

Youth IGF Project

The Youth IGF Project was created by Childnet to include the voice of children and young people at the Internet Governance Forum.



Three young people aged 15 years from the UK attended the IGF 2014 and took part in a number of workshops that discussed issues ranging from child safety and child rights; privacy and anonymity; and digital citizenship and youth participation.

- **Pre-event:** Governance in a Mobile Social Web – Finding the Markers
- **Workshop 1:** [Protecting Child Safety AND Child Rights](#)
- **Workshop 17:** [Privacy as Innovation II](#)
- **Workshop 146:** [Anonymity by Design: Protecting While connected](#)
- **Workshop 19:** [Empowering Global Youth Through Digital Citizenship](#)
- **Best Practice Forum:** Child Online Protection

Youth perspectives:

“Our vision for the future is an internet where all young people are not abusive in their language but freely and confidently express whatever thoughts they have, and are knowledgeable enough to use the internet as a way of connecting to youth worldwide.”

“It’s very important to ensure that young people have a chance to be creative and to explore good aspects of the internet. However, there needs to be some systems in place to protect against the exploitation of young people and to support their well-being, though these protections can’t be too restrictive or limit young people’s internet access or how they use the internet.”

“The youth are key stakeholders in the internet too, so our opinions and voices should be heard, and we have as much of a right to have our views listened to as any key stakeholders. Young people today are getting more aware of what’s going on around them, growing up faster, and are very tech savvy. We use the internet as much as others, and so we should also have an equal say and be consulted more often, especially as these things will be implemented when we are adults.”



History of the project

The Youth IGF Project has been running for 6 years to amplify the voice of youth in a meaningful way at the Internet Governance Forum.

Youth IGF Project Timeline: 2009 – 2013

2009: Workshop - Internet Governance, Activating and Listening to the Voice of Teens

This workshop led by Childnet featured a youth panel, and revealed the contradiction between young people's desire for freedom and the belief that they have an automatic right to be safe.

The workshop represented a mile-stone in including young people in the discussions at the IGF, but the Youth IGF Project proposed that this should just be the start in working towards the meaningful inclusion of young people in the IGF process. View [workshop report](#).

2010: First time full Youth Delegation taken to IGF

The Youth IGF took a team of 7 young people to Vilnius and worked with them to support their participation in a range of access and diversity, and privacy, openness and security workshops. The youth team worked to develop a [statement of belief](#) and this was contributed in the main session on privacy openness and security.

2011: Workshop - A global consideration of the challenges to access, and the opportunities that access affords, from a youth perspective.

Childnet led a [workshop about challenges and opportunities](#) featuring eight UK youth delegates as participants, and the youth team contributed in other workshops as panellists.

2012: Youth chaired workshop – Social media, young people and freedom of expression

For the first time at the IGF young people chaired their own workshop and presented the results of this workshop in the main session. Further youth projects inspired by the Youth IGF Project meant that there were more young people from across the world than ever before present at the IGF. The young people were invited to be panellists in an additional 5 workshops. View [workshop report](#).

2013: Youth chaired workshop - Online anonymity, freedom of expression and internet governance (55)

The topic of anonymity was proposed by the young people in response to the discussions they engaged in at the IGF 2012 and their interest and experience. The workshop presented the results of a global youth survey which explored global attitudes and experiences of online anonymity. View [workshop report](#).