Internet Governance

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Topics Covered

Part 1

- What is Internet Governance

- Why and how to get involved?

Part 2

- Debrief from the Summit of the Future and WSIS +20

Self-Regulation

- Social norms worked well in the beginning of the Internet
- Self-regulation still works in a group with strong community ties, by applying peer pressure or exclusion (e.g. Wikipedia)
- ISPs try to self-regulate by imposing standards of behaviour for their customers
- Should ISPs make decisions in lieu of legal authorities? Should they judge what is acceptable?
- Self-regulation doesn't always work, e.g. IoT market

consumers want low prices $ manufacturers save costs on security
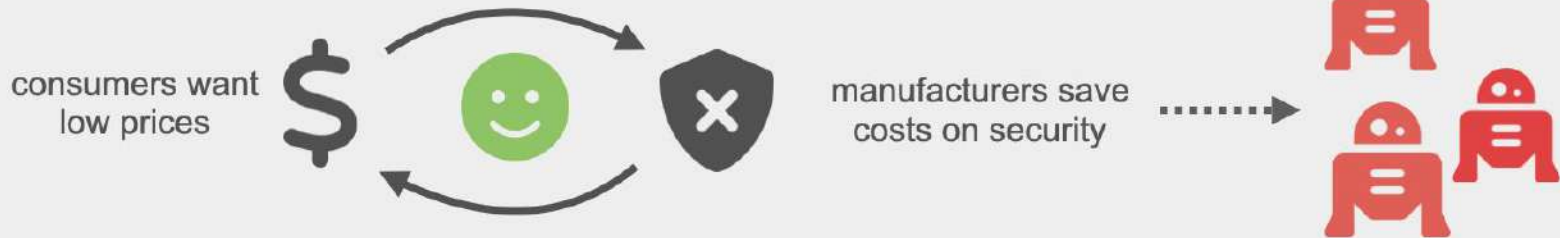
What is "Internet Governance"?

"Internet Governance (IG) is the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programmes that shape the evolution and use of the Internet"

- World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) 2005

The Multi-Stakeholder Model
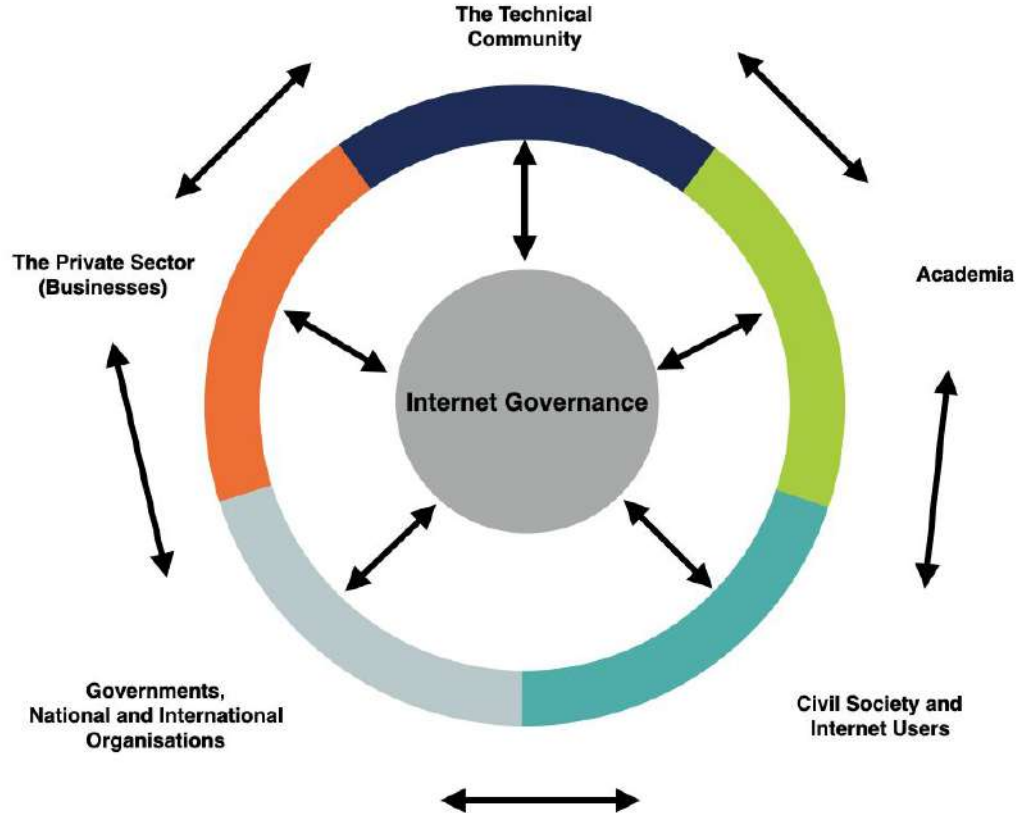
Main Policy Making Principles

- Promote the open, distributed and interconnected nature of the Internet
- Maintain technological neutrality
- Encourage multi-stakeholder co-operation in policy development processes
- Ensure transparency, fair process, and accountability
- See NetMundial, OECD, Council of Europe, etc.

Centralised vs. Decentralised

Small But Important Differences

Left diagram: **Information Security** (political and social stability) — containing **Cybersecurity**

Right diagram: **Cybersecurity** (protecting Internet infrastructure) — containing **Information Security**

Why get involved?

- The wider Internet governance system is essential to the stability of the global Internet and should not be undermined

- Un- or ill-informed regulation can do a lot of damage

  - affect your operations and bottom line

  - affect RIPE NCC's own operations, bottom line and ability to serve our members effectively (sanctions, NIS (2) Directive)

How to get involved?

- Attend IG events, either in person or online
- EU consultations
- Your national government's consultations
- Join the discussion on the RIPE Cooperation Working Group

Why the Technical Community's Voice Matters
https://labs.ripe.net/author/suzanne_taylor_muzzin/why-the-technical-communitys-voice-matters/

Global Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

- Largest forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on public policy issues related to the Internet

- No negotiated outcome, instead:
  - Open and inclusive dialogue and the exchange of ideas
  - Inform and inspire
  - Facilitate a common understanding

- Yearly report and a summary of key messages

Other IGFs

- EuroDIG (12-14 May 2025, Strasbourg)
  - Key messages from 2024: digitalising public services, messenger interoperability, EU policies (Data Governance Act and Data Act)

- SEEDIG (25-26 November 2024, Belgrade)

- CAIGF (summer 2025)

- Many national and Youth IGFs

Recent History and Upcoming Events

- 2018 UN Secretary-General established the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation as well as an IGF Leadership Panel
- 2021 UN Secretary-General published a report called Our Common Agenda in which he proposed a Global Digital Compact (GDC)
- Sept 2024: United Nations Summit of the Future
  - Agree on Global Digital Compact
  - Discuss role of the IGF as a source of multistakeholder expertise
- 2025: UN General Assembly
  - 20-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society
  - review the IGF's mandate

Internet Governance e-learning Course

- Six self-paced modules: Text, images, videos, questions, activities
- Takes approximately 3 hours to complete
- Free to anyone

RIPE NCC Academy link:
academy.ripe.net

More Information

The History of Internet Governance
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QUrkRtC2Js

An Introduction to Internet Governance
https://www.diplomacy.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AnIntroductiontoIG_7th-edition.pdf

Global Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

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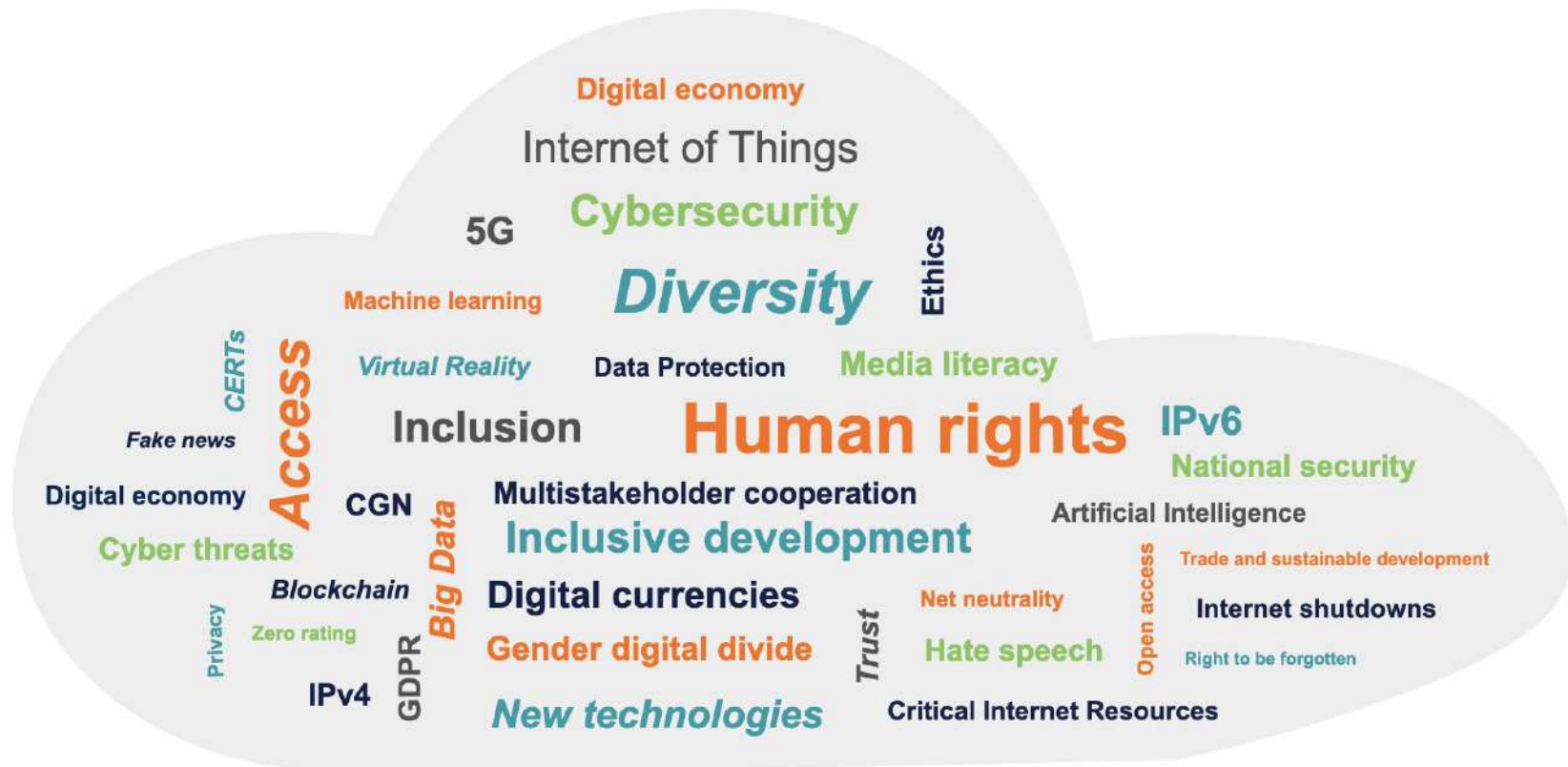
- 15-19 December 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- "Building our Multistakeholder Digital Future"
- Themes:
  - Harnessing innovation and balancing risks in the digital space
  - Enhancing the digital contribution to peace, development, and sustainability
  - Advancing human rights and inclusion in the digital age
  - Improving digital governance for the Internet We Want

IGF 2023

- 8500 participants (online and on-site)
- 175 countries
- 300+ sessions

Key messages:

https://www.intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/300/26576

The Road Ahead

Challenges

- The increasing consolidation of the Internet industry
- Digital sovereignty / Internet fragmentation
- Attracting and keeping the interest of business, governments and technical community
- IG events: Lack of secure funding and no tangible results or decisions
- Some important discussions, esp. about economy and trade, are not open

Challenges

- Successful IGFs with clearer outcomes
- Business and government interest rejuvenated
- Increased commitment to the multistakeholder approach

- Support diminishes for a multistakehoder approach
- Governments re-assert unilateral regulation of Internet
- Globally, governments look to international organisations to govern

Questions & Comments ?

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Recent Internet Governance Events

1.

Global Digital
Compact (GDC)

2.

World Summit on
Information Society
(WSIS) +20 review

Global Digital Compact

UN Global Digital Compact (GDC)

GDC in a nutshell

- Global digital compact (GDC) is an annex to the Pact of the Future

- Adopted at the United Nations Summit of the Future in New York on September 22-23, 2024

- By consensus of 193 member states of the UN

- GDC is a *"comprehensive framework for global governance of digital technology and artificial intelligence"*

- Not legally binding, intended to provide governments with guidance

UN Global Digital Compact (GDC)

5 objectives of GDC - to put it in perspective

- Close all digital divides and accelerate progress across the **Sustainable Development Goals**

- Expand **inclusion** in and benefits from the digital economy for all

- Foster an inclusive, open safe and secure digital space that respects, protects and promote **human rights**

- Advance responsible, equitable and interoperable **data governance** approaches

- Enhance international governance of **artificial intelligence** for the benefit of humanity

Reaffirmation of the status quo of the Internet Governance

- The **multi-stakeholder nature** of the Internet governance is recognised, with full involvement of other stakeholders

- **Technical community** highlighted as a stakeholder group among Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and academic community

  - *"in their respective roles and responsibilities"*

- The importance of the **Internet Governance Forum** acknowledged as the primary multi-stakeholder platform for discussion of Internet governance issues

UN Global Digital Compact (GDC)

Concerns expressed by multi-stakeholder community

- Critique on the process
  - Lack of collaboration between the member states in the negotiation process
  - Lack of transparency on how various positions of non-governmental stakeholders were recorded and incorporated into the document

- Reaffirmation of the status quo of the Internet Governance, however:
  - Last minute amendment proposals undermined the multistakeholder governance model of the Internet
  - The paragraphs that addressed the funding of the IGF were taken out
  - China and G77 group (134 countries) advocated for a more state-driven approach to Internet governance and digital technologies

- Risk of duplicating efforts with new institutions (Digital Cooperation Forum) instead of strengthening existing ones - **Geneva - NY tension**

UN Global Digital Compact (GDC)

What does it mean for the future?

- The document autorises a new set of processes and organs - a shift towards more UN involvement in Internet Governance processes
    - The UN Tech Envoy will have general digital governance coordination functions

- What role the GDC will play in the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)+20 review?
    - "We look forward to the **WSIS+20 review** in 2025 and invite it to identify how these processes and forums can support the contribution of all stakeholders to **implementation** of the Compact"

WSIS +20

World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)+20 review

Timeline

- WSIS+20 High-level event - May 2024 Geneva, Switzerland

- WSIS+20 High-level event - July 2025 Geneva, Switzerland

- UN High-level meeting on the WSIS process (review of the implementation) - Sep 2025 New York, USA

World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)+20 review

What does it mean for the future?

- WSIS 2005 (Tunis Agenda) defined the past twenty years of the Internet Governance
  - Recognised bottom-up coordination, collaboration and inclusion as the most effective way to govern the Internet
  - Established the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

- WSIS 2024: "The WSIS mechanisms have facilitated a functional interplay between **multilateral** and **multistakeholder** governance. These different approaches to governance should not be seen as mutually exclusive, but as complementary"

- Will WSIS+20 end up supporting the GDC and its implementation?

- WSIS 2025 - the IGF mandate beyond 2025 will be considered

Upcoming Internet Governance Events

SEEDIG 9

Belgrade, Serbia

25-26 Nov 2024

Global IGF

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

15-19 Dec 2024

Questions & Comments **?**

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