the digital revolution. This report focuses on women and girls using, studying and working in digital technology in five Western Balkan States (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) and three Eastern Partnership countries (Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova). On the surface, these eight counties are well poised to take advantage of the new digital economy, as they have a high degree of digital access and connectivity and populations with strong academic foundations in mathematics and science. This report provides a series of actionable racomendations to be addressed in the future actions undertaken under the ITU Regional Initiaitves for Europe.

6.4   Other reports coming soon

The folloiwng presents a series of other publications to be released shortly

- 5G impelementation in non-EU countries of the Europe region (ITU)
- Implementing 5G for Good: Does EMF matter? (ITU)
- Regional assessment on EMF (ITU)
- Connectivity in education: Status and recent developments in 9 non-EU countries (ITU-UNICEF)
- Digital innovation profile of Georgia (ITU)
- National assessment of digital accessibility in the Reupublic of Serbia (ITU)
- Regional good practices: Accelerating innovation, enterpreneurship and digital transformation in Europe (ITU)

- Digital excellence in agriculture (ITU-FAO)
- Getting prepared to meet EU expectation on digitalization: A guidebook for pre-accession countries (ITU-FAO)