



# BALKAN CYBERSECURITY DAYS 2024

20-22 MARCH 2024  
HOTEL ADRIATIK, DURRËS. ALBANIA



## Balkan Cybersecurity Days – Speakers biographies

### Introduction from the hosts



#### **Franziska Klopfer, DCAF**

Franziska Klopfer. Franziska has been engaged in institutional reform in the security sector, with a specific focus on cybersecurity at the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) since 2011. Previously, she had worked for over seven years for intergovernmental committees and working groups on Internet governance at the Council of Europe and the United Nations. In her work at DCAF, Franziska implements reform and capacity building projects and leads research on cybersecurity governance. She has specific expertise on Internet governance, human rights and public policy, cybersecurity and the privatisation of security. Franziska holds an MA in Human Rights from University College London and an LLM in Public International Law from Queen Mary University of London.



#### **Serge Droz, Board of Directors, FIRST**

Serge Droz is a senior IT-Security expert and seasoned incident responder. After more than twenty years work in different CSIRTs he now works as a senior adviser for the Swiss FDFA. He studied physics at ETH Zurich and the University of Alberta, Canada and holds a PhD in theoretical astrophysics. He has worked in private industry and academia in Switzerland and Canada in different security roles as well as at the national CERT in Switzerland. Serge is a member of the board of directors of FIRST (Forum for Incident Response and Security Teams), the premier organisation of recognised global leaders in incident response. In this role he actively participates in discussion relating to cyber security at various policy bodies, in particular related to norm building.



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## Era Gjata, Project Officer, AKCESK

From 2023, Era Gjata serves as a Specialist in the International Projects Coordination and Strategic Development Directorate at the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cyber Security (AKCESK). Prior to this, Era has been engaged in different roles working in the aviation field as well as research industry. Graduated in Public Law and recently licensed as a lawyer, Era brings a blend of legal acumen and a proactive approach to project management of cybersecurity.

## High-level Opening Address



## Igli Tafa, General Director, AKCESK

Prof. Assoc. Dr. Igli Tafa is the General Director of the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cyber Security of Albania (AKCESK) and National Coordinator for Cyber Security. He has extensive expertise, developed through a rich career, in higher education institutions, private sector organizations and public institutions.

In the last decade, Mr. Tafa has carried out scientific research, training, and awareness activities for different target groups, on cyber security and cyber threat management, including participation in projects at national and regional level, and broader.

Before joining AKCESK, Mr. Igli Tafa held various positions related to cyber risk assessment, security systems engineering, application layer security and incident response. He holds a PhD degree in Virtualization Systems in Computer Science from the Polytechnic University of Tirana and additional prestigious international certifications in the field of cyber security. The passion for promoting cybersecurity education has ensured his continued success. His mission is to harness the knowledge and experience to empower individuals and organizations and strengthen national security, using best practices and the highest professional standards as the foundation towards securing the digital economy.



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## Keynote Speech: Building a fruitful environment for national CERTs



**Roman Hüssy, Head of GovCERT, National Cybersecurity Centre of Switzerland**

Roman Hüssy is Co-Head of the Swiss national CERT (GovCERT.CH). With over 15 years of CERT experience, he is participating in the international CERT community for over a decade.

## Panel: Promoting Cyber Talent for Good



**Tiffany Skinner, Senior Officer Prevent, National Cyber Crime Unit, United Kingdom National Crime Agency**

Tiffany Skinner currently works for the National Crime Agency as a Senior Officer in the National Cyber Crime Unit (NCCU) Prevent team. I studied BSc Psychology and MSc Cyber Security and Human Factors at Bournemouth University and incorporate this understanding with my interest and work experience in behaviour change to help create innovative cyber prevent interventions. These interventions aim to empower young people who are at the risk of committing cyber crime or those who have committed low-level cyber crime with the capability, opportunity and motivation to change their behaviour and encourage better use of their technical skills and abilities. In my spare time, you will find me playing football and travelling to explore new towns and cities



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## Filip Simeonov, CPP services

Filip Simeonov is a visionary leader and seasoned expert in the field of cybersecurity, serving as the CEO of Cyber Protection and Privacy (CPP) Services from North Macedonia, a renowned cybersecurity company at the forefront of safeguarding digital ecosystems against evolving threats. With a distinguished career spanning over 17 years, Filip Simeonov has demonstrated unparalleled expertise in developing innovative strategies and solutions to combat cyber threats and protect organizations of all sizes from malicious actors.

Under Filip's dynamic leadership, CPP Services has achieved unprecedented growth and recognition for its cutting-edge cybersecurity offerings, earning the trust of clients across diverse industries worldwide. Through a relentless commitment to excellence and unwavering dedication to client satisfaction, Filip Simeonov has positioned CPP as a trusted partner in cybersecurity resilience.

A sought-after thought leader and industry influencer, Filip Simeonov frequently shares insights and best practices at prestigious conferences, seminars, and forums, empowering audiences with actionable strategies to fortify their digital defenses and navigate the complex cybersecurity landscape effectively.



## Anđela Komnenić, Student

Anđela Komnenić is a dedicated computer science student with a keen interest in the field of cybersecurity, is also an avid Capture The Flag enthusiast. Currently, she stands as one of the candidates for Team Europe.



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## Plenary Sessions



### **Jaromir Horejsi, Trend Micro**

Jaromir Horejsi is a threat researcher at Trend Micro. He specializes in hunting and reverse-engineering threats that target Windows and Linux. He has researched many types of threats over the course of his career, covering threats such as APTs, DDoS botnets, banking Trojans, click fraud and ransomware. He has successfully presented his research at RSAC, SAS, Virus Bulletin, HITB, FIRST, AVAR, Botconf and CARO.



### **Saimir Kapllani, Director of Compliance Analysis, Risk and Control Directorate, AKCESK**

Since embarking on his career in 2009, Mr. Saimir Kapllani has devoted himself to strengthening Albania's cybersecurity framework, currently serving as the Director of Compliance Analysis, Risk and Control Directorate at the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cyber Security (AKCESK).

Mr. Kapllani began with his role as an expert at Control Unit at AKCESK. His background in Law and his engagement in establishing a solid foundation related to Electronic Identification and Trusted Services as well as executing detailed controls to ensure adherence to both national and international standards have been essential in safeguarding Critical and Important Information Infrastructures as well as Qualified Trusted Service Providers.

In 2018, Mr. Kapllani ascended to the role of Head of Cyber Security Governance and Audit at AKCESK. His commitment to continuous professional growth is evidenced by acquiring prestigious certifications such as CompTIA Security+ and ISO/IEC 27001 Senior Lead Auditor, as well as advanced Cyber Security studies from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies.



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## Phil Sheriff, Royal Holloway University London

Phil Sheriff is a PhD student at RHUL, studying the metricing and evaluation of international cyber capacity building programs. Prior to joining the CDT, he worked for both the FCDO and Australian DFAT in Pakistan, Colombia, Bosnia and Thailand, as well as roles in London and Canberra. Prior to that he spent seven years in the British Army. He has an MSc in Information Security from RHUL, an MA in Defence Studies and International Relations from St Andrews, and a BA in Physics from Oxford.



## Marko Krstić, SRB CERT

Marko Krstić completed his bachelor, master, and doctoral studies at the School of Electrical Engineering in Belgrade. He has been working in the field of information technology and security at the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications and Postal Services (RATEL) for almost ten years. He is currently serving as the Head of the Cyber Security Division and National CERT Affairs in the RATEL. Marko was part of several projects related to the application of artificial intelligence for children protection on the Internet as well as for digital forensics at the European level.



## Aleksandar Acev, DAI Global LLC

Mr Aleksandar Acev (DAI) has more than 20 years of experience in Information Systems Management and Cybersecurity. He has work experience in developing and implementing policies, procedures and controls related to information security and cybersecurity. He established and led for 7 years the National CSIRT in the Republic of North Macedonia MKD-CIRT. There he led the establishment of the Information Exchange Network and the implementation of Incident Response and other CSIRT systems and services. He has experience in developing programs on raising awareness of cybersecurity for the citizens including establishing the first open portal for cybersecurity training. He also managed numerous activities for building capacity and cyber exercises for the constituents and CI operators



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## Gregor Wegberg Oneconsult

After his IT apprenticeship with a focus on software development, Gregor Wegberg studied at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich, Switzerland. After completing his master's degree in computer science, he joined Oneconsult in January 2017 as a penetration tester and security consultant. Since February 2020 he is Head of Digital Forensics & Incident Response and leads the OCINT-CSIRT. He also teaches Incident Response at the University of Applied Sciences OST and likes to share his experience in lectures, workshops, and trainings.



## Leonora Hasani, DCAF

Leonora Hasani is a Project Officer for the three-year project “Good Governance in Cybersecurity in the Western Balkans”, implemented by the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance - DCAF and funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. She has been working in cybersecurity for several years, during which she has also been part of the public sector in the past where she had the opportunity to work on policies, strategies, and legislation. Currently, she works with different stakeholders and partners that represent the wide spectrum of parties in cybersecurity including public institution for policymaking and legislation, technical public institutions, private sector, and policy research organizations. Strengthening cybersecurity at a national and regional level is a focal point of her work in which she develops and implements project activities that aim to increase the overall cyber resilience in Kosovo and the Western Balkans.



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## Mil Rajic, DynaRisk

Mil Rajic is a cybersecurity expert with over 20 years of experience. For the past seven years, he has led the Threat Intelligence Team at DynaRisk, specializing in detecting emerging threats, identifying threat actors, and incident response.

With a previously background in both military electronic warfare and cyber security, Mil is renowned for his work in protecting companies, particularly in the banking, financial, and technological sectors. His efforts have been featured in world magazines and has been awarded several times for his work as an ethical hacker by the world's leading companies highlighting his impact in the cybersecurity landscape.



## Relendi Xhango

CISM, ISO27001LA, ITIL4F

Chairman of Albanian Association of Banks Cybersecurity Committee and  
Cyber Emergency Task Force

Head of Security and Business Continuity Management, Information  
Security Officer of Intesa Sanpaolo Bank Albania



## Atdhe Buja PhD c. CEI, ICT Academy

Atdhe Buja, Ph.D. (c) is a world-renowned cybersecurity expert with over 20 years of experience in ICT and 10 years of experience in cybersecurity.

He is a Certified EC-Council Instructor (CEI) and a leading authority on information technology, Industrial IoT, and ICS/SCADA cybersecurity.

His research work focused on cybersecurity countermeasures for Industrial IoT and included ICS/SCADA infrastructures and wireless sensor network WSN. He has held a variety of roles in the cybersecurity industry, including database administrator, CERT Team manager, cybersecurity trainer, and penetration tester. [www.atdheb.com](http://www.atdheb.com)



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## **Branko Primetica, CEDARS**

Prior to Cedars, Branko served as President and Chief Strategy Officer of EGT, based in Washington D.C., for more than 24 years. EGT, a company that he co-founded, was an award-winning provider of business transformation, IT, and cybersecurity consulting services for the United States Federal Government. With his entrepreneurial leadership, Branko helped build EGT from the ground up to over 400 employees while also working directly on high-visibility client projects with the White House and General Services Administration.

Currently based in Belgrade, Branko's activities include submitting a recommendation to the Government on a centralized cybersecurity program, supporting development of the National Strategy on Information Security and corresponding legislation, and provided a recommendation for a functional structure of a centralized cyber program along with funding options. He also provided inputs into Serbia's AI Strategic Plan and Ethics Principals.



## **Alin Valentin Dragan, Safetech Innovation**

Since December 2015, Alin Valentin DRĂGAN is member of SAFETECH INNOVATION team, with whom he participated at the implementation of many national and international projects and also at several national and international conferences, seminars and workshops. He started as Communication, Dissemination & Outreach Coordinator, while now he is Sales & Outreach Representative.

Previously, Alin Valentin DRĂGAN worked as a journalist at Nine'O'Clock newspaper and as Electoral Expert in different capacities (such as: Head of office for Elections for Kandahar Province, Dissemination Officer for Kosovo, Municipal Electoral Committee Supervisor, Long Term Observer, Short Term Observer) and with different Organizations (such as: United Nations, OSCE, EU, International Organization for Migrations - IOM, National Democratic Institute - NDI, International Foundation for Electoral Systems - IFES), in post-conflict or conflict areas such as: Kosovo (almost 2 years - 2001, 2002, 2014), Afghanistan (over 1 year 2005, 2010, 2012,



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2014), Syria (over 6 months - 2004, 2010), Pakistan (over 6 months - 2004, 2011), Nigeria (2,5 months - 2011), Bosnia (over 2 months - 2000), Georgia (2 weeks - 2003), Moldova (one week - 2003).



## Iulian Alecu, Safetech Innovations

Iulian Alecu, short bio

Co-Founder of the National Cyber Security Directorate from Romania and Deputy Director - subsecretary of state of the National Cyber Security Directorate (November 2021 - September 2022)

Deputy Director General of the National Romanian CERT (March 2018 - November 2021)

Chair of the NIS (Network Information Security) Cooperation Group within the European Commission during the Romanian presidency at the EU Council (November 2018 - June 2019)

Member of the ENISA Management Board (March 2018 - September 2022)

Manager in Cyber Security related issues in governmental institutions (January 2011 - March 2018)

Security expert in international relations in governmental institutions (September 2002 - December 2010)

Over 20 years experience in security, cyber security, institutional building, leadership, management, international cooperation.

## Trainers: Training Track 2 - Intel Threat Pipeline

### Jarosław Jedynak, CERT.PL

Jarosław Jedynak is a proficient security and software engineer. His specialisation is low-level security and malware reverse engineering, but he also worked as a CERT analyst and in analysis automation.

During his professional career, he worked in many international corporations like Google and Symantec but spent most of his time in the Polish CERT. His areas of interest include disrupting criminal operations, proactive security research, and improving the state of IT security in the



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world. Regularly speaks at domestic and international IT security conferences, and conducts security trainings.



### Paweł Pawliński, CERT.PL

Paweł Pawliński is a principal specialist at CERT.PL. His job experience includes data analysis, threat tracking and automation. In his current role, Paweł manages international R&D projects in the area of information exchange and threat monitoring.

## Trainers: Training Track 3 – Incident Response TTX and cyber drill



### Adriano Lleshi Cyber Security Expert

“At the end of the day, the goals are simple: safety and security.”

**Role:** Cyber Security Expert - Head of Purple Team, Malware Analysis, Incident Investigation and Digital Forensics Unit.

**Experience:** 5 years in Cyber Security, Incident Response of all CII in Albania, Digital Forensics and Threat Hunting.

**Certified by:** Comptia Security+, ISO 27001 Lead Implementor, European Union Certifications against Ransomware attacks, White Hat Ethical Hacking, etc.

**Bio:** Adriano has dedicated his career to protecting CII of Albania from cyber threats. He recommends security measures for implementations to Critical and Important Information Infrastructures. With a strong background in both offensive and defensive security tactics, Adriano leads the Purple Team, where he orchestrates simulated cyber attacks to test and enhance the organization's overall security posture. He has been instrumental in developing innovative techniques and tools for threat detection and mitigation. His leadership, technical prowess, and commitment to excellence make him a trusted advisor and invaluable asset in the ongoing battle of Cybersecurity.



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**Bledar Kacadej**  
Network Security Engineer

“Cybersecurity heroes wear digital capes.”

**Role:** Network Security Engineer - Part of Purple Team, Malware Analysis, Incident Investigation and Digital Forensics Unit.  
**Experience:** 12 years in IT and Network Cybersecurity.  
**Certified by:** Cisco, Fortinet, Oracle, Azure Cloud, etc.  
**Bio:** With a solid background in network security engineering and a passion for tackling complex cybersecurity challenges. Bledar brings invaluable expertise to the Purple Team and Digital Forensics at AKCESK. His extensive experience in understanding, designing, implementing and maintaining secure network and system infrastructures. Ensures that the team's defensive capabilities are robust and effective.  
 Bledar's proactive approach to identifying and mitigating threats, coupled with his dedication to staying current with the latest security trends and technologies, makes him a valuable asset in safeguarding the organization's digital assets.

**Ergis Gaxho**  
Cyber Security Expert

“Your password, your first line of defense.”

**Role:** Expert - Directorate of Compliance Analysis, Risk and Control .  
**Experience:** 13 years in IT Industry and Cybersecurity.  
**Certified by:** CompTIA Security+, Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA), Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP), VMware Certified Associate - Digital Business Transformation, OSCE Cyber/ICT Security Confidence-Building Measures, and numerous other specialized certifications in VMware, Ruckus Wireless, Fortinet Network Security, DPSWAT etc.  
**Bio:** A highly qualified and dedicated Cybersecurity and IT professional with a robust portfolio of certifications that underscore a broad and deep expertise in both theoretical and practical aspects of cybersecurity, IT service management, and network administration. Deep knowledge of malware analysis techniques, including static and dynamic analysis, using a variety of tools. Skilled in compiling and updating incident response documentation and managing security audits for national critical and important information infrastructure. Experienced in IT service management, with strong skills in Windows technical support, DNS, DHCP, and wireless technologies. Proven track record in conducting thorough security information audits, incident response, and in the application of a wide range of IT solutions to complex problems. A comprehensive understanding of log management tools and threat monitoring, underpinned by a vast array of technical certifications from industry leaders.



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**Gerald Bici**  
Cyber Security Expert

“There's no digitalization without cybersecurity”

**Role:** Expert - Directorate of Compliance Analysis, Risk and Control.  
**Experience:** 15 years in IT and Cybersecurity.  
**Certified by:** Lead Auditor for ISO 27001:2013 and ISO 9001:2015, CCNA, and has undergone specialized cybersecurity training with the US Department of Homeland Security and CISA, enhancing his effectiveness in international cybersecurity initiatives.  
**Bio:** With a rich background in information security and risk management, Gerald brings over a decade of experience to his role, underpinned by a degree in Computer Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Tirana, specializing in networks and telecommunications. In his current capacity at AKCESK, Gerald is instrumental in advancing cybersecurity compliance and risk management strategies, ensuring the security and integrity of critical information systems against evolving cyber threats. His leadership and expertise continue to drive significant advancements in the field of cybersecurity compliance. Before joining AKCESK, Gerald held significant positions in the energy and banking sectors, notably as the Head of the Information Security Policy Sector at OST sh.a. and as a Information Security Specialist at OTP Bank Albania. His roles have fortified his expertise in cybersecurity, risk assessment, and compliance with ISO standards.

**Jetmir Rajta**  
Cyber Security Specialist

“Worse than tomorrow, better than yesterday.”

**Role:** Cyber Security Specialist - Part of the Directorate of International Projects Coordination and Strategic Development.  
**Experience:** 5 years in IT and Cybersecurity.  
**Certified by:** EC Council as Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), Top 1% Worldwide on TryHackMe etc.  
**Bio:** With a diverse educational background spanning IT, Political Sciences, International Relations, Military, and Cyber Security, Rajta brings a wealth of expertise to his role. Rajta serves as a Cyber Security Specialist at the National Authority on Electronic Certification and Cyber Security (AKCESK). Known for his involvement in Hackathons, Tabletop Exercises and Capacity Building Workshops. He is dedicated to enhancing Critical and Important Information Infrastructures resilience in Albania.



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**Kevin Mamaj**  
Software Engineer

“ Security should be built in, not bolt-on.

**Role:** SOC Team, External Monitoring Unit.

**Experience:** 2 years in software development

**Certified by:** Java, Python, Microsoft etc.

**Bio:** Since June 2023, Kevin has been working as a Security Operations Center (SOC) Analyst, bringing his experience in software development with a focus on Java, Python, and Microsoft Dynamics NAV/Business Central. His background in software engineering has been instrumental in his role in cybersecurity, where is specialized in monitoring, detecting, and responding to security threats. Leveraging his technical skills, Kevin has implemented strategies and tools to enhance the security posture of organizations, blending his programming expertise with a keen understanding of cybersecurity to protect digital assets against evolving cyber threats.



**Kristian Josifi**  
Software Engineer

“ The quieter you become, the more you can hear!

**Role:** Software Engineer - Part of Purple Team ,Malware Analysis, Incident Investigation and Digital Forensics Unit.

**Experience:** 4 Years in Software Development.

**Certified by:** Java, Angular, Python etc.

**Bio:** With a rich background in diverse projects, Krisitan adeptly utilizes programming languages such as C#, Java, Python, JavaScript, and TypeScript. His proficiency extends to working with frameworks like ASP.NET MVC, Unity, Springboot, Angular, Flask, and Django. Boasting significant experience in analyzing malicious programs and detecting security vulnerabilities in digital environments.



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### Redon Hoxha

Expert in Cyber Defense

“Cybersecurity is a never-ending race; the finish line shifts with every technological advance.”

**Role:** Expert in Cyber Defense - Part of Defense Unit.  
**Experience:** 4 years of experience in Cybersecurity.  
**Certified by:** Cybersecurity Council, CEH, Pentest Academy etc.  
**Bio:** Redon has been working as Penetration Tester for more than 2 years which makes his knowledge about cyber attacks more comprehensive, enabling him to anticipate potential vulnerabilities and develop robust defense strategies. As part of Cyber Defense his responsibilities are to manage incident response, analyze indicators of compromise (IOC), and identify potential cybersecurity risks. In such dynamic field, each day presents new and complex threats, so staying up to date and in constant vigilance for new challenges makes him more responsible and proactive in his approach to cybersecurity.



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