

Internet Society - Bulgaria

Julia Velkova

Projects Coordinator

ISOC-Bulgaria

julia@isoc.bg

About ISOC Bulgaria

- **Founded in 1995 (one of the oldest chapters in the world).**
- **Non-governmental, for public benefit, organization**
- **Since its foundation ISOC-Bulgaria has managed to score some of the biggest achievements in the Internet history of Bulgaria.**

Some keystones

- **1996:** Sponsors the first Internet cafe in the country
- **1997:** Begins the first Web-Awards in Bulgaria
- **1998:** Joins European Co-ordination Council of ISOC chapters
- **1998:** Warns the Parliament about attempts by the Government to implement Internet censorship

Some keystones

- **1999:** Files a case against the Governmental requirement to license the Internet Service Providers
- **1999:** Reached an out-of-court agreement with the Prime Minister to abandon the ISP licensing
- **2000:** Organized the first Internet Fiesta (President Stoyanov joins ISOC)

Some keystones

- **2000:** Initiates “A Class in Internet” for the Bulgarian schools, lobbies with the Telecom Regulator to allocate funds for computers for half the schools in the country.
- **2001:** Second Internet Fiesta organized; changes in the Telecom Laws to encourage competition in the VoIP
- **2001:** Prime Minister Kostov becomes member of ISOC as a sign for his personal involvement in the allocation of funds for computerization of the Bulgarian schools

Some keystones

- **2001:** Another ISOC member becomes President of Bulgaria – Georgi Parvanov
- **2002:** Bulgarian President's IT Advisory Committee is formed; ISOC-Bulgaria board are appointed as members
- **2002:** ISOC.bg supports ISOC for their bid to obtain .org TLD
- **2002-2004:** ISOC.bg is GIPI coordinator

Some keystones

- **2003:** Co-organized the Bulgarian Big Brother Awards; Veni Markovski selected for the ICANN Board; organized international cyber-security conference in Sofia.
- **2004:** ISOC.bg starts an UNDP-funded project for Supporting e-government initiatives at local level through Free and Open Source Software in the municipalities in South Eastern Europe

More about the latter project...

Through this project it was aimed to:

- Support the e-government initiatives at local level in South-Eastern Europe
- Work with ethnic minorities, not only in Bulgaria, for better IT skills
- Achieve a major citizen participation in the local affairs

Achievements through the project

- Educated more than 200 municipal employees on basic IT skills and computer literacy
- Introduced the concept of free and open source software in a number of municipalities in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Kosovo and Turkey
- Established a number of portals offering basic e-municipality services
- Bringing closer the citizens to the municipality and trying to bridge the digital divide

Some keystones (contd.)

- **2003 and 2005:** ISOC.bg participates at the WSIS Geneva summit, with crucial support for the establishment of the WGIG
- **2005:** ISOC member Sergey Stanishev becomes Prime Minister, several other ISOC members – ministers in the new cabinet, including chairman of SAITC Dr. Plamen Vatchkov
- **2005:** ISOC.bg participates as jury in the annual Kazakhstan Internet Awards

Some keystones (contd.)

- **2005** - ISOC.bg joins Creative Commons movement and becomes the Project leader for Creative Commons Bulgaria.
- **2005:** ISOC.bg becomes partner in 2 major EU funded projects for the Free and Open Source Software wider adoption and study across Europe



- FlossWorld (~600 000 euro support from the EC)



- Tossad (~ 720 000 euro support from the EC)

Some key partners

- United Nations University in Maastricht – MERIT
- Oxford Internet Institute
- National Information Technology Institute (ITI) of the Office of the President of Brazil
- China Educational Research Network
- The scientific and technical research council of Turkey
- ISOC – Global

Some results

- Established a network of partnerships for the further promotion of FOSS
- Got important data regarding FOSS impact in South-Eastern Europe, such as
 - to what degree is FOSS studied in Higher Educational Institutions
 - usage of FOSS in e-government
 - impact on the labour market and real demands

Some keystones (contd)

- **2006:** ISOC.bg starts a UNDP funded project for enhancing service delivery, social protection and livelihood support for the poor through ICT

Results:

- Implemented a portal for enhancing online labour services in Vratsa municipality
- Conducted series of trainings to orphans, elderly and handicaps on information technologies

Some keystones (contd)

- **2006:** ISOC.bg becomes partner in several other major EU funded initiatives:



SELF project



Mithras project

Some keystones (contd)

- *SELF*: partly supported by ISOC.org
- *SELF*: created an online educational platform for collaborative learning and sharing of information
- *SELF*: cooperated with the Free Software Foundation Europe, Indian Tata Research Institute in Mumbai, Internet Society Netherlands, University of Gothenburg, Fundaction Via Libre, Open University of Catalunya

Some keystones (contd)

- *Mithras*: help entrepreneurs to share knowledge more efficiently
- *Mithras*: provide online collaborative resources and materials on better knowledge management
- *Mithras*: cooperated with organisations from Ireland, Spain, Denmark, Poland and the Netherlands

Some keystones (contd)

- **2006 and 2007** Co-organizers of the biggest FOSS Conference in Bulgaria - the annual Open Fest
- **2007:** ISOC.bg sends a letter to the Chief Prosecutor of Bulgaria for corruption-related deal of the Ministry of State Administration with Microsoft. Formal investigation is still taking place as of today
- **2007:** ISOC BG signs with ICANN as recognized At-Large structure the constitution of the European At-Large Organization (EURALO)

Some keystones (contd)

- **2007:** ISOC.bg joins another EU funded project – TRAIN-OS under the Leonardo da Vinci educational programme
 - *Partners:* in cooperation with organisations from Malta, Spain, Turkey, Germany, Slovenia and Austria
 - *Goals:* create a knowledge base for online courses on free and open source software at professional and HEI level
 - *Status:* project is in progress

Some keystones (contd)

2008: Partners with Bluelink on privacy-related project

- *Project* is supported by ISOC - Global
- *Goals:* to raise public awareness through debate about data protection
- *Goals:* to provoke changes in the current legislation in Bulgaria
- *To do:* in the end of September make a round table at the SAITS or the Parliament

Some keystones (contd)

- **2008:** Partners in Pandora project (EU funded)
- *Project:* to start in November 2008
- *Main goal:* teach decision makers from SMEs in Europe on Risk Management
- *Collaborating* with partners from the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Ireland and others.

Some keystones (contd)

- ISOC-Bulgaria has permanent staff, office in Sofia, Bulgaria with people working for the organization in different countries.
- ISOC.bg is a reliable partner to any government, business or private institution, whose aims are similar to the ones of the global ISOC.

Thank you!

We work hard to make sure that
the Internet Is For Everyone.

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO SOFIA!