

BUILDING 5G NETWORKS IN EUROPE

On September 18, 2019, the European Liberal Forum (ELF) with the support of the Institute for Politics and Society held a debate to discuss the development of 5G, how it will be implemented in Europe and the security risks that come with it.

Antoni Wrega, of the Polish embassy in the Czech Republic, discussed a recent security scandal his country faced when they used 5G technology purchased from China and how they will no longer be using any 5G technology until they have worked with other countries to ensure its safety. He also spoke about how Poland hopes to catch up to other countries development of 5G technology by working with them in 2020.

Chris Boyer, assistant Vice President of strategic analysis at AT&T, spoke about their companies plans to unroll a complete 5G mobile network by 2021. They are currently working on encouraging policy to ensure free competition on the market by de-integrating 5G components for increased security and capabilities.

Jaroslav Šmíd, Deputy Director for National Cyber and Information Security Agency, addressed issues the government was facing developing and enforcing criteria for 5G device security in the wake of the Chinese security scandal in Poland. He also noted that Czech operators were not limited by the warning issued by the government against using Chinese technology because they had access to many other vendors.

Filip Plevač, Expert in Robotization, digitalization and Industry 4.0, spoke about how the hype around 5G in the Czech Republic was unnecessary because there was still no demand for it. Once it becomes affordable and available demand will increase. He also mentioned that security risks were not a priority for most companies because they viewed hacking as inevitable and did not want to take steps to prevent, only to plan how to react.