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| **Regional Preparatory Meeting  for WTDC-17 for Europe (RPM-EUR)** | P:\SUP\Logos\Post-150th Anniv\ITU-logo-UNblue.jpg | |
| **Vilnius, Lithuania, 27-28 April 2017** | | |
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| **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro** | | |
| ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS/ICT PRODUCTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO ENSURE DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | | |

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| **Priority area:**  Priority setting for Regional Initiatives, related projects and financing mechanisms  **Summary:**  Recognising ITU-D support to the Members to promote ICT Accessibility through its Regional Initiatives, as well as considering the requirements of the European Accessibility Act, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro submit a proposal for continuation of work through a Regional Initiative on “Accessibility and affordability of telecommunications/ICT products and services with special attention to persons with disabilities to ensure their digital inclusion and sustainable social and economic development.”  **Expected results:**  Strengthen and support regional cooperation and engagement of all relevant stakeholders in line with European Accessibility Act, development, and implementation of ICT accessibility policies and solutions in the Europe region.  **References:**  ITU Resolution 58 (Rev. Dubai, 2014), European Accessibility Act. |

# Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina have been actively participating in the work of ITU-D Study Group Question 7/1 on „Access to telecommunications/ICT Services by persons with disabilities and with specific needs” as one of the rapporteurs since September 2014. Bosnia and Herzegovina also contributed to raise awareness and build capacity on this topic while bringing together the relevant stakeholders throughout the Region to work together in creating an ICT ecosystem accessible to the persons with disabilities and thus ensuring digital and social inclusion to all citizens in the Europe region.

Considering that the ITU-D work in ICT Accessibility for PwD is in line with the European Disability Strategy and the European Accessibility Act, that has as a key commitment to ensure accessibility to goods and services, including public services for PwD, the Members commitment to progress in this area is a recognition of their engagement to enable all citizens to fully participate in society and economy.

Recognising ITU-D support to the Members to promote ICT Accessibility through its Regional Initiatives, as well as considering the requirements of the European Accessibility Act, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro submit a proposal for continuation of work through a Regional Initiative on “Accessibility and affordability of telecommunications/ICT products and services with special attention to persons with disabilities to ensure their digital inclusion and sustainable social and economic development.”

# Objectives are as follows:

* Strengthen and support regional cooperation and engagement of all relevant stakeholders in line with European Accessibility Act, development, and implementation of ICT accessibility policies and solutions in the Europe region.
* Raise awareness and promote relevant guidelines on public policies, including exchanging knowledge and sharing good practices on ICT accessibility products and services for PwD, through regional and sub-regional meetings and workshops, including an annual regional regional conference which could be called “Accessible Europe”.
* Develop regional and in-country capacity though relevant web accessibility training to ensure that government websites/ and related services are available and accessible to All citizens, including the PwD.
* Develop regional and in-country capacity to promote and deliver to all stakeholders that are involved, training courses in ICT Accessibility including the training on public procurement as a tool to improve inclusion of PwD in education, employment, economic and social life.
* Encourage regional cooperation between research centers and academia in speech technologies (TTS, Text-Speech, for everyone who can listen, Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR), Speech-Text for everyone who can read). Improving these technologies can help to overcome disabilities.
* Raise awareness about accessibility possibilities of TV and video programming in digital platforms and implement available solutions.
* Encourage implementation and related measurement progress of regional/national ICT activities and projects aiming to eliminate disparities in the use and access to ICTs of public institutions websites and government education programs, services and information.

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