Profile on Sorina Teleanu

" INTERNET GOVERNANCE IS MY PASSION"

The first South Eastern Europe Dialogue on Internet Governance (SEEDIG), held in the summer of 2015, came about largely due to the efforts of Sorina Teleanu, a civil servant working with the Committee on Information and Communications Technology of the Romanian Parliament. And Sorina's efforts were made possible in part by her participation in the Next Generation Learning Program of the Internet Society (ISOC).

When she started working for the Parliament, Ms. Teleanu did not expect that she would be taking a role beyond Romania. She had studied science and math in high school, and international relations and European studies in college, so she had a basic foundation for working at the intersection of international governance and technology. But she needed more to take a leadership role in Internet governance.

> *"After University I got a wonderful opportunity to work with the Parliament on policy and legislation related to Information and Communications Technology (ICT). My policy background helped me get the position, I'm sure, but I had no background in technology, and I really had to start learning. For the first year I read and read. Then I heard about the Diplo Foundation."*

Sorina completed the Foundation's online course on Internet governance, and followed that with a summer school course on Internet governance in Europe. While she learned online and in the classroom, she was also getting hands-on experience in the Parliament, addressing issues like privacy, data protection, and the rights of individuals, as well as transposing EU Internet regulations into Romanian law.

CONNECTING WITH THE INTERNET SOCIETY

Through Diplo, she connected with the Internet Society's programme for Next Generation Leaders. The programme provides training and professional development to prepare the world's next generation of leaders, ages 20 to 40, to address challenges in Internet technology, business, policy, and education.

SORINA TELEANU, ROMANIA

Internet Society fellowships: eLearning programme, Ambassador and Returning Ambassador to IGF

Advice to those seeking to work in Internet governance: "Get out there and learn for yourself, then help in your local community. Never give up. "

Admired leader: Varujan Pambuccian, Member of the Romanian Parliament, "for the passion, curiosity, and open-minded attitude that drive him in everything he does. And for his ability to see things beyond the foreseeable future."

What she wishes she had known: "Don't take everything so seriously!"

Favourite place: Bertea, Romania "I work in Bucharest, but that little mountain village is home."

Favourite food: "Chocolate—I'm addicted to it."

She applied to, and was selected to participate in, ISOC's e-Learning course, *Shaping the Internet*. In this course she "learned even more about how Internet governance worked." Because the Internet Society programme includes individuals from around the world, she got the benefit of learning how key issues play out in different countries. And of course, she made valuable professional connections with fellow students.

Serving as the ISOC's Ambassador to the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) had multiple impacts for Sorina. It helped her raise awareness of issues relating to Internet governance within the Romanian Parliament. She met people from the United Nations Secretariat to the IGF, and later worked for the Secretariat in Geneva as a fellow and as a consultant.

TAKING A LEADERSHIP ROLE

After her experience with ISOC's Next Generation Leaders programme, she became involved with ICANN as Romania's alternate representative to ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee. She participates in discussions of key issues for her region, such as the use of non-Latin alphabets (e.g. Cyrillic) in top-level domain names (e.g. .com, .org).

At the same time, her IGF participation awakened in her a desire to do something more about Internet governance issues specific to southeastern Europe, which can be overlooked in typical pan-European meetings. So she started working, together with others in the region and beyond, on the development of the first SEEDIG conference.

Frédéric Donck, the Internet Society's Regional Bureau Director for Europe, met Sorina during the planning for an INET meeting in Bucharest. He later supported Sorina and her colleagues in the development of SEEDIG.

This very successful SEEDIG meeting brought together 150 Internet stakeholders from 19 Southeastern European countries, as well as other countries. The programme focused on a mix of capacity-building training and exchange of information and best practices among stakeholders. SEEDIG has now been recognized as a sub-regional IGF initiative, and will be meeting annually going forward.

Sorina also continues to work with the IGF Secretariat on a volunteer basis. Right now she is helping members of the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) plan a session for the Brazil meeting, in which countries and regions with their own IGF initiatives gather to share experiences.

Sorina has taken full advantage of her experiences to benefit her country and others in southeastern Europe and beyond. She's learned a tremendous amount, and she has a real commitment to paying it forward. Asked whether she has any hobbies, Sorina says, "I spend my time on this— it's my passion!"

> "...SEEDIG was a great first time event and an opportunity for the regional actors to get included in the global dialogue on Internet governance... there is a big need for more awareness and capacity building."
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> **– SEEDIG PARTICIPANT**