10 years of the Internet in Croatia: lessons learned

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Ten years ago, even those with wildest imagination, couldn't even dream of some things which became a common place nowadays. Yet some things everyone expected to be around today, still haven't come. Which are those surprises and what have we learned in the past ten years? How will it influence our future? Answers to some of those questions will be sought in discussion with people who have been building Croatian Internet in the past decade.

The panellists were:

- Djuro Deželić
- Ante Lauc
- Ivan Marić
- Oliver Popov
- Mario Profaca.

Panellists, but also the audience (20+ participants), were asked to answer three questions:

1. what is today present in everyday life and work that you didn't even dream of, ten years ago ?

2. what you thought, ten years ago, will be part of everyday life and work today, but is not ?

3. if you could go back 10 years and change one thing, what would it be ?

The participation was active and atmosphere collaborative. The overall conclusion on the first question was that most people involved with ICT on the technological side were not surprised with the development. If any, surprises were on the technological support for full quality sharing of multimedia materials and the speed of adoption of mobile phones.

In answer to the second question, everybody agreed that implementation of technology and its wide-spread usage are far below expectations. Expectations ranged from full courses administrativia at least at the universities to be broadly available and used on-line to hopes of less conflicts and more cooperation and understanding among people due to improved communication. The emotions expressed were predominantly disappointments.

In the answer to the third question, participants involved with deployment of infrastructure recognized the need for technical people to act socially by promoting technology and its use, all the way to their involvement in policy and strategy development at the highest national level.

As the consequence of these answers and conclusions, an attempt has been made to formulate a suggestion on how to accelerate the usage of available technology. Participants agreed it would be the following: "everybody who is aware of the potentials of ICT and/or participates in development/deployment of technology, infrastructure and applications, should also take part in social activities aimed at raising ICT awareness and literacy, both in general public and in the camp of decision makers.