

# Internet Governance BAROMETER (JUNE 2018)

IG Barometer indicates the presence of specific IG issues in the public policy debate in comparison to the previous month

## Global IG Architecture



At the G7 Summit in Charlevoix, Canada, G7 leaders endorsed a 'Common vision for the future of artificial intelligence (AI)', that will, among other, endeavour to promote the human-centric and commercial adoption of AI. [The European Commission](#) hosted a high-level meeting with representatives of European philosophical and non-confessional organisations, to discuss ethical and social challenges related to AI. [The Commission's ethical guidelines](#) for the development of AI will be finalised by the end of 2018.

The 13th annual IGF meeting will be hosted by the government of France at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, on 12–14 November 2018.

The US National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) invited stakeholders to comment on four broad issues to inform its international internet policy priorities, [including](#) on (a) responses to restrictions to the free flow of information and freedom of expression online; (b) US priorities within ICANN, DNS policy, and improvements to the IGF; (c) international venues to address cybersecurity threats and online privacy issues; and (d) emerging technologies which international policy discussions should focus on.

## Sustainable development



Malaysia is considering the possibility of amending its constitution to include Internet access as a fundamental right, as it looks to bridge the digital divide between the urban and rural areas. [The status of constitutional right](#) is likely to give additional incentives for the government at state and federal level to boost efforts to provide the service to all Malaysians.

## Security



The US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) unveiled a new round on sanctions on five Russian entities and three Russian individuals, charged for directly contributing to improving Russia's offensive cyber and underwater capabilities through their work with the Russian Federal Security Service. [The Cyber Security Agency of Singapore](#) refuted these findings.

Cyber-attacks on Singapore increased during Kim-Trump summit. Some 40,000 attacks were launched on Singapore from June 11 to June 12, cybersecurity researchers reported. [On that day](#), Singapore received 4.5 times more attacks than the USA or Canada and this anomaly is being brought into connection with the meeting of US President Donald Trump and North Korean President Kim Jong-un in Singapore. [The Cyber Security Agency of Singapore](#) refuted these findings.

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## E-commerce and Internet economy



same relevance

Uganda has imposed a tax on social media to raise money for the country. Social media users will need to pay 200 Ugandan shillings (\$0.05) a day to use popular platforms like Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp. The law comes into effect on 1 July.

Members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) – China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan - adopted a

joint communiqué in which the countries will aim to simplify trade procedures, specifically on trade in goods. Member states also touched upon governance aspects, and referred to 'the importance of joint efforts needed to support and strengthen the multilateral trade system based on the standards and principles of the World Trade Organization.'

## Digital rights



increasing relevance

ICANN's court battle against Germany-based domain name registrar EPAG continues. After having dismissed ICANN's case which argued that EPAG should continue to collect administrative and technical contact information when domain names are registered, the Regional Court in Bonn decided to revisit this ruling, and gave EPAG two weeks to comment on ICANN's appellate papers. Meanwhile, ICANN has outlined elements for a possible 'unified access model' that would allow WHOIS personal information to be accessed by users with a legitimate interest (such as law enforcement agencies).

MEPs in the European Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee (LIBE) have voted in favour of a resolution that asks the European Commission to suspend its

Privacy Shield agreement with the USA unless data protection safeguards are introduced by 1 September.

The USA announced its withdrawal from the UN Human Rights Council over alleged political bias, criticising it for failing to hold human rights abusers accountable.

In her statement to the 38th session of the Human Rights Council, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women spoke about combatting online/ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls, calling for new laws and stronger regulatory frameworks.

## Jurisdiction and legal issues



increasing relevance

The Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament (JURI) adopted the proposed version of new copyright rules, sparking debate. The directive's controversial Article 13 requires Internet platforms hosting a large amount of user-generated content to take measures to monitor and identify copyright infringements. It is feared that this could affect freedom of speech and lead to forms of censorship, especially with regard to memes, re-mixes, and similar content. Another disputed provision is Article 11, which could impose a 'snippet tax' for companies when they use short extracts from other news publications.

In a preliminary decision, the Vienna Commercial Court ruled that YouTube is not a pure intermediary and that it should prevent third parties from uploading material that violates copyright rules. Since YouTube is sorting, filtering, and linking content on its platform, it can not be considered as a pure intermediary and rely on safe harbor provisions.

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## Infrastructure



same relevance

Solomon Islands has dropped its contract with Chinese company Huawei to build an undersea cable to the small island state. Instead, it will receive funds from Australia, which is refocusing its foreign aid programmes to the Pacific. [↗](#)

## Net neutrality



same relevance

In the USA, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Restoring Internet Freedom Order took effect in June, repealing the 2015 Open Internet Order and restoring the classification of broadband Internet access service as a lightly-regulated information service. [↗](#)

The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) adopted a Joint Statement for an Open Internet [↗](#) that outlines the common scope and grounds of net neutrality frameworks in Europe and India and show the parties' commitment to supervising and enforcing rules and guidelines for an open Internet in their regions.

## New technologies (IoT, AI, etc.)



increasing relevance

Researchers continued to achieve several breakthroughs in AI. Among them is IBM, which launched an AI system that can engage in reasoned arguments with humans on complex topics. Project Debater, trained in advance on debating methods but not on the details of the debates, 'digests massive texts, constructs a well-structured speech on a given topic, delivers it with clarity and purpose, and rebuts its opponent'.

Researchers at MIT's Computer Science and AI Laboratory developed an AI system that uses wireless signals to 'see' through walls. [↗](#) Called RF-Pose, the system uses a deep neural network to spot human motion using radio frequency signals reflected from people's bodies. The system could be used in search and rescue operations after natural disasters, and for medical purposes. [↗](#)

In a blog post, Google's CEO described a series of principles which are to guide the company's work on AI. [↗](#) These include developing systems that are accountable to people, and that do not create or reinforce unfair biases.

Several Amazon shareholders wrote to the company's CEO expressing concerns over the selling of facial recognition software to US law enforcement agencies. [↗](#) They are concerned with the potential use of Rekognition to 'violate civil and human rights' and 'to unfairly and disproportionately target and surveil people of colour, immigrants, and civil society organisations'. In May 2018, more than 30 US-based civil society organisations sent a public letter to Amazon, asking the company to stop providing the software to the US government. [↗](#)