

Your guide to business views on IGF 2020 discussions



An open, stable and trusted Internet is not only vital for business operations worldwide but it is also a prerequisite to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the voice of business, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) considers Internet governance to be critical for the promotion of international trade, economic development, and innovation. In today's digital economy, Internet governance has implications for businesses operating all over the world, regardless of location, sector, or company size.

The importance of this agenda cannot be understated in the context of COVID-19, both in terms of containing the pandemic and enabling a sustainable economic rebuild. While we still cannot predict what the new normal will look like, one thing is clear: the Internet and digital technologies will be a vital component of a post-COVID recovery. This is why, in responding to the crisis, global leaders should not forget that it is imperative to devise and maintain a long-term strategic perspective to spur a sustainable economic recovery. Global leaders from all stakeholder groups must work collectively to ensure that actions are coherent with existing commitments to expand meaningful access to technology, safeguard the free flow of data across borders, ensure trust online and protect the climate.

ICC and its Business Action to Support the Information Society (BASIS) initiative, works to ensure private sector views are represented at the Internet Governance Forum and all other forums where the future of the Internet is under consideration. We have been actively involved in discussions on Internet for over 15 years, continually making the case for business to be included in all policy discussions and decisions on the Internet and information society.

This guide concisely sets out business views on the key issues up for discussion at IGF 2020. To learn more about our work visit www.iccwbo.org or join the discussion at [@iccwbo](https://twitter.com/iccwbo).

We look forward to working with you in this consequential and fast moving policy area!

1. DATA

The IGF 2020 Data track involves discussions on ensuring that the benefits of the data revolution contribute to inclusive social and economic growth, while also effectively addressing privacy and data protection challenges. The track will work towards identifying best practices for the development of human-centric data governance frameworks at the national, regional and international levels.

- Data has proven itself to be a key driver of economic and social development in both developed and developing countries. The Internet and internet-enabled services, which rely on open cross-border data flows are vital for companies across all sectors of the economy and are particularly critical for small and medium sized businesses. 
- ICC urges governments to ensure that all citizens and companies can realize the full potential of the Internet by adopting policies that facilitate the adoption of new technologies and the global movement of data that supports them. Policymakers should support open cross-border data flows, while also ensuring that users have adequate privacy, security, and IP protections and that those protections are implemented in a manner that is transparent, non-discriminatory and not a disguised restriction on trade.
- Governments should adopt flexible, globally-consistent, and market-driven policies that fuel innovation and facilitate the adoption of new and emerging technologies. When designing and deploying new technologies, such as AI, all relevant stakeholders should work together to ensure human-centric and holistic approaches that take into account social/cultural factors, values and ensure trust.
- Governments should work in partnership with business to enable convergence and to ensure that regulation does not create unnecessary burdens or unintended consequences that could stifle the potential for economic and societal benefits that deployment of new technologies and innovative business models can bring.

2. ENVIRONMENT

The IGF 2020 Environment track will explore the relationship between the the Internet, digital technologies and the environment, to better understand how these technologies can contribute to a more sustainable future. Discussions will consider how ICTs and digital technologies can be harnessed for climate action, while also mitigating any negative impact.

- If we are to avoid a climate crisis, there is only one way forward: deliberate and ambitious climate action on a global scale to keep the global temperature increase to below 1.5°C —as set out in the landmark Paris Agreement—and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.
- ICTs and digital technologies have a transformational impact on our ability to meet this goal, as well as all 17 SDGs outlined in the UN 2030 Agenda  Sustainable Development. To achieve this, all stakeholders must work together to prioritize the 2030 Agenda.
- While more companies than ever before are placing sustainability at the heart of their business strategy, investments and operations, the scale and speed at which we must transform our economies requires additional action from policymakers.
- Policymakers must create an enabling policy environment and channel finance to support the acceleration and encouragement of private sector innovation and break-through technologies, as well as the scale-up of technology research, development and deployment at the scale and speed needed to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

3. INCLUSION

The IGF 2020 Inclusion track aims to provide a framework for assessing policies that can improve access to equitable opportunities in a digital age. Digital inclusion is about identifying and connecting communities with little or no access to the Internet, creating inclusive information and knowledge societies, and bringing everyone to the table throughout the decision-making process.

- Private sector investment and innovation has transformed the Internet from an information exchange network to the platform for sustainable social and economic development we recognise it to be today.
- In order to reach their development potential, ICT must be accessible, affordable, and relevant to the needs of all citizens. Connecting the unconnected is not just about infrastructure and access to mobile, the Internet and new technologies. Meaningful connectivity also requires focus on adoption barriers, including creating an enabling environment for the creation and availability of locally relevant content in local languages and addressing skills gaps.
- In pursuit of these goals and of a people-centric Information Society, policymakers must improve their understanding of how ICTs work in practice, including knowledge of the ICT ecosystem, the roles of the various stakeholders and relevant policy issues. Frameworks that enable Internet connectivity should be based on light-touch ICT policy and regulations, encourage competition and the entry of new players into the ICT ecosystem to foster the emergence of innovative products, services and business models.
- Multistakeholder efforts are necessary for the continued support of capacity building initiatives that empower individuals and businesses locally as content producers. Multistakeholder efforts are also needed to develop business models that are unique and relevant to national economies.
- To enhance inclusiveness and diversity online, attention should be given to developing tools that promote Internet access and use to a wider spectrum of users including women, the elderly, people living with disabilities, and non-English speakers.

4. TRUST

The IGF 2020 Trust track will discuss strategies for protecting all aspects of the digital ecosystem, as security and safety are prerequisites to economic growth and a healthy digital environment beneficial to all. The security, stability, and resilience of the systems, infrastructure, and devices that underpin the Internet, as well as; the safety users online are of paramount importance.

- Stakeholder cooperation is essential for strengthening Internet security and responding to the large and growing range of cybersecurity threats to the global Internet. Stakeholder collaboration is important to promote a culture of security and to build trust among businesses and users with appropriate legislation in place to combat cybercrime.
- Policy frameworks should promote robust and appropriate data protection that guarantees user privacy while also supporting an efficient and innovative marketplace. Governments should assure that their policies and regulations are up to date and reflect best practices regarding the protection of privacy and security.
- Companies should adopt recognised and applicable best practices to ensure that personal data is appropriately secured as technology and services evolve. Voluntary compliance with broadly accepted industry guidelines is an effective approach to ensuring privacy and security standards.

- Rights that people have offline must also be protected online, in accordance with the rule of law and international human rights legal obligations. Freedom of expression and the right to seek, receive and impart information in a safe environment is essential to protect the Internet's ability to generate innovation and commercial opportunities for all.

5. INTERNET GOVERNANCE

The IGF offers a unique, open and inclusive setting for multistakeholder dialogue around issues, norms, principles, and decision-making processes related to the use and evolution of the Internet.

- The very nature of the global Internet necessitates an effective multistakeholder governance model to be at its core. To this end, business looks forward to contributing to the possible evolution of the Internet Governance Forum—and, specifically, to ensuring that this important mechanism is strengthened, agile and capable of supporting an inclusive and interdependent digital world.
- Effective multistakeholder Internet governance includes continued efforts by all stakeholders (individually and collectively—including private sector led, multistakeholder and intergovernmental) to address Internet-related issues and the promotion of greater cooperation among organisations.
- Such cooperation should be guided by the objectives of information sharing, raising awareness and where appropriate, coherence among work programmes and collaboration.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (ICC)

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the institutional representative of more than 45 million companies in over 100 countries. ICC's core mission is to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Through a unique mix of advocacy, solutions and standard setting, we promote international trade, responsible business conduct and a global approach to regulation, in addition to providing market-leading dispute resolution services. Our members include many of the world's leading companies, SMEs, business associations and local chambers of commerce.