IGF 2021

Pre-meeting guide

November 2021

About

This guide

This meeting guide gives a preview of what to expect at IGF2021 and is intended to help participants navigate between the different types of sessions and events.

The Internet Governance Forum

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is the global multistakeholder platform that brings stakeholders together to discuss public policy issues relating to the Internet.

The IGF is convened by the United Nations Secretary General, its mandate is set out in paragraphs 72 of the 2005 Tunis Agenda of the World Summit on the Information Society. The IGF's mandate was renewed in 2006 for 10 years.

IGF 2021

The IGF 2021 process – including its 16th annual IGF meeting hosted by the government of Poland from 6 to 10 December 2021 under the overarching theme *Internet United* – needed to adapt to the global health situation. The meeting is organised in a fully hybrid format, face-to-face in Katowice, Poland, and online.

- Information on the hybrid aspect of the meeting and to connect to sessions can be found on the participant dashboard https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2021-participation .
- Information for travelers to Katowice and health and safety tips can be found on the host country website https://www.gov.pl/web/igf2021-en/covid-info .

Meeting times indicated in this guide are in CET (UTC+1), local time at the venue.

IGF 2021 Preparatory and engagement phase

The *Preparatory and engagement phase*, organised in a lead-up to the 16th IGF, engaged people in IGF discussions, and ahead of the annual IGF, to identify synergies between different activities and facilitate cooperation.

The preparatory and engagement programme contained several types of sessions feeding into the annual event. An overview is available:
https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2021-preparatory-and-engagement-phase

IGF 2021 annual meeting | Programme

IGF Programme structure

Over 250 different sessions are planned to be held during the 16th annual IGF. To help participants orient themselves in the programme, this pre-guide provides some background with the different types of sessions, their purposes and organisers.

- ❖ Thematic IGF tracks - IGF community organised sessions
- ❖ IGF High-Level leaders track
- ❖ IGF Parliamentary track
- ❖ IGF intersessional work track
- ❖ Youth Summit

Thematic IGF tracks - IGF community organised sessions

Community-led sessions, organised as *main sessions* by the MAG and *workshops* by stakeholders, are built around the six IGF 2021 issue areas selected based on a public call for issue in December 2020-January 2021:
- ❖ Economic and Social Inclusion and Human Rights
- ❖ Universal Access and Meaningful Connectivity
- ❖ Emerging Regulation: Market Structure, Content, Data and Consumer Rights and Protection
- ❖ Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change
- ❖ Inclusive Internet Governance Ecosystems and Digital Cooperation,
- ❖ Trust, Security and Stability

The issues are described in the [Guide to IGF 2021 Issues and Policy Questions](#) (see annexe).

Issue area: Economic and Social Inclusion and Human Rights	
Main session	**Economic and Social Inclusion and Human Rights** 9 December | 09:30 - 11:00 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	*1. Social inequality and the pandemic* WS #163 Digital health blueprints for a post-pandemic world WS #131 Money can't buy me digital literacy WS #110 The Paradox of Virus Contact Tracing Apps *2. Economic and social inclusion and sustainable development* WS #86 A Toolkit to Measure and Shape an Inclusive Digital Economy WS #163 Digital health blueprints for a post-pandemic world WS #184 Syncing AI, Human Rights, & the SDGs: The Impossible Dream? WS #29 Fintech: A sustainable development economy of inclusivity? WS #266 Data justice: What is to be done? WS #78 Sustainable consumption in e-commerce WS #232 Mind the gap: digital labor and international frameworks *3. Digital policy and human rights frameworks* WS #276 Reinterpreting Free Speech Guarantees for the Digital Era WS #198 The Challenges of Online Harms: Can AI moderate Hate Speech? WS #170 Child Protection Online - How to legislate? WS #137 Multi-stakeholder approaches for the Design of AI Policies WS #250 Open Terms Archive : build with us a new digital common WS #196 Human Rights Impact Assessments throughout AI lifecycle WS #73 Digital Rights and Responsibilities: from Local to Global WS #261 Best Practices in Content Moderation and Human Rights WS #144 Framework- Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces WS #167 Digital Human Rights:How IGF-born guides support the Roadmap WS #133 Delivering children's rights in the digital world WS #197 Protecting human rights in the State-business nexus WS #258 A common "Bill of digital Human Rights and Responsibilities" WS #81 Best Practices for Consent and Safety in Adult Content Distribution *4. Inclusion, rights and stakeholder roles and responsibilities* WS #170 Child Protection Online - How to legislate? WS #137 Multi-stakeholder approaches for the Design of AI Policies WS #163 Digital health blueprints for a post-pandemic world WS #29 Fintech: A sustainable development economy of inclusivity? WS #250 Open Terms Archive : build with us a new digital common WS #196 Human Rights Impact Assessments throughout AI lifecycle

	WS #73 Digital Rights and Responsibilities: from Local to Global
	WS #68 AI Ethics & Internet Governance: Global Lessons & Practices
	WS #144 Framework- Media and Information Literacy in Digital Spaces
	WS #78 Sustainable consumption in e-commerce
	WS #133 Delivering children's rights in the digital world
	WS #131 Money can't buy me digital literacy
	WS #197 Protecting human rights in the State-business nexus
	WS #110 The Paradox of Virus Contact Tracing Apps
	5. Promoting equitable development and preventing harm
	WS #198 The Challenges of Online Harms: Can AI moderate Hate Speech?
	WS #86 A Toolkit to Measure and Shape an Inclusive Digital Economy
	WS #184 Syncing AI, Human Rights, & the SDGs: The Impossible Dream?
	WS #266 Data justice: What is to be done?
	WS #33 Empowering Persons with Disabilities - Accessible Technology
	WS #68 AI Ethics & Internet Governance: Global Lessons & Practices
	WS #232 Mind the gap: digital labor and international frameworks
	WS #110 The Paradox of Virus Contact Tracing Apps
	WS #81 Best Practices for Consent and Safety in Adult Content Distr

Issue area: Universal Access and Meaningful Connectivity	
Main session	**How Can We Achieve a Multilingual Internet?** 8 December | 13:50 - 15:20 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	**1. Defining universal and meaningful access** WS #35 Building Capacities for Meaningful Access to the Internet WS #248 Framing meaningful access for inclusive digital policy WS #246 Construction of an institutional digital infrastructure WS #26 Digital Skillsets: Is this it? WS #245 The importance of being Earnest, a good Internet Citizen **2. Barriers to universal and meaningful access** WS #177 From commitment to action: breaking barriers to connectivity WS #158 Digital Inclusivity in DLDCs: User Connectivity vs. Content WS #246 Construction of an institutional digital infrastructure WS #26 Digital Skillsets: Is this it? WS #245 The importance of being Earnest, a good Internet Citizen WS #153 Error 404 - Freedom of Speech not found **3. Leveraging infrastructure and technology innovation and development** WS #177 From commitment to action: breaking barriers to connectivity WS #199 Innovative strategies in achieving universal connectivity WS #13 Digital transformation challenges in developing countries

	4. Business models and investment - ***5. Practical locally-driven policy solutions*** WS #35 Building Capacities for Meaningful Access to the Internet WS #158 Digital Inclusivity in DLDCs: User Connectivity vs. Content WS #199 Innovative strategies in achieving universal connectivity WS #13 Digital transformation challenges in developing countries WS #248 Framing meaningful access for inclusive digital policy WS #118 Learning resilience in the face of the pandemic ***5. Challenges and solutions in regulating spectrum*** WS #153 Error 404 - Freedom of Speech not found

Issue area: Emerging Regulation: Market Structure, Content, Data and Consumer Rights Protection	
Main session	**Regulation and the Open, Interoperable, and Interconnected Internet - challenges and approaches** 9 December | 11:15 - 12:45 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	***1. Regulation, competition and innovation*** WS #175 Clash of Digital Civilizations: Governments and Tech Giants WS #77 Antitrust regulation of Internet platforms in global outlook WS #121 Platform economy: (post-pandemic) chances for SMEs WS #169 Regulating digital platforms from and for the Global South WS #123 Trust Me, I am a Seller: Regulating Online Business Accounts WS #115 Fan the Flames? Regulating Competition in Digital Markets WS #100 Forging Trust in the Digital Economy: A Consumer Perspective WS #130 The risks of pursuing digital autonomy WS #124 Gaming and its uniting power Information ***2. Content moderation and human rights compliance*** WS #17 Content Moderation BEYOND Social Media ***3. Data governance and trust, globally and locally*** WS #80 Trustworthy data flows – what's at stake and what is needed? WS #51 A Meaningful Standard for Necessary Scope of PI Processing WS #175 Clash of Digital Civilizations: Governments and Tech Giants WS #130 The risks of pursuing digital autonomy ***4. Data transfers, trade, cooperation and trust*** WS #80 Trustworthy data flows – what's at stake and what is needed? WS #121 Platform economy: (post-pandemic) chances for SMEs ***5. Protecting consumer rights***

	WS #51 A Meaningful Standard for Necessary Scope of PI Processing WS #123 Trust Me, I am a Seller: Regulating Online Business Accounts WS #115 Fan the Flames? Regulating Competition in Digital Markets WS #100 Forging Trust in the Digital Economy: A Consumer Perspective *6. Overall* WS #243 Level Up: Methods for Localizing Digital Policy and Norms

Issue area: Environmental and Sustainability and Climate Change	
Main session	**The Impact of Environment Data on Sustainability and Internet Governance** 9 December	15:35 - 17:05 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	*1. Increasing awareness and proactiveness among policymakers and developers* WS #231 E-Waste Management - How do we achieve a Circular Economy? WS #50 Critical Times: Impact of Digitalization on Climate Change *2. Measuring impact* WS #253 Cutting carbon in a digital world - myths and facts WS #50 Critical Times: Impact of Digitalization on Climate Change WS #125 Big Data for Environmental Sustainability *3. Reducing impact* WS #253 Cutting carbon in a digital world - myths and facts WS #231 E-Waste Management - How do we achieve a Circular Economy? WS #214 Achieving Sustainable Local Tourism and Nature Conservation WS #125 Big Data for Environmental Sustainability *4. Environmental education* WS #214 Achieving Sustainable Local Tourism and Nature Conservation

Issue area: Inclusive Internet Governance Ecosystems and Digital Cooperation	
Main session	**Digital Cooperation: Quo Vadis?** 8 December	11:15 - 15:20 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	*1. Digital sovereignty* WS #106 Open Source Collaboration for Digital Sovereignty *2. Assessing Internet governance approaches and mechanisms and fostering inclusiveness*

	WS #57 Multistakeholder initiatives in content governance
	WS #259 Digital Cooperation process - Analysis from Youth lenses
	WS #268 Right to safe medicines: Managing competing interests online
	WS #74 Leveraging sustainable digital transformation
	WS #228 Supply Chain Governance and Security for IoT Resilience
	WS #262 From Civil Society Participation-Washing to Decision-Making
	3. Governance and cooperation for an evolving Internet
	WS #57 Multistakeholder initiatives in content governance
	WS #252 Imagining the Future of International Internet Governance
	WS #268 Right to safe medicines: Managing competing interests online
	WS #262 From Civil Society Participation-Washing to Decision-Making
	WS #181 All We Need Is YOUth: Connecting Young People and ICT
	4. Technical Internet governance
	WS #269 Inclusive Governance: Models of Open Source Participation
	WS #228 Supply Chain Governance and Security for IoT Resilience
	5. Advancing global digital cooperation
	WS #252 Imagining the Future of International Internet Governance
	WS #273 Leveraging Private-Public Partnership for Digital Skills
	WS #74 Leveraging sustainable digital transformation
	WS #272 Youth in IG policy-making process: Let's talk about the MHLB
	WS #181 All We Need Is YOUth: Connecting Young People and ICT

Issue area: Trust, Security, Stability	
Main session	**Trust Matters: Exploring Ways for Building a Safe and Secure Cyberspace** 10 December | 09:30 - 11:00 CET *main session description*
Workshops per sub-theme	**1. Cybersecurity practices and mechanisms** WS #142 One click to attack critical infrastructure. What can we do? WS #240 Education 4.0: Who is looking at cybersecurity? WS #254 Democracy and online voting: challenges and innovations WS #154 Promoting Collective Action to Protect our Healthcare WS #209 The State of DNS Privacy Technologies WS #271 Youth Talk about IoT Security and AI misuse WS #260 Internet resilience towards a renewed resilience for society WS #18 Cyber Diplomacy in Africa and Digital Transformation WS #279 Fighting disinformation as a cybersecurity challenge **2. Ensuring a safe digital space** WS #278 Networked trust: encryption choices to a reliable Internet WS #240 Education 4.0: Who is looking at cybersecurity? WS #254 Democracy and online voting: challenges and innovations WS #209 The State of DNS Privacy Technologies

	WS #260 Internet resilience towards a renewed resilience for society WS #139 Mind the Gender Gap OR Mend the Gender Gap WS #279 Fighting disinformation as a cybersecurity challenge ***3. International standards*** WS #278 Networked trust: encryption choices to a reliable Internet WS #200 Security of digital products – A coordinated approach WS #271 Youth Talk about IoT Security and AI misuse WS #239 The Internet of Things is a Ticking Clock: Secure Design Now WS #18 Cyber Diplomacy in Africa and Digital Transformation ***4. Roles and responsibilities in protecting against cyber-attacks*** WS #187 Exploring Neutrality:A Multistakeholder Cyber Norms Dialogue WS #142 One click to attack critical infrastructure. What can we do? WS #119 The Next Chapter of UN Cyber Dialogues WS #154 Promoting Collective Action to Protect our Healthcare WS #239 The Internet of Things is a Ticking Clock: Secure Design Now WS #139 Mind the Gender Gap OR Mend the Gender Gap WS #233 Not Espionage as Usual ***5. International rules and state accountability*** WS #187 Exploring Neutrality:A Multistakeholder Cyber Norms Dialogue WS #119 The Next Chapter of UN Cyber Dialogues WS #233 Not Espionage as Usual ***6. Private sector accountability*** WS #200 Security of digital products – A coordinated approach

IGF 2021 High-Level leaders track

Co-organised by the Host Country and UN DESA/IGF Secretariat, the IGF 2021 high-level leaders' track will focus on the overarching theme *Internet United*. Experts and leaders from all stakeholder groups will discuss a series of key questions such as: In which areas of people's lives do we see the biggest impact of digital transformation for sustainable development? How can we ensure that revitalised digital economies are inclusive? How can technologies work for people?

The track will include six high-level exchange panels and one high-level plenary.

6 December	
11:00 – 12:00 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **Global economic recovery – where are we at?** *session description*
12:15 – 13:15 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **Cities United: connected, green and inclusive** *session description*
14:00 – 15:00 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **Creating sustainable value and inclusive society – the role of digital platforms** *session description*
15:15 – 16:15 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **How to promote inclusive and diverse innovation, investment opportunities and corporate social responsibility in digital technologies?** *session description*
16:30 – 17:30 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **Building equitable employment conditions and competences for the future of work.** *session description*
7 December	
11.45 – 12.45 CET	HIGH LEVEL PLENARY: **Investing in digital growth and enabling capacities – transnational and transcontinental synergies** *session description*
13.45 – 14.45 CET	HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE PANEL: **Governance models to promote inclusive and diverse business development – what stands in the way?** *session description*

IGF 2021 Parliamentary track

Building on the [2019](#) and [2020](#) parliamentary roundtables, the IGF 2021 parliamentary track is organised jointly by UN DESA, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the lower chamber of the Polish parliament, the Sejm. Support is also provided by the Department of Digital Policy in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, acting as co-facilitator and overall coordinator of the IGF 2021 from the Host Country's side.

Under the theme *Legislative approaches for a user-centric digital space*, parliamentarians will exchange views and share good practices on tackling three key digital policy challenges: privacy rights and legitimate uses of personal data; balancing freedom of speech and the fight against harmful online content; and automated decision-making and human-centric approaches. The main points emerging from these discussions will form the basis for the output document from the parliamentary track at IGF 2021.

More details about the track are available on the [dedicated page](#).

7 December	
16:15 – 17:15 CET	IGF 2021 parliamentary roundtable: **Legislative approaches for a user-centric digital space** *session description*

IGF 2021 Intersessional Community work

Best Practice Forums

The Best Practice Forums (BPFs) provide a platform to exchange experiences in addressing Internet policy issues. The objective is to collect existing and emerging good practices from community experience, not to develop new policies or practices.

BPFs are open, bottom-up and collective processes to produce community-driven outputs. BPF outputs intend to contribute to an understanding of global good practice, and to serve as a resource to inform policy discussions, standards development, business decisions, as well as public understanding, awareness, and discourse.

9 December 09:30 – 11:00 CET	Best Practice Forum on Gender and Digital Rights **Gendered Disinformation** *session description*
10 December 10:15 – 11:45 CET	Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity: **The Use of Norms to Foster Trust and Security** *session description*

Policy Networks

The Policy Network (PNs) are dedicated to identifying status quo and current issues including the policy gaps, existing capacity and conditions, local specificities, good and bad practices and possible ways forward through actionable activities led by identified implementation parties.

8 December 09:30 – 11:00 CET	**Policy Network on Meaningful Access** *session description*
9 December 13:50 – 15:20 CET	**Policy Network on Environment** *session description*

Dynamic Coalitions

Dynamic Coalitions (DCs) are open, multistakeholder and community-driven groups dedicated to an internet governance issue or set of issues. They emerged at the first IGF meeting in 2006.

At IGF 2021, 17 DCs will hold individual sessions to discuss Internet policy issues within their focus and present their work. A DC main session on the theme *Digital cooperation in practice: IGF Dynamic Coalitions* will (a) showcase how coalitions contribute to advancing the debates on the IGF 2021 issue areas and (b) feature a strategic discussion on how coalitions could contribute to broader digital cooperation efforts and a strengthened IGF. The starting point for these discussions will be the report DCs produced in 2021, which provides insights into their work and processes and explores their further potential.

7 December	
13:45 – 14:45 CET	DC on accessibility and disability **Challenges & Opportunities for PWDs in a Post Covid World** *session description*
15:00 – 16:30 CET	DC on children's rights in the digital environment **Regulate or prevent to protect children – a false dichotomy?** *session description*
16:45 – 18:15 CET	DC on network neutrality **Device Neutrality and Interoperability for Internet Openness** *session description*
8 December	
09:30 – 11:00 CET	DC main session **Digital cooperation in practice: IGF Dynamic Coalitions** *session description*
12:45 – 13:45 CET	DC on data and trust

	Enhancing community cooperation to ensure effective data management and accuracy *session description*
9 December	
09:30 − 11:00 CET	DC on internet universality indicators **UNESCO's call to all stakeholders to support ROAM and the DC** *session description*
11:15 − 12:45 CET	DC on public access in libraries **Public Access: Driving a Community-Based Development Model** *session description*
13:50 − 15:20 CET	DC on schools of Internet governance **Rising to current challenges facing Schools of IG** *session description*
13:50 − 15:20 CET	DC on community connectivity **Sustainable Funding Models for Community Networks** *session description*
13:50 − 15:20 CET	DC on small island developing states in the Internet economy **The Pandemic Internet: Ensuring SIDS do not fall behind** *session description*
15:05 − 16:35 CET	DC on platform responsibility **Platform Interoperability: Understanding a Complex Issue** *session description*
15:05 − 16:35 CET	DC on the sustainability of journalism and new media **Internet governance and news media sustainability** *session description*
15:35 − 16:50 CET	Youth coalition on Internet governance **Youth in the decision-making process: hear us!** *session description*
15:35 − 16:50 CET	DC on Internet and jobs **Changing Jobs & Skillsets Post COVID - How Internet can Help** *session description*
15:35 − 16:50 CET	DC on data-driven health technologies **Health Matters: Data & Technology In The Healthcare Sector** *session description*
15:45 − 17:15 CET	Internet rights and principles coalition **IRPC The Charter at 10: Achievements, challenges and what's next?** *session description*
16:50 − 18:20 CET	DC on internet standards, security and safety **DC-ISSS: Making the Internet more secure and safer**

	session description

10 December	
09:30 – 11:00 CET	DC on core Internet values **Internet Regulation during Crisis One Year Later** *session description*
13:50 – 15:20 CET	DC on gender and Internet governance **Tangled like Wool: Gender, Social & Digital Inequalities** *session description*

National and Regional IGF Initiatives

National and Regional IGF Initiatives (NRIs) are organic and independent multistakeholder networks that are discussing issues pertaining to Internet Governance from the perspective of their respective communities, while acting in accordance with the main principles of the global IGF.

6 December	
12:00 – 13:30 CET	NRIs Coordination Session *session description*
8 December	
15:15 – 16:15 CET	NRIs Collaborative Session **Smart Local Solutions to Connect Everyone** *session description*
9 December	
13:50 – 14:50 CET	NRIs Collaborative Session **Enabling Local Smart Solutions to Close the Global Digital Divide** *session description*
17:05 – 18:05 CET	NRIs Collaborative Session **Securing the Trusted Internet Now for the Generations to come** *session description*
10 December	
09:30 – 10:30 CET	NRIs Collaborative Session **Digital Sovereignty and Digital Self-Determination** *session description*
13:50 – 15:20 CET	NRIs Main Session **The good, the bad and the ugly of the Internet in times of crises** *session description*

15:00 – 16:00 CET	NRIs Collaborative Session **E-commerce Challenges and Opportunities in 2021 - Looking at National Practices** *session description*

Youth engagement

Youth engagement is of particular importance to the IGF 2021. The Global Youth Summit will provide an opportunity for engagement between young people from all parts of the world and senior leaders and experts on topics related to the challenges young people observe in the areas of access, digital education, environment, and cybersecurity, among others, as well as how young people could deliver successful advocacy and engage other stakeholders in supporting effective initiatives and local ecosystems.
A number of other sessions focus on raising youth voices on different Internet governance issues.

6 December	
16:00 – 18:30 CET	**Global Youth Summit** *session description*

Other sessions and Day-0 events

Participants will find several other stand-alone events on the IGF Schedule, including pre-events or day-0 events organised outside the official IGF programme.

- ❖ **IGF pre-events / Day 0 events** take place on Sunday 7 December, before the official IGF Programme. *related sessions*
- ❖ **Open Forums** are organised by governments, treaty-based organisations, and other global organisations. *related sessions*
- ❖ **Launches and Rewards**
- ❖ **Lightning Talks**
- ❖ **Networking Sessions**

Guide to IGF 2021 Issues and Policy Questions

https://www.intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/11138/2551

The 'Guide to IGF 2021 Issues and Policy areas' consists of a high-level description of the IGF 2021 issue areas with related sub-topics and policy questions identified by the MAG. The guide was published after the public call for issues launched by the MAG late in 2020 with a deadline of 31 January, that received over 230 responses which were then clustered and prioritised by the MAG. In doing so, the MAG aimed to achieve a dual goal:

❖ Contribute to ongoing IGF evolution and strengthening through an approach to the programme that would encourage focused discussion that delves more deeply into specific issue areas, thereby potentially leading to more focused outcomes.
❖ Maintain the IGF's open and bottom-up character as a space for dialogue and debate on a wide-range of issues considered relevant by people and institutions from all stakeholder groups around the world.

Finally, the MAG agreed on two main focus areas and four emerging and cross-cutting issue areas.

❖ Economic and Social Inclusion and Human Rights
❖ Universal Access and Meaningful Connectivity
❖ Emerging Regulation: Market Structure, Content, Data and Consumer Rights and Protection
❖ Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change
❖ Inclusive Internet Governance Ecosystems and Digital Cooperation,
❖ Trust, Security and Stability

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Economic and social inclusion and human rights

Description

The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on existing and growing inequalities around the world. People and institutions from all sectors and stakeholder groups need to work together to design and implement enabling environments to foster inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies and economies. In doing so, meaningful access and inclusivity need to be achieved at all levels, from access to infrastructure, to online education, digital literacy and skills, to equal opportunities regardless of gender, race, disability, as well as adequate protection of workers' rights and access to digital health information and services.

Human rights need to be at the centre of inclusive digital societies and economies, and technologies and policies alike need to be designed, used and implemented in a human rights-centred manner. The protection of both civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights in the digital space should remain a priority for all actors. Adequate regulatory frameworks need to be put in place to provide rules and boundaries for the private sector. Governments need to be accountable for respecting and promoting these rights and for ensuring that others, including companies, also do so. Global companies that operate across borders need to be accountable for their practices and uphold international human rights standards, and users need to be more aware of how to demand respect for their rights. This holistic awareness and integration of human rights can only be achieved through collaboration, learning and capacity development, and open and constructive dialogue among all stakeholder groups.

The IGF can facilitate informed discussion on the values that we want technology and the Internet to serve and how Internet-related policy and capacity development efforts can contribute to more inclusive, just and peaceful societies.

Policy questions

1. **Social inequality and the pandemic:** What can be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic context about the relationship between digital inequality and social and economic inequality? Similarly, what lessons can be drawn with respect to the pandemic and Internet-related human rights? What does this suggest about policy approaches for digitalisation and digital inclusion?

2. **Economic and social inclusion and sustainable development:** What is the relationship between digital policy and development and the established international frameworks for social and economic inclusion set out in the Sustainable Development Goals and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in treaties such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Conventions on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, on the Rights of the Child, and on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities? How do policy makers and other stakeholders effectively connect these global instruments and interpretations to national contexts?

3. **Digital policy and human rights frameworks**: What is the relationship between digital policy and development and the established international frameworks for civil and political rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and further interpretation of these in the online context provided by various resolutions of the Human Rights Council? How do policy makers and other stakeholders effectively connect these global instruments and interpretations to national contexts? What is the role of different local, national, regional and international stakeholders in achieving digital inclusion that meets the requirements of users in all communities?

4. **Inclusion, rights and stakeholder roles and responsibilities**: What are/should be the responsibilities of governments, businesses, the technical community, civil society, the academic and research sector and community-based actors with regard to digital

inclusion and respect for human rights, and what is needed for them to fulfil these in an efficient and effective manner?

5. **Promoting equitable development and preventing harm:** How can we make use of digital technologies to promote more equitable and peaceful societies that are inclusive, resilient and sustainable? How can we make sure that digital technologies are not developed and used for harmful purposes? What values and norms should guide the development and use of technologies to enable this?

Related issues

○ Economic and social equality and inclusion, access, education, children, gender, persons with disabilities, human-centred design, digital rights, privacy and data rights, freedom of expression, surveillance, responsible use of data, platform governance, accountability, transparency, regulation, ethics and values, future of work.

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Universal access and meaningful connectivity

Description

Ensuring that all people everywhere have meaningful and sustainable access to the Internet is a priority, as the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated. The concept of universal access has evolved over time, from referring to the availability of a payphone within walking distance in the 1990s, to the widespread availability of either fixed or wireless broadband Internet connectivity from the mid-2000s. However, evidence increasingly indicates that access to connectivity is not sufficient on its own. People and institutions from all sectors and stakeholder groups should reflect on connectivity in a holistic way that takes into account how people are able to make use of connectivity once they do have access. This requires considering links between digital equity and social and economic inequalities, and adopting an user-centric approach that combines access (in terms of availability of affordable connectivity and devices), adoption and ability to use (digital skills and readiness), uses driven by content and applications (e.g. education, economic development, health, agriculture) and equity/diversity (e.g. gender, race, language, disability, geographic location, ownership and control).

There is a need for creative and accountable approaches to policy, regulation, enabling financing solutions, infrastructures/content platforms, partnerships and business models that can help achieve meaningful access. Examples include public and private partnerships; local access provision, through, for instance, community networks; use of universal service/access funds in financing access; infrastructure sharing; decentralised approaches to infrastructure development; and use of emerging technologies and sustainable energy solutions. Other factors that can contribute to advancing ubiquitous and affordable Internet access range from developing the capacity of regulators and service and content providers,

to incentivising the development and use of local language content and locally relevant content.

Last, but not least, we should also examine why many of the policy solutions which are already known and proven to be effective are not being widely implemented.

Policy questions

1. **Defining universal and meaningful access**: What are the key elements that constitute universal and meaningful Internet access? How can it be measured? How is the concept evolving in time and what does this evolution mean for policy?
2. **Barriers to universal and meaningful access**: What are the main challenges that people face in obtaining and making full use of Internet access? To what extent are these the result of social, economic and cultural factors, and to what extent do they result from aspects of the digital environment? How can we use the responses to these questions to better understand the intersection between digital policies and other policy areas? Can this understanding help us to develop and implement more realistic Internet-related policy goals?
3. **Leveraging infrastructure and technology innovation and development**: How can the significant expansion of mobile infrastructure around the world, as well as other existing and emerging technologies such as satellite, fibre, and wireless networks, be used to expand affordable access?
4. **Business models and investment:** The IGF has frequently addressed the principles, approaches, business models, incentives and coordinated actions by various stakeholders (governments, local authorities, regulators, fixed and mobile broadband Internet service providers, telecom companies, local communities, etc.) to spur investments in connectivity solutions and enable more affordable Internet access in developing countries. What can the IGF do to capture and communicate the emerging consensus resulting from these discussions? What are the barriers to this emerging consensus being implemented and how can they be overcome?
5. **Practical locally-driven policy solutions**: What lessons can be drawn (and how) from successful policy solutions to universal access and meaningful connectivity around the world, while taking into account local specificities and needs? In particular, what are the relevant practices implemented by local actors (local government, civil society, local providers and entrepreneurs) to advance universal and meaningful access?
6. **Challenges and solutions in regulating spectrum:** What are the relevant regulatory issues that require attention when it comes to enabling broader access to spectrum in order to stimulate dissemination of affordable and quality access at the community level?

Related issues

- ○ Universal access, meaningful connectivity, infrastructures, community-based networks, connect the unconnected, affordable and easy access, connectivity in rural areas and for marginalised communities and individuals, alternative business

models, capacity development, democratising Internet access, closing the gender gap, content diversity, local language content, locally relevant content, Internet for all, bridge digital divide, enabling policy environments, Internet accessibility, investment in infrastructure, deployment of infrastructure, next generation of communication standards, low-orbit communication satellites, spectrum.

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Emerging regulation: market structure, content, data and consumer/users rights regulation

Description

Recent years have seen increased discussions on regulating many aspects of the Internet, be it in the form of national and international regulations by governments and intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), or private sector-led self-regulation and co-regulation initiatives. At least four areas stand out within this trend. First, there are ongoing regulatory efforts to address anticompetitive practices and monopolistic behaviour by large tech companies, prevent excessive concentrated market structures, and ensure a more pluralistic and level-playing field between large and small market players. Second, various jurisdictions are discussing whether new regulations are needed to clarify the liability of Internet intermediaries with regard to the content they host, as well as their role and responsibilities in tackling issues such as online misinformation/disinformation and the spread of violent content and hate speech. Related to this is the issue of minimum standards that Internet platforms should embrace in their content moderation policies to ensure alignment with human rights frameworks (in particular with respect to freedom of expression), and the role of governments in influencing private sector policies in this area. Concerns about the transparency and coordination of content moderation decisions need to be at the center of the debate to prevent capture by powerful actors, and to ensure these decisions are transparent, and accountable.Third, discussions continue on multiple data governance related issues, including (a) how data governance frameworks could enable the responsible and trustworthy use of personal and non-personal data; (b) what transparency standards need to be put in place when it comes to personal data processing; and (c) how privacy rights and protections are interpreted and imposed, or not, within and beyond national borders. Additionally, the issue of cross-border data flows remains high on the international agenda, as countries have different approaches towards the extent and the conditions under which they enable data transfers or require data localisation. At the same time, there are calls for unified data governance frameworks that enable rights respecting data flows. Fourth, there is an increasing interest to enhance consumer protection regulations in order to foster a more balanced relationship between users and Internet companies, provide meaningful remedy for individuals whose rights have been violated, and avoid unfair and deceptive commercial practices, while also building consumer awareness around issues such as tracking and targeted advertising.

Policy questions

- ○ **Regulation, competition and innovation**: How could regulatory and self-regulatory frameworks help foster more competitive Internet-related markets, a larger diversity of business models, and more innovation? How to enable equitable access to data, marketplaces or infrastructures for fostering competition and innovation on the Internet?
- ○ **Content moderation and human rights compliance:** How to ensure that government regulation, self-regulation and co-regulation approaches to content moderation are compliant with human rights frameworks, are transparent and accountable, and enable a safe, united and inclusive Internet?
- ○ **Data governance and trust, globally and locally:** What is needed to ensure that existing and future national and international data governance frameworks are effective in mandating the responsible and trustworthy use of data, with respect for **privacy and other human rights?**
- ○ **Data transfers, trade, cooperation and trust**: What is the role of local and international norms and principles in facilitating trustworthy international data transfers for trade and cooperation?
- ○ **Protecting consumer rights**: What regulatory approaches are/could be effective in upholding consumer rights, offering adequate remedies for rights violations, and eliminating unfair and deceptive practices from the part of Internet companies?

Related issues

- ○ Antitrust, anticompetitive practices, monopolistic behaviour, competition, big tech, concentrated market structures, remedies, network effects, vertical integration, merger control, digital advertisement, platform economy, surveillance economy, innovation, data concentration, centralisation of infrastructure, decentralisation, data trusts, data commons, interoperability, intermediaries liability regimes, media policy, content policy, content moderation, data localisation, lawful access, misinformation/disinformation, violent content, hate speech, freedom of expression, upload filters, privacy, data governance, self-regulation, co-regulation, cross-border data transfer, data flows, extraterritorial rules, targeted advertising, algorithmic transparency, automated decision making, profiling, user tracking, meaningful consent, dark patterns, consumer awareness, consumer rights, quality of service, remedy for abuse

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Environmental sustainability and climate change

Description

Mitigating climate change, addressing waste and pollution, and ensuring environmental sustainability are among the world's most pressing issues. The Internet and other digital technologies can pose challenges to the environment (for instance through energy consumption for data production, storage, usage and transfer, and through the production of devices and disposal of e-waste), but they can also be leveraged to advance environmental sustainability. Policies and actions are therefore needed to 'green' the Internet, reduce the environmental impact of new technologies (including artificial intelligence and big data) and facilitate their use to address environmental challenges. Examples include improving the circular economy for digital devices (e.g. enabling reuse and recycling), extending the lifespan of software and devices, reducing the energy use associated with the Internet, and promoting technologies that help reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption. Also important is to develop and put in practice adequate governance frameworks that enable the sharing and re-use of environmental data. At the same time, more focus needs to be placed on promoting environmental education and building awareness on environmental sustainability within Internet governance and digital policy spaces.

Policy questions

1. **Increasing awareness and proactiveness among policymakers and developers:** How do we ensure that technology developers, digital corporations, policy makers and policy processes consistently consider the impact of the Internet and digitalisation on sustainability and climate change?
2. **Measuring impact:** How can we improve the assessment, measurement and monitoring of the environmental impact of digitalisation and the Internet?
3. **Reducing impact:** How can we achieve a net zero impact on climate change of the further expansions of the Internet and its infrastructure? How can Internet standards, governance and policy choices, and standards for device design, development and manufacture, contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the Internet (e.g. through the adoption of green computing, energy efficient servers and machines/processes, and by policy contributions)? How can we further use digital technologies to better predict and manage the impacts of climate change?
4. **Environmental education:** How can policymakers leverage the Internet and Internet governance processes for expanding and strengthening environmental education? Should computer science curricula, Internet governance capacity development and digital literacy programmes include awareness of environmental sustainability?

Related issues

- Climate change, greening the Internet, smart cities, sustainable cities, sustainable smart cities, environmental education, environmental sustainability, green

technologies, future of work, digital waste, sustainable exploitation of natural resources for digital technologies, digital capacities for natural disasters response, energy efficiency, environmental data governance, indigenous communities environmental/climate resilience, AI and environment.

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Inclusive Internet governance ecosystems and digital cooperation

Description

The Internet's contribution to social, cultural and economic growth and opportunity is recognised, but with its increased role and importance to societies, individuals and economies – well illustrated during the global pandemic – come key questions of governance, accountability, misuse and access. When approaching the governance of the Internet, most institutions, including governments, tend to turn to models they understand or are familiar with, rather than thinking about what might work in the future. Coordinating and consolidating collaborative and inclusive Internet governance is increasingly challenging. Recent discussions about the roles and responsibilities of governments and international corporations have raised issues relating to digital sovereignty, data localisation, national security, economic growth, the governance structures of a borderless Internet, cross-border business transactions, and human rights. In consequence, the precise nature, scope, and modalities of digital sovereignty have become pressing topics in a wide range of contexts. Nevertheless, there has not been any organised and fully inclusive global debate about the reasons for and manifold consequences of digital sovereignty initiatives. The IGF could be well placed to foster such a dialogue.

There is also a need for further engagement on the evolution of the IGF itself as a widely distributed and inclusive platform for deliberating on inclusive Internet governance processes and ecosystems. What opportunities are provided by the current focus on digital cooperation resulting from the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for digital cooperation? How to strengthen the capacities of policymakers, business and citizens to stay abreast of the rapid technological developments and adequately engage in Internet governance discussions to respond to the challenges these developments present? What is the future of multistakeholder Internet governance and who will shape it?

Another question to address touches on how the technical governance of the protocols and procedures that underpin an interconnected Internet relate to the ongoing Internet public policy discourses.

Policy questions

1. **Digital sovereignty:** What is meant by digital sovereignty? What implications does it have for the global nature of the Internet, for Internet governance itself, and the

effectiveness of the multistakeholder approach? From an opposite angle, what are the implications of the Internet and digitalisation for national sovereignty?

2. **Assessing Internet governance approaches and mechanisms and fostering inclusiveness:** What are the main strengths and weaknesses of existing Internet governance approaches and mechanisms? What can be done, and by whom, to foster more inclusive Internet governance at the national, regional and international levels?

3. **Governance and cooperation for an evolving Internet:** How does Internet governance need to change in order to meet the changing nature and role of the Internet? What tools, mechanisms, and capacity building instruments are needed for stakeholders to effectively cooperate, and engage in Internet governance?

4. **Technical Internet governance**: How can the technical governance of the Internet (e.g. the development of standards and protocols, and the management of critical resources) take into account the needs and views of all stakeholders?

5. **Advancing global digital cooperation**: What opportunities are provided by the current focus on digital cooperation resulting from the UN Secretary-General's Roadmap for digital cooperation? What role should the IGF play (and how) in advancing global digital cooperation?

Related issues

○ Digital cooperation, digital sovereignty, multistakeholder cooperation, Internet infrastructure, capacity development, national and regional Internet governance cooperation, Internet Governance Forum, technical Internet governance, inclusive Internet governance

IGF 2021 Issue Area | Trust, security and stability

Description

The borderless nature of the Internet, the digital economy, the increased cyber-physical interdependency through the Internet of things, and the increased use of the Internet in processes such as elections and in the response to global crises such as the pandemic paint a complex policy, legal and operational picture for cybersecurity and stability. Almost all sectors utilise ICTs and rely on the Internet for anything from the simplest to the most strategic tasks. Global supply chains are increasingly interconnected, and the ICT systems supporting them comprise numerous internal and external devices and applications. Managing these issues, mitigating cybersecurity concerns and addressing risks requires cooperation between the public and the private sectors, the technical community, the academic and research sector, and civil society. Collaboration is needed to build awareness of vulnerabilities and increase resilience. An Internet that is trusted by its users requires combatting online gender-based violence, child safety online, cyberbullying, and misinformation, among other challenges.

Discussions on trust, security and stability of the Internet should cover norms, voluntary standards, guidelines, best practices and capacity building to manage cybersecurity-related risks and foster collaboration between countries, institutions and stakeholder groups.

Policy questions

1. **Cybersecurity practices and mechanisms:** What are the good cybersecurity practices and international mechanisms that already exist? Where do those mechanisms fall short and what can be done to strengthen the security and to reinforce the trust?
2. **Ensuring a safe digital space:** How should governments, Internet businesses and other stakeholders protect citizens, including vulnerable citizens, against online exploitation and abuse?
3. **International standards:** How should international standards address the different requirements and preferences of governments and citizens in different countries?
4. **Roles and responsibilities in protecting against cyber-attacks:** Which stakeholders hold responsibility for protecting national governments, businesses and citizens against cyber-attacks?
5. **International rules and state accountability**: How should international rules be strengthened to protect national sovereignty and citizens against attack by malicious state and non-state actors? What can be done to better hold nation-states accountable for cyber-attacks?
6. **Private sector accountability:** What can be done at the national and international level to tackle private sector companies that aid and abet nation state attackers?

Related issues

- ○ Cybersecurity, cyber terrorism, cyber criminals, national strategy, global strategy, cyber mercenaries, COVID-19 security, privatisation of attacks, nation-states, global organisations, accountability mechanisms, cybersecurity and critical infrastructure