



**THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
ROUNDTABLE
“THE WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY AND GENDER EQUALITY”
AND ON THE
WORKSHOP FOR JOURNALISTS ON
“THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT”**

Belgrade, 06 September 2005, Hotel Palas

Today, two months before the Summit, Serbia does not have either the Policy or the Strategy for the Information Society. Montenegro has adopted its own Strategy and on the Federal State level there are no activities in this direction. Apart from the specialized Symposiums and Seminars, there was no wider public debate on the advantages brought by the Information Society. Neither have the media recognized its role in this issue and instead of urging and reminding the actors, the media are showing either the indifference or non-understanding of their role in this process.

Stated above are the main reasons for which the Association „Equal Opportunities“ has organised this Roundtable. Withing the scope of its activites „Gender Equality in the Development of the Information Society“ and with full support of Gender Caucus of the World Summit as well as the support of companies: Telekom Srbija, JP PTT Srbija, ZJPTT, Ericsson, Telegroup, Intracom, Veratnet i Eunet, this Roundtable is organised as the platform. This platform, right before the Second World Summit on Information Society, can at least open questions such as: Where are we in relation to the WSIS Declaration of Principles and the Action Plan? Is the question of gender equality included in a debate on the Information Society? Do we pay attention to this issue? Are our media aware or the importance of principles and inclusion in the stream towards the Information Society? Is the low level of development of our communications, the fact of being late in the creation of the free market environment in the information & communications the real obstacle towards more rapid entering into an Information Society?

The Roundtable was held on 06 September 2005 in Hotel Palas, Belgrade. It commenced at 10 A.M. with the following Agenda enclosed as Annex 1. Mr. Dragoljub Mićunović, PhD and Professor, the Chief of the State Delegation at the First Phase of the Summit, and His Excellency, Ambassador of Tunisia, Mr. Radhouane Larif, and His Excellency, Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. Lars-Goran Engfeldt, participated in the work od the Roundtable.

There were 50 female and male participants in the work of the Roundtable. The Roundtable Moderator was, Ms. Nataša Gospić, PhD and Professor, the President of the Asociation of „Equal Opportunites“.

Mr. Dragoljub Mićunović, PhD and Professor, the Chief of the State Delegation of Serbia and Montengro at the First Phase of WSIS in Geneva in 2003, gave opening remarks. In his speech, Mr. Mićunović emphasized that the problem of gender equality is universal problem and that the mankind has slowed down its development by neglecting the capacity of the female part of the population. “Whenever women were excluded from any movement or project this meant that the results were cut into half“. He also underlined that in our country the political elite is not aware enough, or at least it pretends not beeing aware of the problem of the functional illiteracy of the population, of the poverty and of the crises of ethical standards. If we look closer to our political scene, it is easy to see that women are pushed

aside to perform routine jobs. Poor countries, and that is also Serbia and Montenegro, can solve many problems if they recognise chances offered by an Information Society and if they provide full observation and recognition of gender equality. This is the message that our County should convey to the upcoming Summit in November.

On behalf of the Host Country of the Second Part of the WSIS, His Excellency, the Ambassador of Tunisia, Mr. Radhouane Larif, emphasized in his welcoming speech, that the goal of the World Summit is to build the society of equality. Tunisia encourages production of the local content and equal opportunities for the access to the Internet.

Mr. Milan Janković, PhD, gave the overview of the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action of the First Phase of the WSIS. He also provided the review of the main documents which are the outcome of Preparatory Committee Meetings, ongoing preparatory process for the Second Part of the WSIS. Those documents will be further discussed at Plenary Sessions of the Second Part of the WSIS.

In her presentation "The Media – participants or spectators of the Information Society Development", Ms. Nada Kovačević spoke about the media and their role. Through her two-month in-depth analyses of media in Serbia, she emphasized that there was not a single word on the WSIS nor on the Information Society. She also presented the results of the Questionnaire conducted with students of Journalism on their knowledge about the activities on building the Information Society. The results of the questionnaire confirmed the results of her media analyses. Ms. Kovačević noted that media in Serbia are getting very modernized and that they have responded to the new media technologies and new communication channels. However, media do not recognize the phenomenon of Information Society Development nor its target lines and they do not pay attention to deeper research nor explanations or enlightening the IS.

The media also failed to provide reporting on sociological, philosophical, political or global aspects of the Information Society Development. Gender equality can be found in media as an issue on its own but it is rarely linked with the access to new information and communication channels. Specifically, she emphasized that this is the topic where one could easily notice the following: the media narrows the focus, reduces it to simple forms and uses the interpretative instead of the research journalism. Although the politics is the constant topic in media, the development of the Information Society is not linked either with the democratic processes or with the basic values of the human civilisation. Ms. Kovačević concluded that although media have certainly new responsibilities in Information Society, they have failed in recognizing and in responding to them.

Milica Turnić introduced the formation, the work and the Report of the WSIS Working Group on Internet Governance. She emphasized that it is necessary and crucial to mainstream the gender equality in National Internet Governance Mechanisms and above all in National Strategy on Information Society.

Mr. Dragan Domazet, PhD and Professor, spoke about the education of future professionals as the foundation in building an Information Society. In spite of this fact, there are still only three faculties of Informatics. The trend is that several faculties in Serbia have added informatics to the curriculum as either separate subjects or as separate departments. He concluded that in building Information Society we need more and professionally educated people.

Ms. Dijana Gligorijević spoke about the role of women as leaders in info-communications companies. She underlined that in this sector the real results can be achieved only if we observe gender equality. On the other hand, in Serbia, there is no promotion or recognition of companies which carry out actively a policy of gender balance. She recommended that the

responsible Ministry introduces an Award not only for companies in info-communications sector, but in all sectors.

Ms. Nada Petrović-Kolašinac addressed the participants on behalf of the Gender Office of Montenegro. She underlined that the main goals of the Gender Office are, through collecting the statistical data: to present the real situation, to create best-practices data-base, to define mechanisms and areas of implementation. Montenegro has its own Strategy on Building the Information Society and has adopted, according to European regulations, a series of laws and regulations which create a legislative framework.

Mr. Dragan Bogojević, PhD, gave the overview of the goals and results of the main European activities and initiatives on *e-Europe 2002*, *e-Europe 2005* and *e-Europe Plus*. In regards to the regional level of development of the Information Society in Balkans, he pointed out obligations of Serbia regarding the Agenda for the Development of the Information Society of South-East Europe (eSEE Agenda) and other obligations of Serbia. Unfortunately, those obligations are not fulfilled so far. Mr. Bogojević underlined the role of the development of telecommunications and information infrastructure in building an Information Society. He presented the basic indicators of the telecommunication sector of Serbia. He also gave a concrete comparisons for Serbia and for 10 countries, which have joined the EU in 2004, for: the fixed telephony, the mobile telephony, the number of PCs, the number of Internet users, the broadband Internet and public places for the access to the Internet. Mr. Bogojević accentuated the digital divide between urban and rural population and gender equality. He concluded with the information that we are the witnesses of the huge improvement of the Information Society in the EU25 and that Serbia is out of the main development process in Europe. According to the situation in 2005, the perspectives for the development of an Information Society in Serbia (e-Serbia) are more than bad. The main reasons for this, the speaker sees in the exaggerated and inadequate role of the state.

Ms. Divna Vučković presented the overview of the Equal Opportunities's activities in empowering women to use ICT tools, in tracking down the indicators of gender equality and in preparations for the forthcoming WSIS in November.

Ms. Dragana Petrović, the President of the Council for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia, expressed her appreciation for being the participant the Roundtable. She proposed as a very useful event, the organisation of the presentation on the aspects of gender equality in building Information Society to the Council and to the political parties' clubs in the Assembly.

The participants of the Roundtable received the information on the Results of the research on the use of Internet according to the Verat Net provider. The sample consisted of 65.570 persons, which makes 10% of all Internet users in Serbia. Data are disaggregated according to the sex and the age of users. Male users comprise 71% of all Internet users whereas there are 29% of female users. The best ratio is in the 19-25 age group where out of 3 users, 2 are male and 1 is female. Approximately one half of all users are aged 18 or less and the most worrying fact is that in this age group gender inequality is the strongest: 75% of users are boys and only 25% are girls.

In the debate, which followed the presentation of the guest lecturers, the following questions were raised: gender sensitive language, production of the gender sensitive dictionary of info-communications, women's journalists' agency, development of various portals and women's network. In her discussion on gender equality, Ms. Jelica Čapaković stated that the example of gender budgeting in Vojvodina can serve as the model for others. Ms. Gordana Radić gave the overview of gender activities in the Republic of Serbia.

Based on the presentations and a debate, participants of the Roundtable accepted the Recommendations for respective Ministries, the Council for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia, Gender Office of Montenegro, Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro, UN, EU, non-governmental organisations, private sector and media. Annex 2.

The Roundtable finished its work at 2.30 PM.

**THE REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP FOR JOURNALISTS:
“THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN AN INFORMATION SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT”**

Belgrade, 06 September 2005, Hotel Palas

The Workshop for Journalists “*The Role of Media in an Information Society Development*” started its work at 3 PM. The response from journalists was one more confirmation of the media representatives’ indifference towards this topic. Nevertheless, those who participated at the Workshop, have shown exceptional readiness not only to define the widest possible framework to be presented through media, but also the readiness to go into in-depth analyses of reasons which are the main causes of media ignoring the phenomenon of the Information Society Development and gender equality.

This Workshop concluded that it is necessary to prepare the media campaign with the assistance of the state and business sector. This campaign needs to bring the attention to the phenomenon itself and to implications for the development of an Information Society. It should perform this task by covering the following topics: social consequences, gender equality within the development of an Information Society, political and social power as the consequences of access to information, the policy of employment in an Information Society, an Information Society and democratisation, ethical standards, education for an Information Society and education for gender equality. Another conclusion is that it is necessary to educate and sensitise the Editors-in-chief on an Information Society and gender equality, and on using the technology for huge information resources. The Recommendation of the Workshop is to form a lobby group, which would assist “The Information Society Development and Gender Equality” topic to find its place in public life and in political, economical and media streams in the society.

AGENDA:
III ROUNDTABLE
“GENDER AND WORLD SUMMIT ON INFORMATION SOCIETY”
And
WORKSHOP FOR MEDIA:
“ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT”
6 September 2005
Hotel Palas, Belgrade

09:00 – 10:00 Registration

10:00 – 11:30 Roundtable: Moderator: prof. dr Nataša Gospić

- Key address and opening, prof dr Dragoljub Mićunović
- Key address H.E. Radhouane Larif, Ambassador of Tunisia

Discussion on the following subjects

- WSIS Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action, introduction Dr Milan Janković
- Internet Governance, introduction Mme Milica Turnić
- Media in Serbia – Actors or Observers of the IS Development, introduction Mme Nada Kovačević

11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 – 13:00 Roundtable Discussion - Continued

- Human Resource Development, prof dr Dragan Domazet
- Information Technology – Women as Leaders, introduction Mme Dijana Gligorijević
- Basic Principles and Gender Aspect in the Montenegro's Strategy on IS, Mme Nada Drobnjak
- Situation in Serbia (statistics and trends), introduction Dr Dragan Bogojević
- NGO “Equal Opportunities” activities, MSc Divna Vuckčković
- Conclusions

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Workshop for Media, Moderator Mme Nada Kovačević

- Introduction
 - WSIS History, Declaration and Plan of Action
 - Gender in IS
- Situation in Serbia

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 18:00 Workshop for media – Continued

- The role of Media in IS Development
 - Short analysis of activities of most popular newspapers
 - ICT Human Resource Development
- Specialized Journals – widening or narrowing of focus

THE ROUNDTABLE “GENDER AND WSIS”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hotel Palas, 6 September 2005, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

The Roundtable “Gender and WSIS” held in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, on 6 September 2005 organized by the NGO “Equal opportunities” in cooperation with the WSIS Gender Caucus Group and with participation from the government sector, international organizations, NGOs and companies from info-communication sector:

REFLECTING: on the global consensus and **REAFFIRMING** commitments made at previous international conferences and summits, in particular, the UN World Conferences on Women, Beijing and Beijing +5, and reaffirming the agreed conclusions on the ICT (Info-communication Technologies) and Women by United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2003,

HAVING IN MIND: WSIS Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action, Geneva 2003, Agenda on e-Europe 2002 and e-Europe 2005, and ITU Resolution 70 Rev on gender mainstreaming in telecom sector,

NOTING: that objectives of the III Roundtable are: to promote the Information Society (IS) and to raise awareness on inclusion of gender equality in the preparatory process of the Second Phase of the WSIS to be held in Tunisia, 16-18 November 2005,

FURTHER NOTING: that an important objective of the Roundtable is to draw attention to the inclusion of the gender perspective and equal opportunities in all processes of the formulation of National programs for Information Society and the usage of the ICT,

the participants of this Roundtable **CALL UPON** Governments of Serbia and Montenegro, Civil Society Organizations, Non-governmental Organization, Private Sector Entities, Research and Educational Institutions, Academia, Media and other stakeholders in Serbia and Montenegro to recognize:

- that in the process of transition to Information Society gender divide should be eliminated;
- the importance of ICT as a tool to promote women’s empowerment, rights and dignity and full participation in the Information Society;
- that ICT offers immense possibilities for enhancing women’s participation in society, economy, and politics, and that this participation will reduce poverty and improve the quality of life;
- the potential of ICT to overcome women’s isolation gives to all women a voice and improves governance with a view to achieving gender equal society;
- to introduce gender sensitive language in the educational process on official languages of Serbia and Montenegro.

THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE RECOMMEND TO:

a. All Ministries in charge of Serbia and Montenegro, to the Council for Gender Equality of the Government of Serbia, to Gender Office of the Government of Montenegro and to Employment Agencies to:

1. Ensure that gender equality is clearly articulated in the National IS Policy and National ICT Strategy,
2. Introduce the changes in the official statistical system and to introduce Information Society indicators and benchmarks on the Information Society in accordance with the ITU and European initiatives
3. Initiate and support activities such as:
 - a. Designing of the content that includes gender equality and enables the education in the official Serbia and Montenegro languages on how to use the Internet;
 - b. Dissemination of knowledge on the use of ICT for unemployed women, marginalized groups, women from rural areas, specially for girls and young women;
 - c. Design and certification of the train-the-trainers programs, especially of women-trainers, for the use of the ICT as a tool in the educational process;
 - d. Putting in place favorable and enabling financial and procurement policies to assist women to establish and sustain Small and Medium Enterprises for the reduction of poverty;
 - e. Organization of the promotions of the successful companies and ICT companies which implement the policy of gender equality;
4. Ensure that through the National Information Society Policy and National Information Society Strategy such infrastructure is planned to be put in place, which will ensure that ICT are accessible on equal footing to rural and to urban areas.
5. Establish and allocate funds for the support of the education of women in ICT, to support women's economic empowerment, and to introduce special scholarships for girls and young women to study ICT.
6. Ensure equal representation of women in institutions and bodies' responsible for the creation of mechanisms for the Information Society development.
7. Prevent misuse and violence against women on the Internet through the relevant legislation.
8. Organize dialogue between government bodies and relevant civil society representatives about the gender equality challenges in the process of entering the Information Society.
9. Organize media campaigns which will promote all of the domains of the Information Society.

b. The Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro in the Process of Preparations and Participation at the WSIS in Tunisia to:

1. Bring to the attention of the public the process of the national preparation for the Information Society and the Second Phase of the WSIS to be held in Tunisia in November 2005.

2. Ensure that minimum 30% members of the Official Serbia and Montenegro Delegation at the WSIS in Tunisia are women.
3. Provide support to gender equality and to include gender dimension in the Serbia and Montenegro Official Country Statement for the WSIS in Tunisia.

c. *United Nations, European Union and other International and INGO Organizations in Serbia and Montenegro to include in their program of activities gender mainstreaming and in particular to:*

1. Ensure that the gender equality aspect is considered and emphasized in all projects implemented in the Serbia and Montenegro.
2. Support building the ICT capacity of women, to enhance their capability to transfer knowledge to different target groups.
3. Support the government to work in partnership with private and civil society sector in order to reduce the gender digital divide and to pay special attention to marginalized groups and women in rural areas.
4. Support the government to integrate ICT in all state policies, specifically the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Strategy on European Integration, Strategy on Sustainable Development, and other.
5. Prepare the guidelines on the inclusion of the gender equality perspective in the process of the building IS, especially for rural areas.
6. Assign funds for the advancement and faster usage of the ICT tools from the aspect of the gender equality.
7. Enable the advancement of the content in local language and to support the production of the Gender-sensitive Dictionary of the ICT Terms which would be available for public.

d. *Non-governmental Organizations to:*

1. Support and organize trainings on the use of ICT as a tool for different target groups of unemployed women to advance their capabilities.
2. Encourage the training of women and children with disability and promote the application of Web-accessibility principles in Web design to enable the equal access to information.
3. Support the establishment of the women's media agencies which would generate and widely distribute the content relevant to women in local communities.

e. *Private Sector to:*

1. Develop the web content that is relevant and useful for women.
2. Invest in ICT services for development with specific reference to the advancement and benefits for rural women, such as telemedicine.
3. Establish the partnership with governments for the empowerment of women in the ICT.

f. Media to:

1. Promote the benefit of ICT in improvement of human lives by printing or broadcasting of the suitable content.
2. Promote the ways in using ICT as a tool for sustainable development.
3. Encourage women from rural areas to use ICT by printing articles and broadcasting suitable programs.
4. Make network with women's media agencies and civil sector dealing with questions of gender equality.