



REPORTING DAILY FROM THE 11th INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

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Highlights from pre-events

In the past year, since the world's leaders agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Development, **sustainable development** goals (SDGs) have been a main theme at many major digital policy events. Unsurprisingly, sustainable development was one of the most discussed topics during Day 0, a day dedicated to pre-events which precede the main meeting that runs from Tuesday to Friday this week.

During the Host-Country-led Workshop and High-level Meeting, speakers made a clear link between Internet governance and the SDGs. The Internet's core values of openness, freedom, resilience, safety, and decentralisation are fundamental for enabling inclusive and sustainable growth.

The multistakeholder model, described as the DNA of the Internet, is essential to addressing the different divides, including North/South, gender, rural/urban, economic, social, and others.

Participants of the Internet Society's Collaborative Leadership Exchange suggested that communities are connected with other communities sharing similar issues, and that grassroots programmes for youth are developed to ensure the continuation of efforts to attain the goals.

Meanwhile, the interactive session on Advancing Solutions for Connectivity: Improving Global Coordination and Collaboration referred to several projects and initiatives that aim to achieve universal Internet access by 2020.

In Community Networks: How to Build Connectivity? the session discussed the opportunities offered by community-built networks, and the various economic, social, and regulatory obstacles in developing them.

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Speakers and participants share a light moment during the IGF Newcomers Track: IG Mentors Session, on Monday, 5th December. The IGF Newcomers Track is a new feature in this year's programme; [read more on page 4](#).
Credit: Glenn McKnight

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While communities need to be active in looking for alternatives to get connected, several projects that aim to bring access to communities – such as Project Loon and Free Basics – were criticised by some as ‘Internet for the poor’. These offered second-rate digital citizenship with access to a limited set of content and services. The realistic alternatives remained an open question which will hopefully be addressed during this IGF.

The Geneva Internet Platform’s monthly IG Barometer of Trends, which determines the presence of specific issues in the digital policy debate in comparison to previous months, showed that the **digital economy** has been a prominent issue throughout most of the year. This trend continues at the IGF. The session on OECD – Broadband Policies for LAC: A Digital Economy Toolkit¹ discussed the recently launched toolkit, which aims to assist countries in the region to enhance their digital prospects. It is the result a two-year project involving 26 LAC countries and the combined resources of the OECD and the International Development Bank.

While stressing the importance of coordination across local and federal levels to overcome bottlenecks in the deployment of infrastructure, speakers also acknowledged that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The toolkit was also discussed in IGF LAC Space² session.

The Best Practice Forum on Cybersecurity³ referred to the fact that governments and the private sector have different mandates, and therefore, **cybersecurity** discussions often take place on two different levels.

Along similar lines, it was noted that actors tend to discuss issues within their own stakeholder group, resulting in silos. Speakers also referred to the Internet Society’s collaborative security approach, in which collective responsibility is needed to ensure a secure cyberspace. In The Internet of Toys and Things⁴, speakers noted that the Internet of Things introduced new sets of cybersecurity and privacy-related issues.

Risks to journalists have increased manifold, and can be mitigated by creating international standards for governments and intermediaries to protect online freedom of expression, emphasising digital etiquette for media houses and journalists, and tracking the digital trail of attackers.

In Protecting Safety of Journalists Online and Offline in Global Internet Governance Ecosystem⁵, the UN Special Rapporteur on

Freedom of Opinion and Expression criticised governments that criminalise reporters and equate them with terrorists.

The session on International Media Support – Operational Responses to Online Harassment⁶ noted that female bloggers and/or activists are usually the targets of **online harassment**. The best response, according to one speaker, is not from the victim herself, but from the community. ‘When positive responses are made by men, they have a positive impact for the situation, and for the victim.’

The Brazilian Internet Bill of Rights, known as the Marco Civil, was the subject of a vibrant discussion during Internet Bill of Rights: Enforcement and Impact⁷. Speakers noted that the most challenging part of the process – the implementation – is taking place right now, with over 200 suggested amendments being proposed. Some argued that many of the changes aim to weaken provisions such as net neutrality, non-liability of intermediaries, personal data protection, and privacy.

In UNICEF – Global Kids Online: From Research on Children’s Rights in the Digital Age to National and International Policy⁸ – which discussed the results of the first year of research as part of the Global Kids Online initiative – a call was made for stakeholders to seek the opinions of children. The younger generation should not be excluded from debates on **children’s safety** and their **rights online**.

Giganet’s Annual Symposium⁹ included a wide range of themes: search engines and the transparency of their algorithms; the meaning and evolution of crypto-discourses, from Cyber-Punk to the Snowden era; and parallels between the Law of the Sea and the Internet. A discussion on the origins of the IGF pointed towards it being the result of compromise and specific circumstances. The concepts of digital constitutionalism and digital colonialism triggered engaging and complex academic debates.

Other sessions were dedicated to the work of civil society organisations, to other themes such as deliberative polling, and advocacy and research related to human rights, and to policy tools such as the Internet Legislation Atlas¹⁰, an initiative to compile legislation in Middle East and North African countries related to the Internet.

The themes discussed during the pre-events will undoubtedly reappear in many discussions in the next few days.

REPORTING FROM THE IGF 2016: WHAT TO EXPECT

Every year, thousands of participants gather for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to discuss, network, and possibly come up with innovative solutions for some of the world’s digital-related challenges.

At each IGF meeting, hundreds of workshops are organised, from traditional sessions, to best practice forums, and other new formats that develop each year. The sheer number of workshops and the parallel sessions make it a challenge for the community to follow and absorb the vast amount of information and data shared during the week. Not to mention a host of other pre-event sessions and other events that take place on the sidelines of the four-day meeting.

This week, the *GIP Digital Watch* observatory will be providing just-in-time reporting with the aim of addressing these challenges – an initiative supported by the Internet Society and ICANN.

Reports from IGF sessions will be available within hours of the end of each session on our dedicated page – **dig.watch/igf2016** – together with analysis, data mining, and visualisations that summarise the main themes. In addition, a daily newsletter will be available online and at the IGF venue every day of this week. A final report will then present a thematic analysis after the IGF closes.

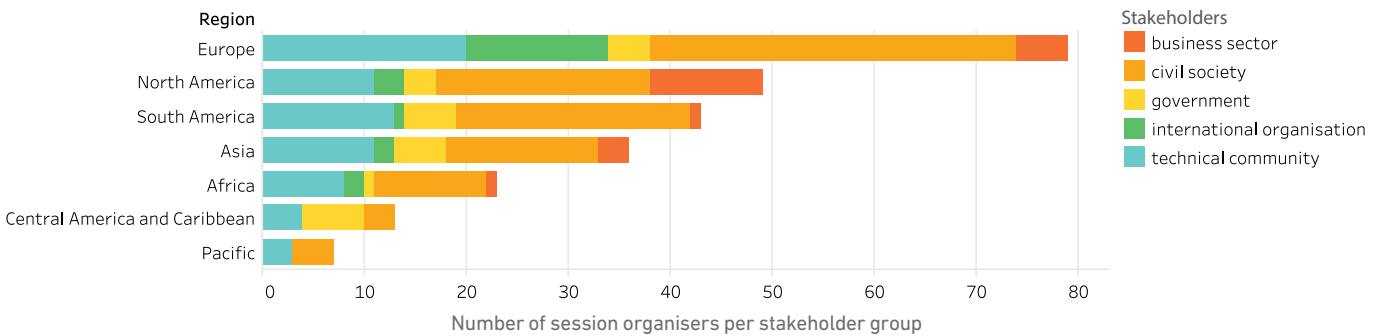
The demographics of the IGF

The IGF, like any other ecosystem, has its own demography. As can be seen in the illustration below, the IGF ecosystem radiates both ways from the centre that steers the process and from edges that provide new ideas and inputs.

Each circle in the IGF's demography plays an important role. The Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG), the host organisers, and the Secretariat, are at the core. Together, they ensure coherence and the continuous dynamics of the IGF ecosystem.

Session organisers, in the next circle, are the essential link between the wider Internet governance community and the MAG. They select topics,

The regional distribution of the main stakeholders is proportional. Civil society takes 40–50% in all regions except for the Caribbean and Central America; their share is 30%. The technical community covers 28% with a higher presence among session organisers from Africa and Pacific. A possible explanation is that in these two regions, the technical community still has higher importance for Internet access challenges (international connection, local loops, Internet exchange points). Among governments, the lowest participation is from Africa. In the business sector most of the session organisers come from the United States, the main hub of the Internet industry.



recruit speakers, and try to persuade the MAG to accept their proposals.

Session organisers are the most interesting segment of the IGF's demography. While the MAG and session speakers (the other two circles) are selected following gender, stakeholder, and regional quotas, there are no quotas for session organisers. Anyone can propose an IGF session. Thus, their proposals are the most relevant indicator of priorities in the Internet governance debate and how that debate is framed.

Our analysis of the session organisers' demographics shows that most organisers are from Europe (31.60%) followed by North America (19.60%), and South America (17.20%). Europe's major role in IGF activities has been constant since the early days of the IGF process (Athens, 2006).

By far, civil society is the most active in the IGF ecosystem (45.20%), followed by the technical community (28%); other stakeholders – governments, international organisations, and the business sector – cover less than 10% of session organisers.

Balanced gender participation (male – 52.40%; female – 47.60%) is achieved due to higher participation of women in the civil society group. In other stakeholder groups, men are more frequently represented in session organisers.

This snapshot of the IGF's demography through a survey of session organisers provides some indications of where future capacity development efforts should be made. A priority would be strengthening the participation of governments, in particular from Africa and Asia.

Like any ecosystem, the future of the IGF ecosystem will depend on achieving a reasonable balance in IGF demography representing different issues, approaches, and interests. The first successes are there: the IGF has achieved gender balance in an otherwise male-dominated ICT sector. But much more needs to be done.

Read the full article and access the interactive visualisation with additional data.



What's new at IGF 2016?

This year's IGF, the first after the 10-year renewal of the Forum's mandate – brings several novelties for the thousands of registered *in situ* and online participants. With timely topics for the main sessions, new dynamic coalitions (DCs) and best practice forums (BPFs), and several innovative session format, the MAG and the IGF community have created a high-quality programme that caters for the different needs and expectations of participants.

■ Main sessions

Main sessions are a tradition at the IGF, but the novelty this year comes in the topics being covered. In line with the meeting's overarching theme – Enabling Inclusive and Sustainable Growth – two main sessions will focus on the connections between the Internet and sustainable development: Assessing the Role of Internet Governance in the Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Development, Internet and Inclusive Growth. For comparison, IGF 2015 had one main session on Internet Economy and Sustainable Development. Trade agreements and the Internet and Shaping the Future of Internet Governance are the themes for two new main sessions. For the first time in the history of the IGF, national and regional IGF initiatives will have their own main session, giving them an opportunity to showcase their work and gain more visibility within the wider IGF community.

■ Best Practice Forums

The IGF community started working on BPFs in 2014, as activities carried out inter-sessionally (between two annual IGF meetings) and resulting in 'living' outcome documents that could later be used to inform policy debates beyond the IGF. Two new themes have been chosen for BPFs this year: Gender and Access (building on the 2015 BPF on Countering Online Abuse Against Women Online), and Cybersecurity (building on the 2014–2015 BPFs on Spam and Computer Emergency Response Teams/Computer Security Incident Response Teams).

■ Dynamic Coalitions

DCs have been part of the IGF since 2006. They gather members from various stakeholder groups who have an interest in a specific

topic. Two new DCs have emerged over the past year on Community Connectivity and Innovative Approaches to Connecting the Unconnected. These, and 12 other DCs, will have their own meetings at the IGF. Surveys on the activities of most were published before the meeting, asking for community feedback.

■ New session formats

Usually, an IGF meeting includes main session, workshops, open forums, DC meetings, and BPFs. This year's programme brings several innovations:

- **Lightning sessions.** These 20-minute sessions will feature presentations on pre-determined specific topics (such as violent extremism and human rights online, access to knowledge and culture, and governance of cyber identity). Six such sessions are scheduled for each of the four IGF days, between 13.00 and 15.30.
- **Corner sessions.** Participants will propose topics ad-hoc; the four most popular topics will be discussed in groups, and each group will report on its conclusions. These will take place on Thursday, 8th December, between 09.00 and 13.00 (local time).
- **Unconference.** Participants interested in delivering 20-minute presentations can sign up for a slot during this loosely structured session emphasising the informal exchange of information and ideas between participants. Presentations will be delivered on Thursday, 8th December, between 15.00 and 18.00 (local time).

■ IGF Newcomers Track

Daily sessions have been planned for newcomers at the IGF, with the aim of helping them better understand the IGF process and more easily integrate into the IGF community. A Newcomers Mentor Session on Monday, 5th December (12.00–13.30) will be complemented with knowledge café sessions (Tuesday–Friday, 13.30–14.15), all aimed to give participants an opportunity to have informal talks with some of the most experienced IGF stakeholders.

