

Internet Governance Forum Ireland (IGF Ireland) 2025 Event Report

22 May 2025

DogPatch Labs

Dublin, Ireland

<https://www.igf-ireland.ie>

Introduction

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Ireland is a national initiative that brings together stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector, and the technical community to discuss internet governance issues facing Ireland. The IGF Ireland aligns with the global IGF, a United Nations-led forum that facilitates policy discussions on internet governance.

The inaugural IGF Ireland event was held on 22 May 2025 at DogPatch Labs in Dublin, Ireland. This event marked an important step for Ireland’s ongoing role in internet governance.

Preparatory Process

Host Organisation

The IE Domain Registry CLG (t/a .ie) volunteered as host organization for the inaugural IGF Ireland event. Representatives from .ie also acted as secretariat and coordinator for the IGF Ireland.

Multi-Stakeholder Organising Team

The volunteer Multi-Stakeholder Organising Team (MSOT) was formed in May 2024 and consists of a secretariat and 12 representatives from Government, Civil Society (including academia), the Private Sector, and the Technical Community. Information on the MSOT can be found at <https://www.igf-ireland.ie/committee>.

The MSOT held 4 virtual meetings to prepare for the IGF Ireland 2025. They were held on the following:

Q2 2024	22 May 2024
Q3 2024	14 August 2024
Q4 2024	25 November 2024
Q1 2025	17 February 2025
Q2 2025	22 May 2025 – IGF Ireland 2025

The MSOT representatives approved a Terms of Reference document that laid out expectations for how the preparatory process would align with the main IGF principles (open and transparent, inclusive, bottom-up, non-commercial, and multi-stakeholder). This included a requirement for the IGF Ireland’s agenda to be informed by the results of effective and inclusive public consultation, and a requirement for the secretariat to make

substantial efforts to ensure representation from all four main stakeholder groups on the MSOT.

Public Consultation Process

The IGF Ireland launched a dedicated website (www.igf-ireland.ie), dedicated mailing list, and LinkedIn page in October 2024. A preliminary draft agenda was developed by the MSOT and published on the website, and the public was invited to provide feedback within a 30-day period. 3 individuals responded to the public consultation. Their feedback was incorporated into draft agenda, which was approved by the MSOT.

IGF Ireland 2025 Summary

Keynote Speech: “Setting the Stakes for Ireland’s Digital Future”

Speaker: Dr Johnny Ryan, Enforce

Summary

Dr Ryan discussed what he foresaw as the biggest digital challenges facing Ireland. He referred to these challenges as the “*Six Horsemen of the Digital Apocalypse*.” They were as follows: (1) The collapse of the quality of information; (2) Electoral interference; (3) Broken markets; (4) War and geopolitical instability; (5) Effects of Artificial Intelligence on labour; and, (6) Increased carbon emissions from the other 5 areas. Dr Ryan emphasised that addressing these issues requires political will and effective regulation.

Ministerial Address

Speaker: Minister Patrick O’Donovan, Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media of Ireland

Summary

Minister O’Donovan addressed the inaugural IGF Ireland and discussed the importance of responsible regulation of digital spaces, especially for the prevention of cyber bullying and other harms against minors. He welcomed the new IGF Ireland and discussed how it was a positive step forward for Ireland to take part in these important discussions.

Panel 1: Regulating Online Spaces

Moderator: Dr Valerie Lyons

Panelists:

Anna MacCarthy Adams, Appeals Centre of Europe;

John Evans, Coimisiún na Meán;

Mick Moran, Hotline.ie;

Shauna Joyce, Bird & Bird

Summary

The panel discussed Ireland's role in regulating online digital spaces, especially for content moderation and digital trust and safety. It was highlighted that there is a need for online platforms to prevent and remove harmful content, and for regulators to hold platforms accountable. The evolving regulatory landscape on online safety, especially for the protection of minors, was also discussed, as well as the diverging approaches to online safety in the EU and the US. It was discussed how online safety is an increasingly complex and interdisciplinary issue that requires joint action from regulators and online platforms.

Panel 2: Moving Beyond Compliance

Moderator: Chris Disspain

Panelists:

Alan Woods, CleanDNS;

Clare Heenan, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications;

Dr Stephen Farrell, Trinity College Dublin;

Dr Valerie Lyons, BH Consulting

Summary

The panel discussed what it means for organisations to “move beyond compliance,” and the difference between being “compliant” and being “ethical.” The panel discussed how regulatory compliance should be a “jumping off point” for organisations, and that ethical and responsible innovation can foster trust in consumers and is an effective approach to regulatory compliance. The need for effective regulatory enforcement was highlighted, especially for organisations that treat fines as a cost of doing business. The panel also discussed the need for legislation to be proportionate, and to avoid unintended impacts on good actors.

Panel 3: Geopolitics & Internet Governance

Moderator: Eileen Gallagher

Panelists:

Eoin Duggan, Department of Foreign Affairs;

Jim Clarken, Oxfam Ireland;

Joseph Stephens, National Cyber Security Centre;

Dr TJ McIntyre, University College Dublin

Summary

The panel explored how the current geopolitical climate impacts internet governance and digital sovereignty. They discussed the state's responsibility to protect citizens must extend to the cyber domain. Upholding digital rights as fundamental human rights was highlighted, as well as human rights being at the core of Irish values. Finally, the panel discussed the importance of "who's in the room," and stressed the need for more inclusive representation in governance discussions, noting the private sector's dominant role.

Panel 4: Diversity and Inclusion in Internet Governance

Moderator:

Oyinkan Adebimpe

Panelists:

Blessing Usoro, Cyber for Schoolgirls;

Dr Esther Murphy, DigiAcademy;

Jennifer Cox, Women in Cybersecurity UK & Ireland;

Sabrina Steinberga, YouthDIG Participant

Summary

The panel examined the growing challenges to Diversity and Inclusion in internet governance. They highlighted various barriers faced by marginalised groups, including women, youth, and individuals with intellectual disabilities, in fields like cyber security and internet governance. The panel also discussed the need to value inclusive products and provide adequate funding for Diversity and Inclusion programs. Panelists also stressed the need for actors in internet governance actors to create safe and welcoming environments for all voices.

Panel 5: Ethical AI

Moderator: Eimear Loughnane

Panelists:

Dr Barry Scannell, William Fry;

Dr Eamonn Cahill, Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment;

Rena Maycock, Chirp;

Shahed Warreth, PhD Candidate at Swansea University

Summary

The panel discussed what “ethical AI” means, and the importance of ethical and responsible innovation. The panel discussed the importance AI literacy, and for organisations using AI systems to be aware of their legal obligations. It was also highlighted that data used to train AI models should be fine tuned to prevent harmful training inputs. The panel explored various ways that AI can be used to promote positive outcomes, including for child protection, and in detecting and preventing terrorist propaganda.

Attendance & Feedback

Attendance

64 individuals attended the inaugural IGF Ireland in person. The breakdown by stakeholder group is as follows:

Stakeholder Group	Attendees
Government	16
Civil Society	16
Technical Community	14
Private Sector	10
Other/Undisclosed	8
Total	64

Participant Feedback

5 attendees responded to the call for feedback on the event. Of these, all of them rated the overall experience at the IGF Ireland 2025 very highly. Each respondent reported that there was a high quality and diversity of speakers, and that the panel discussions were relevant to current digital challenges in Ireland.

Suggestions for improving future events included having fewer or shorter sessions to allow for more networking. It was also suggested that there be more variety in formats instead of relying solely on panel discussions.

Budget Summary

The IGF Ireland 2025 was generously supported by a combination of sponsors. The Internet Society Foundation provided \$5000USD through their grant programme for Internet Governance Forum Events. Blacknight Solutions provided in-kind contributions through their website builder and domain name registration services. The IE Domain Registry CLG provided funding for services not covered by the Internet Society Foundation grant.

Expenses

Item	
Event Space and AV Services	€2706.37
Food & Drink	€2076.95
Website, Photography, Videography & Speaker Fees	€3874.47
Total	€8,657.79

Sponsors

Sponsor	Contribution Type	Amount
Blacknight Solutions	In-Kind	€724.47
IE Domain Registry CLG	Cash	€3609.51
Internet Society	Cash	€4323.81
Total		€8,657.79

Contact Details

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