

Internet Governance BAROMETER (JANUARY 2017)

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

Global IG architecture



The IGF community wrapped-up its 2016 intersessional work, with the publication of the final outputs of the Policy Options for Connecting and Enabling the Next Billion(s) initiative, and of the four best practice forums on gender, IXPs, IPv6, and cybersecurity. Preparations for the 2017 cycle have already started, as stakeholders have been invited to submit contributions on how to improve the IGF process. Members and observers of the CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation gathered for the group's second meeting to discuss the characteristics of enhanced cooperation in Internet governance, and possible modalities for achieving it.

Sustainable development



At its 2016-2017 Inter-Sessional Panel, the CSTD looked at how the implementation of the SDGs could be supported by innovative approaches, and discussed further linkages between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the WSIS process. The *Inclusive Growth and Development Report 2017*, published by WEF, underlined the slow growth and rising inequality at global level, and suggested several policy and institutional approaches that could contribute to more sustainable and inclusive growth and development.

The first UN World Data Forum was marked by the launch of the *Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data*. The plan calls for recognition of the fact that national statistical systems are essential to the full implementation of the Agenda 2030, and proposes a series of objectives and actions for addressing key statistical capacity building needs.

Security



In the USA, a report published by intelligence services concluded, with 'high confidence', that 'Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election'. The expert community, however, commented that the report does not provide sufficient information for attributing, with high certainty, the attacks to the Russian authorities. Cellebrite, an Israel-based company that offers services of breaking into protected mobile phones (including to governments and law enforcement agencies around the world), confirmed a breach of its servers. The event has sparked concern that the company's encryption-breaking technology could be sold to the highest bidder.

The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) filed a lawsuit against Taiwan-based computer networking equipment manufacturer D-Link for failing 'to take reasonable steps to secure its routers and Internet Protocol (IP) cameras, potentially compromising sensitive consumer information'. D-Link denied the accusations. A report released by the Ponemon Institute has revealed that around 80% of IoT applications and 71% of mobile applications are not tested for vulnerabilities, raising security concerns.

The Federal Security Service in Russia announced that major commercial banks in the country were targeted by a massive cyber-attack by hackers in November last year. A report from security firm Risk Based Security reveals that the year 2016 set new records in terms of data breaches: there were 4,000 data breaches reported over the year, exposing over 4.2 billion records.

E-commerce and Internet economy



Colombia has passed new rules that impose a 19% value added tax on Internet services paid by credit card, primarily targeting over-the-top (OTT) services such as Netflix, Uber, Spotify, and AirBnB. In Canada, the government is considering imposing a so-called Netflix tax on digital services bought from foreign companies over the Internet.

In the UK, thousands of eBay and AirBnB users are being pursued by the British tax office for not declaring their earnings through the 'sharing economy'. The government of Indonesia has started an investigation into Google's tax practice, accusing the company of owing the state more than \$25 million in taxes.

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Digital rights



At the conclusion of their 12th Human Rights Dialogue, the African Union and the EU expressed their commitment to promoting and protecting freedom of expression and the right of access to information in the digital age. The European Court of Human Rights has ruled that security concerns are not a sufficient reason to deny a prisoner Internet access. The European Commission has proposed a new set of privacy rules, also applicable to Internet companies. Turkey has announced plans to develop a domestic search engine compatible with its national culture and values, while a new regulation in Vietnam will enable the Ministry of Information and Communications to demand that content providers take down or block content representing 'ill-intended and toxic' information. David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression, has warned that age-verification checks introduced by the UK government to prevent children from accessing online pornography could 'give the government access to information of viewing habits and citizen data', which would breach international law.

Jurisdiction and legal issues



In the Microsoft case, the court's ruling over data held in Ireland stands, after the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit denied a rehearing of the case. Uber and the Roads and Transportation Authority in the Emirate of Dubai have signed an agreement under which the company will be able to use 14,000 vehicles through its app 'as per the laws governing the operation of taxis and limousines in Dubai emirate'. The Committee on Legal Affairs in the European Parliament has adopted a report outlining recommendations for the introduction of 'civil law rules on robotics'. It proposes the elaboration and adoption of an EU 'legislative instrument' to tackle legal questions related to the development of robotics and AI. In China, the government has launched a campaign aimed at shutting down providers of services which do not have authorisation 'to run cross-border operations'. These services are often used to bypass Internet restrictions in China.

Infrastructure



The government in Cameroon ordered an Internet shutdown to the country's two main English-speaking regions, after Anglophone teachers, lawyers, and students went on strike over alleged bias in favour of Francophones. The Marshall Islands have faced several weeks of Internet blackout, due to problems with an undersea fibre optic cable. While phone and Internet communications have been switched to satellite, authorities have limited access to email and important facilities. ICANN and the US government have agreed to terminate the Affirmation of Commitments (AoI), a 2009 document which outlined ICANN's commitments to openness and transparency. These commitments are now incorporated into the revised ICANN bylaws.

Net neutrality



The net neutrality rules adopted by the US FCC in 2015 might be at risk, as the Commission's newly appointed chairman is expected to initiate a review. Meanwhile, in a report outlining the results of a policy review conducted in 2016, the FCC expressed concerns over AT&T's and Verizon's zero-rating services, seen as presenting significant risks to consumers and competition. The Telecom Regulatory Authority in India has launched a new public consultation on net neutrality, asking for input from stakeholders on the core principles of net neutrality and practices that might be seen as violating these principles.

New technologies (IoT, AI, etc.)



In the USA, four senators have reintroduced a draft bill aimed at ensuring 'appropriate spectrum planning and inter-agency coordination to support the IoT'. In parallel, the country's Department of Commerce (DoC) has issued a *Green Paper on Fostering the Advancement of the IoT*, outlining several principles. The European Telecommunications Standards Institute has launched an Industry Specification Group on cross-sector Context Information Management for smart cities applications and beyond, to work on the development of specifications and protocols for smart cities interoperability.