YOUTH
INTERNET
GOVERNANCE
FORUM

YOUTH IGF SUMMIT 2019

Internet governance is a rapidly changing and developing field. What may be a standard today, will not necessarily remain relevant tomorrow. The change is triggered by multiple factors, among which are different expectations from the network, frequent breaches of people's rights and freedoms online, cyberattacks, digital and gender-based divide. These and many more problems cause serious damages to our societies and prevent us to reach the immense potential digital technologies can bring. They call upon all of us to cooperate and ensure that good strategies and policies are in place for an accessible, inclusive and secure online environment for everyone.

The Internet Governance Forum is on a mission to achieve this. The Forum is mandated to *engage stakeholders from all parts of the world to exchange good practices and discuss public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance for the sake of fostering the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet*[1].

Being aware that there is a gap in digital resources and conditions between developed and developing countries, the IGF invests continuously invests efforts to reach the *weak and missing voices*[2], as the United Nations Secretary-General advised us to do, to ensure that everyone has a say in shaping the digital public policy discourse.

These complex processes, in addition to require a dialogue of people with different knowledge and skills, coming from all disciplines and backgrounds, ranging from governments, academics, researches, scientist, engineers, philosophers etc., also require time. And time is often a resource many of us can not afford. However, we can bridge our present actions to the future to ensure their long-term continuity and sustainability. Children, students and young professionals, are that bridge! Through investing in young people's education now, we build strong bridges to our future, leaving to coming years the legacy of societies equipped with knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that Internet serves people and our democracies.

It is of utmost importance that we raise self-awareness on an individual and collective basis, of youth's needs. Young people from remote areas, youth with disabilities and young girls and women, require our specific and firm investment to empower and enable them to participate in global digital policy processes on an equal basis as everyone else.

It is most encouraging to see the results of the work many in the IGF community do on this. Several thousand young people are active shapers of digital policy on local levels through 127 national, regional and youth IGF initiatives and the IGF's Youth Coalition on Internet governance[3]. The IGF's annual meeting also brings many young students and professionals from all parts of the world to inspire us with their ideas. The Youth Summit organized during the 14th annual IGF meeting is a clear testament of this!

Its key messages that over 100 young people from 40 different countries conveyed to a global community, speaks for itself about the determination of the presence to ensure bright online future for everyone.

The IGF is a people's Forum and its Secretariat welcomes and supports the initiatives such as the Youth Summit. Only by working together we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals the United Nations member states committed to.

We thank the German Informatics Society and their partners for organising the Youth Summit, as well as to the IGF 2019 Host Country, Government of Germany, for their investment in youth.

The 2020 annual IGF meeting will be hosted by the Government of Poland. Under the overarching theme 'Internet United' the host country intends to invest specific efforts in engaging youth in the 15th IGF processes.

United Nations Secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum

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[1] *IGF mandate: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/tags/about*

[2] *Address of the UN Secretary-General: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2018-address-to-the-internet-governance-forum-by-un-sg-ant%C3%B3nio-guterres (2018) and https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/un-secretary-general-remarks-to-the-igf-2019 (2019)*

[3] *Youth Engagement at the IGF: https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/index.php?q=filedepot_download/4874/800*

The German Informatics Society is deeply committed to a technologically sound, free, and open Internet, contributing the expertise of 20,000 computer science professionals and 50 years of experience as a non-profit organisation.

We are inherently multi-stakeholder, with members active in academia, business, public administration, education, and civil society. We are the largest German-speaking, non-partisan professional association for computer science. We have supported young people in information technology for many years, building awareness for the significance and responsibility that comes with our work on future topics such as cybersecurity, digital education, and emerging technologies. We need young people to actively contribute not only to technical advancement, but also to policy development in these fields. The Internet is one of the driving forces of our world today, and young people play a significant role therein. They are the biggest demographic of Internet users – they innovate, and they shape its technical, cultural, and economic course.

The 14th Internet Governance Forum, held in Berlin in 2019, gave us the opportunity to expand our activities to a global reach, and to empower more than 100 young people worldwide to contribute to our shared commitment. The result is a lively discussion on the future of the Internet, that crystallised 11 Youth Messages during the process. These messages reflect the need for inclusive participation, transparency, holistic digital education, and enhanced safety online. As the organiser of the Youth IGF Summit 2019, we proudly carry them further – and we hope others do the same. The next generation of Internet governance is ready to address important questions, and we are here to support them.

Hannes Federrath, President of the German Informatics Society
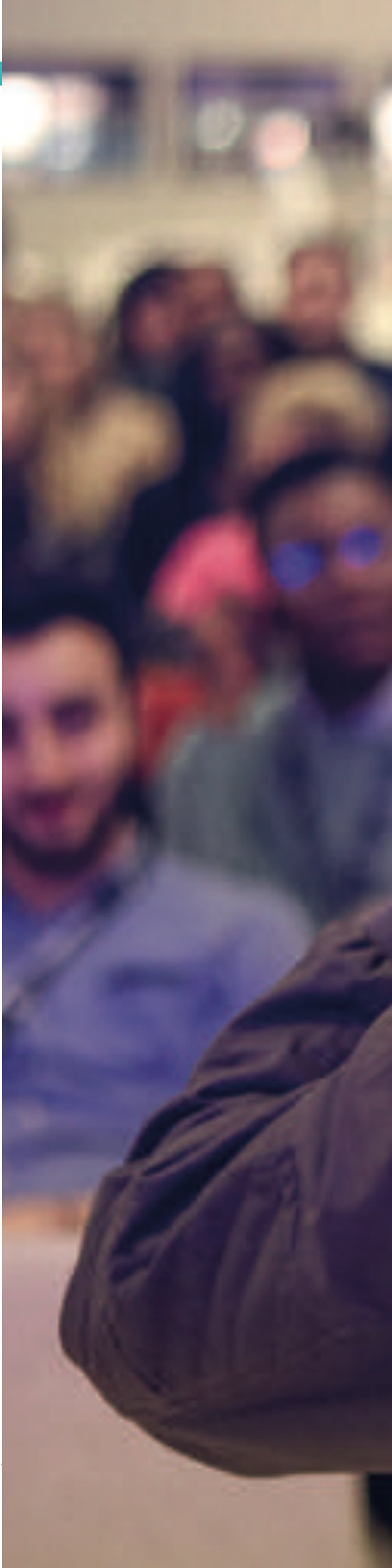
In preparing the 14th global Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Berlin, the Gesellschaft für Informatik e.V. (German Informatics Society, GI) brought a new dimension to the meeting: gathering more than 100 young people from 40 nations at the first Youth IGF Summit to discuss the future of the Internet.

From 25 to 29 November 2019, the IGF took place in Germany for the first time. On the day before the official launch, 24 November 2019, the German Informatics Society hosted the global Youth Internet Governance Forum – an international congress for the next generation of Internet governance. More than 100 young people between the ages of 18 and 30 came to Berlin from all over the world to collaboratively negotiate their demands for an Internet of the future, which resulted in them drafting 11 key messages. Before convening in Berlin, youth representatives from more than 40 countries were able to network in advance through several webinars, and exchange information on the topics of data protection, digital education, digital media and the information society, and cybersecurity.

The programme of the Youth Internet Governance Forum included numerous participatory workshops and sessions, all of which aimed at strengthening youth participation in the IGF as well as highlight the expertise of the next generation of digital decision-makers. During the five days of the IGF, the results of the Youth IGF Summit were presented in numerous formats and encountered much interest from all stakeholders. The participants also had the opportunity to discuss their demands with members of parliament and other high-level representatives. German members of parliament Jens Zimmermann (Social Democratic Party), Anke Domscheit-Berg (party-less, part of the Left parliamentary group), and Dieter Janecek (The Greens) engaged the participants during the dialogue, while areas of concern relevant to international leadership were raised during bilateral exchanges with Vint Cerf (Google's Chief Evangelist) and the delegation of the European Parliament.
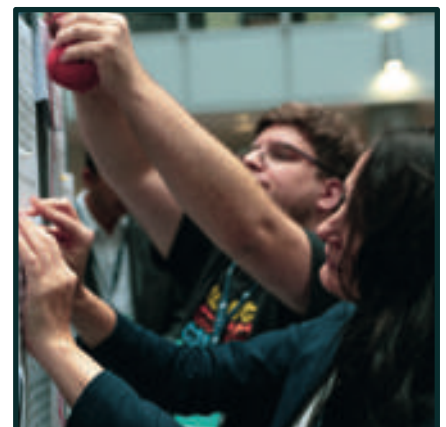
In addition to promoting youth participation, GI acted as a key partner to IGF Berlin. Among others, the "Sustainability Corner" hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy became a discussion forum around the core topics and projects of the GI, which were presented to a global audience. This involved a study on algorithmic decision-making by GI's Legal Informatics Section, presented by the authors Matthias Grabmair (SINC), Bernhard Walt (BMW), and Christoph Sorge (Saarland University). Moreover, GI's Digital Education Charter, which provides a classification for education in digitisation, was discussed with Beth Havinga (Alliance for Education), Jenna Fung (DotAsia), and Veronica Stefan (Digital Citizens Romania).

The 10 future questions on artificial intelligence (AI) stemming from the GI project #KI50 and the findings of the Turing-Bus project also enriched the IGF 2019 programme.

IGF 2019 was characterised like no other by strong civil society support, and especially by a large number of young people who were actively involved in the programme. With technical expertise, political and civil society networking, and formats for participation in 2019, GI and its partners have set a starting point for effective youth participation that we intend to continue at IGF 2020 in Katowice, Poland.

The main outcome of the Youth IGF Summit are 11 key messages to the global Internet governance community. These were drafted collaboratively by all participants over a three-month process. In five webinars, 130 participants from more than 40 countries deliberated with the input of experts and trainers on five core themes.

» Youth participation in Internet governance
» Data governance
» Digital inclusion through education
» Safety and security online
» Media and content in the digital age

These online sessions formed the basis for the face-to-face interactive drafting that took place during the Youth IGF Summit on 24 November 2019. More than 100 young people convened in Berlin, and worked in groups to formulate the short-format Youth Messages as well as complimentary texts. The messages were first officially presented on 25 November 2020 during the IGF, as well as throughout the week in sessions and workshops.

The global network of young people who participated in the IGF was represented in their positions as session organisers, speakers, and experts in their respective fields. Thereby, the Youth Messages serve as a living policy document. They are designed to be adapted and transferred to diverse contexts and discussions.

» Young people face various barriers to participation. It is the responsibility of (multi-stakeholder) decision-makers to overcome these barriers and <u>involve diverse (including underrepresented) young people</u> in a meaningful and measurable way in all IG processes.

While coming up with this message, we had very insightful discussions on the barriers that young people face when it comes to participation in Internet governance. We tried to break down what participation in Internet governance means considering that there are several platforms and processes at a national, regional, and global level. It's an important topic because we still witness that young people are not being represented in a meaningful way in Internet governance processes. We should move beyond tokenistic participation towards the full integration of young people in IG. This is why it's important to have effective KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to measure this level of participation.

When it comes to responsibilities, it's essential that all stakeholders, especially decision-makers, contribute to the efforts of increasing youth participation in Internet governance while making sure that there is a diverse representation that cannot happen without the inclusion of underrepresented young people all over the world.

Statement by: Dajana Mulaj (Albania), Ece Vural (Turkey), Jarret Fisher (United States of America), Khouzeifi Issakha Doudbane (Chad)

» Child protection online is a priority for us all! We need a universal approach. Collaboration between all stakeholders is crucial for designing effective policies by <u>involving parents, healthcare and education professionals as well as children</u> themselves.

We chose this topic because we come from different organisations and countries where the protection of children and teenagers online is an important issue to work on due the lack of an universal regulatory framework from justice, ministries of education, platform developers, IT industry and policy makers that involves all the stakeholders regarding child protection matters on addressing the necessity of a joint strategy to guarantee a safe navigation for children and other aspects of child protection.

These stakeholders include parents, educators, healthcare system and psychologists.

As young people and participants of the Youth IGF Summit, we want to point out this strategy should take the different cultural backgrounds into account, and foster careful and safe development of their own self.

Finally, it is essential to point out everything starts with the digital literacy, where primary and secondary schools provides practical knowledge on being a responsible digital citizen.

Statement by: Cindyneia Cantanhede (Brazil), Eileen Cejas (Argentina), Innocent Adriko (Uganda), Folashade Braimoh (Nigeria), Rachad Sanoussi (Bénin), Kathrin Morasch (Germany)

» Stakeholders must strive to incorporate <u>universal ethical principles and standards</u> and develop general competences framework in digital education.

Digital skills and competences continue to increase in importance, and are a key factor for participation in political, economic, and social life in a networked world. No one should be left behind; therefore, high-quality digital education has to be accessible worldwide. Standards and holistic frameworks are needed in order to ensure equality and equity. The multi-stakeholder model offers the opportunity for public authorities, educators, young people, academia, and businesses to have an open exchange on how to further develop and implement effective digital education.

» Companies should be <u>transparent on their algorithms, data, content, rules & decision-making</u> to uphold trust and responsibility. Governments should play a role in enforcement with independent bodies. Users & independent researchers should have easy access to necessary data.

With more and more people worldwide using online services and platforms daily, users uphold their rights to information and privacy. Internet service providers (ISPs) and digital platforms should be as transparent as possible, respect human rights, and have effective processes in place. Governments should protect human rights online, as well as offline, and hold businesses accountable for their practices. Academia has a legitimate interest to access non-personalised data for research. Users should have access to and sovereignty over their personal data.

» We demand platforms to instate multi-stakeholder councils to <u>dismiss illegitimate data points</u> from micro-targeting used for political advertising to diminish the dangers of dis-/misinformation.

In the past few years, the global community has recognised that disinformation and misinformation online cause serious harm. The rapid spread of disinformation is partly based on the incentivisation of reach present in online platforms.

Targeted advertising can therefore spread before the content can be contextualised as false or harmful. Effective processes must be developed and implemented to counter this development.

» Platform regulation is necessary but in a Goldilocks approach <u>that balances human rights and innovation</u>. Regardless of the platforms' purpose, their governance should be multi-stakeholder, inclusive, transparent and culturally sensitive. Everyone deserves a place at the table!

Platform regulation becomes increasingly necessary as the big intermediaries online take a larger role in countries' economies, democracies and our daily lives. This regulation should take on a „Goldilocks approach": it must safeguard human rights and democracies, but it shouldn't be so restrictive that it will reduce innovation and development. The development of binding and non-binding norms for platforms should be a multistakeholder and transparent process. Civil society, academia, governments and the technical community deserve a seat in this discussion. Beyond token multistakeholderism, companies should also strive for diversity, making sure a variety of social, cultural and economic backgrounds are represented in this process.

Statement by: Fernanda González (Guatemala), Gustavo Paiva (Brazil), Nidhi Singh (India), Paola Gálvez (Peru), and Viviane Vinagre (Brazil)
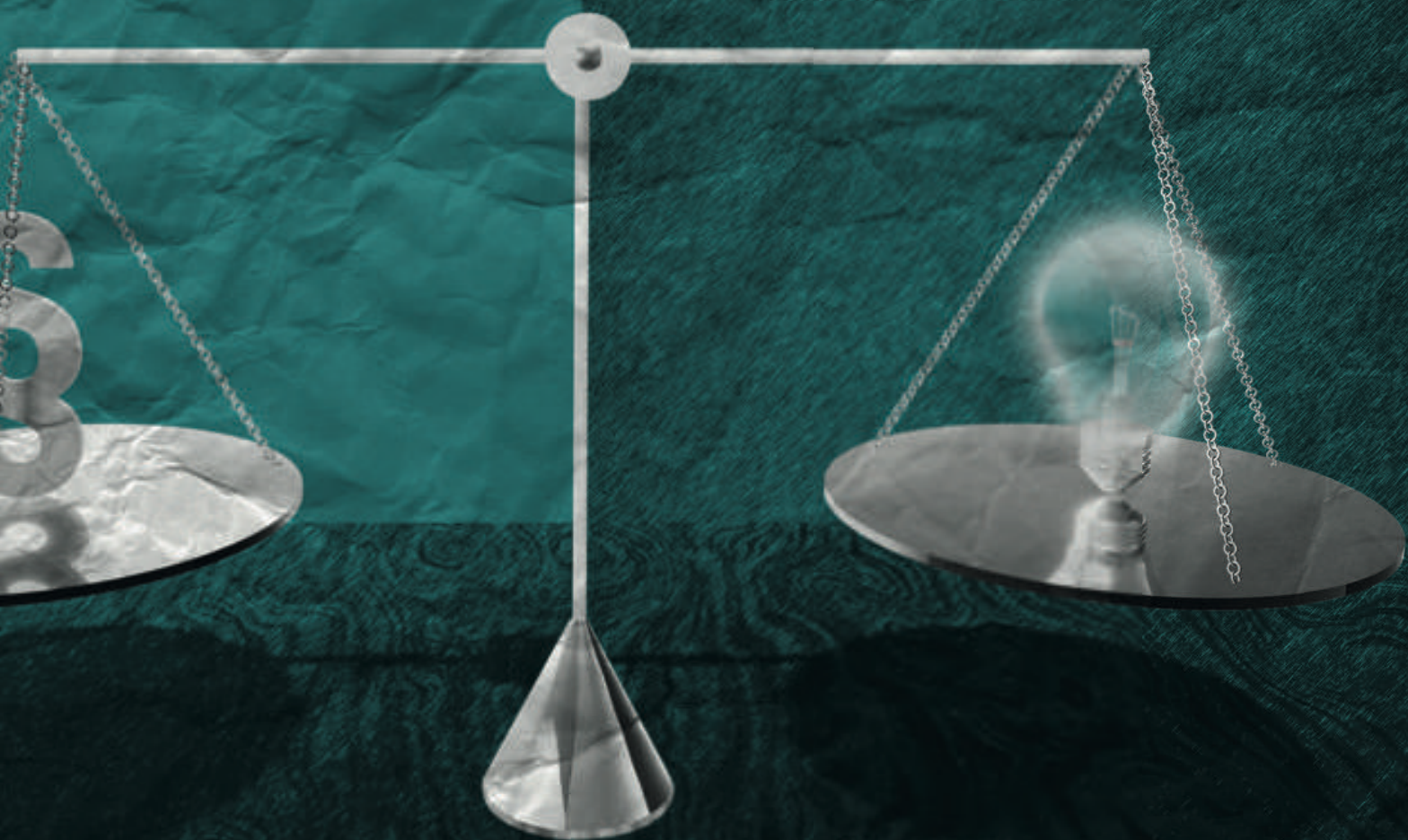
» Net neutrality and un-restricted internet access must be guaranteed in order to <u>ensure digital inclusion</u>. To achieve that governments, companies and ISP must not control data flows nor prioritize services, and must ensure transparency.

Network neutrality, or simply net neutrality, is the principle that ISPs must treat all Internet communications equally, and not discriminate or charge differently based on user, content, website, platform, application, type of equipment, source address, destination address, or method of communication. This is a prerequisite for non-discriminatory use of the Internet.

» We demand new, dynamic cybersecurity strategies with multi-stakeholder approaches that include <u>transparent, adaptive, and human-oriented policies</u> since laws have direct impacts on our daily lives. As technology evolves, policies must too.

Governments need to implement policies that address the needs of their particular country, addressing the actual national or regional cybersecurity needs. Countries operate different policy frameworks for telecommunications. Emerging technologies require that some policies are reviewed. Technology on its own is not a sufficient safeguard against cybercrimes; users are often the weak link in an information security system who can be influenced to divulge sensitive information, subsequently allowing unauthorised individuals to gain access to protected systems. Steps must be taken to ensure that policymakers are able to take informed decisions in the best interest of their users.

Statement by: Botsyoe Edinam Lily (Ghana), Nicolas Fiumarelli (Uruguay), Yawri Carr (Costa Rica), Korry Luke (Japan), Juan Pajaro (Colombia), Belen Giménez (Paraguay), and Mohammad Atif Aleem (India)

» Dear governments, nobody wants their utility companies to get hacked! Critical infrastructure that affects lives needs to be protected. <u>Let's have a proactive approach of audits and national strategies</u> alongside proper disclosure of vulnerabilities.

While it is not trivial to fully define what critical infrastructure is, for the purposes of making the statement we devised general examples such as power plants, emergency services, and telecommunications networks. Realistically, it is the role of governments to identify critical infrastructure and possible threats to it based on their own national priorities.

Most importantly, critical infra-structure must be protected by regular audits and objective proofs of resilience. This proactive approach must be followed up by proper and transparent reporting to all relevant stakeholders when a security incident occurs. We urge that every discovered vulnerability should be reported to the vendor as part of a responsible disclosure process, and we affirm that it is unethical for governments to keep vulnerabilities for their own purposes and hereby put infrastructure around the world at risk.

Statement by: Elliott Mann (Australia), Raashi Saxena (India), Tim Philipp Schäfers (Germany), Marco Mattioli (Germany), Yuliia Polishchuk (Ukraine), and Liam Wachter (Germany)

» <u>Human intervention must guide AI-driven decision-making</u> to ensure explainability, inclusivity, privacy, accountability and the right to appeal. It shall occur whenever the decision rendered had disruptive personal consequences, especially for vulnerable groups such as youth.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) as an emerging technology shall not be exempt from human rights principles, therefore all technologies and innovations must adhere to universal standards. The development and implementation of human-centred policies is a shared responsibility of technical innovators, businesses, governments and regulators, and civil society. Safeguards and effective remedy processes need to be defined to ensure innovation that benefits the global community. Responsible and explainable AI are key concepts that need to be further developed.

» No facial recognition without transparency & accountability. Risks and biases exist, and they need to be known!

The first point raised was the fact that facial recognition technologies are usually not subject to any mechanisms of transparency and auditing, a factor that increases distrust in this kind of technology. The second point raised is that artificial intelligence technologies often rely on biased databases and, as a consequence, discriminate against marginalised groups. The third point raised was the need to develop regulation that takes into consideration the local context and accountability mechanisms. The final result of these discussions was a message that called for accountability and transparency mechanisms when it comes to the use of facial recognition technology.

Statement by: Juliana Novaes (Brazil), Aleksandra Ivanković (Serbia), Emilia Zalewska (Poland), Giovanna Michelato (Brazil), and Valeriia Dubytska (Ukraine)
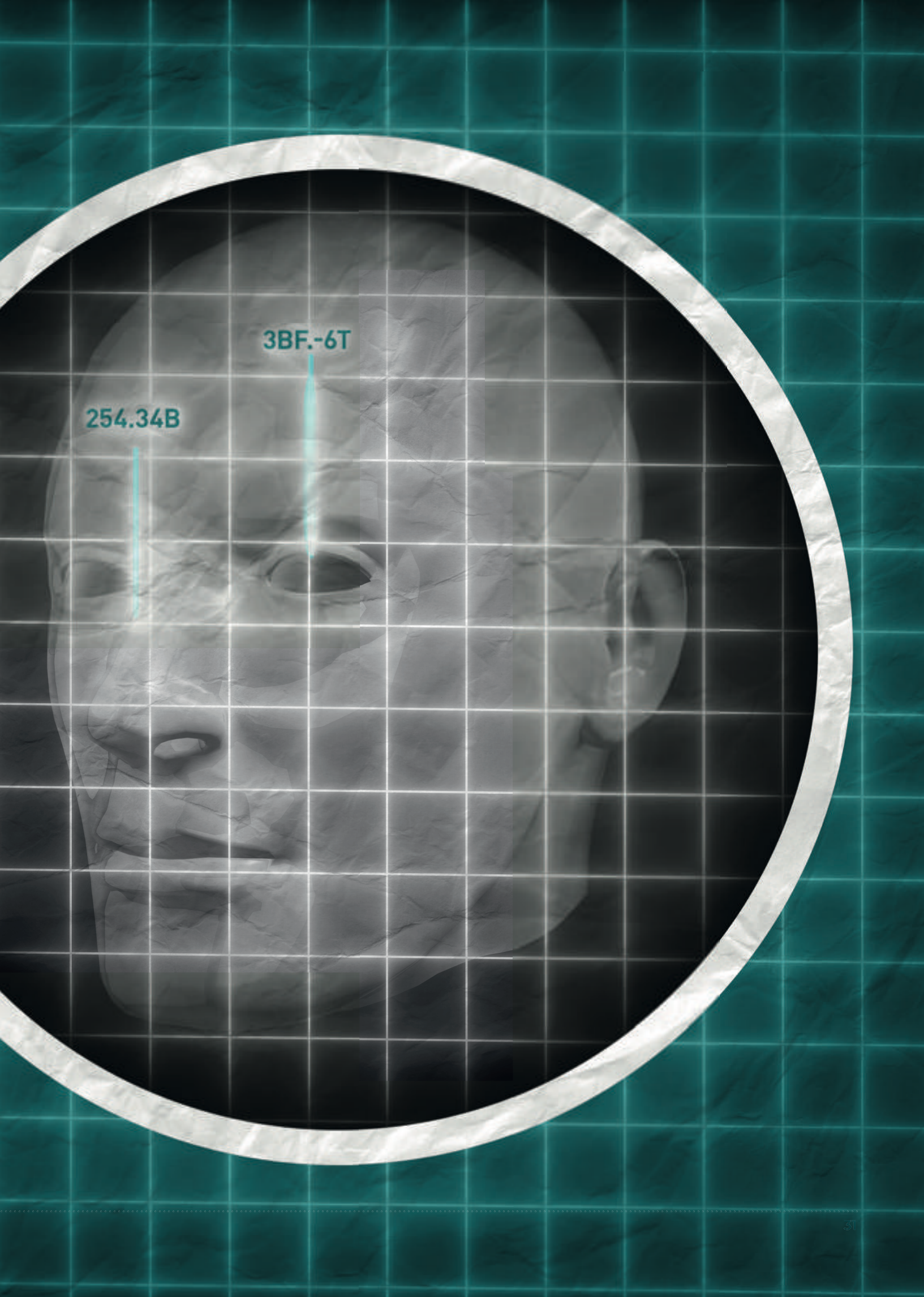
By Veronica Stefan, Trainer Youth IGF Summit

» The great aim of education is not knowledge but action
Herbert Spencer

Building on young people's knowledge and experience in using technology and Internet platforms, whilst considering them legitimate stakeholders, the YIGF Summit 2019 brought a novel approach in engaging young people and stimulating their involvement through the entire 2019 Internet Governance Forum process.

Developed from a genuine interest to give a stronger voice to the young people, the largest demographic group of Internet users, the YIGF Summit 2019 proposed a new model of engaging young people in Internet Governance – before and during the IGF 2019 in Berlin – implemented in three main stages:

1. Creating a collaborative youth community through learning and sharing
2. Offering the space and resources for co-designing the final Youth Messages
3. Engaging young people to be visible throughout the IGF 2019 programme

The entire process was designed through the joint efforts of the German Informatics Society, the Summit's partners, and a team of professional trainers – streamlining a constant educational and advocacy approach.

The first stage "Creating a collaborative youth community through learning and sharing" was essential for setting the context and working towards a common goal, bringing together more than 100 young people from diverse communities across the globe.

It took place online, between September and November 2019, and included a series of opportunities offered to all young people accepted in the programme. This stage was created with the purpose of (I) facilitating knowledge and information about Internet governance-related topics, (II) introducing and preparing participants in the programme for the work and objectives of the IGF, and (III) offering a platform to identify, propose, and draft Youth Messages. As the entire stage took place online, it relied on the use of collaborative tools such as virtual meeting rooms and shared documents.

In this context, young participants had the opportunity to join a total of seven webinars, five of them covering specific themes: data governance and digital identities, inclusion through digital education, public discourse in the digital age, effective youth participation, and safety & security online. For each webinar, the participants were guided through a comprehensive process – receiving access to relevant preparatory resources in advance, while during the webinar they could engage with experts in the field as well as share personal experiences and reflections on each topic.

The final outcome led to identifying key issues and priorities related to youth and Internet governance. Nevertheless, this first stage was just the beginning, allowing young people to propose Youth Messages, but also offering them the space to continue this process until the face-to-face Summit.

The second stage "Offering the space and resources for co-designing the final Youth Messages" represented the actual YIGF Summit, on 24 November 2019. With an ambitious and intensive agenda, this stage was based on a participatory approach, using a non-formal learning methodology and rooted in the principle "For young people. By young people. With young people."

Building on the previous stage, the Summit empowered young people to engage in a meaningful debate about the issues they have previously identified. The entire effort led to the final outcome: the 11 Youth Messages, which were presented during IGF 2019. This was the result of a consensus reached among all participants who were carefully guided through various stages of co-creation.

While the Summit was centred around the Youth Messages, the entire process behind it was designed to include both an educational and advocacy dimension. It offered the means and resources for an informed and balanced debate, while also stimulating ownership over the final results. For this purpose, the Summit offered young participants the opportunity to work together in order to create a plan of how to get organised and mobilise other stakeholders throughout the week in Berlin, offline and online.

All these steps were successfully embodied in the final stage "Engaging young people throughout IGF Berlin." This major moment allowed for both coordinated action as well as for individual ownership. Young participants to the Summit – recognised young leaders in their communities – successfully managed to draw attention to their messages through engagement in various thematic or specifically youth-designed sessions.

The Summit's educational and advocacy dimensions did not conclude at the end of the day, however. During the evenings, young people had the chance to join a reflection group designed to guide their participation through the IGF, both by encouraging reflections on their own learning and by supporting their engagement in the next days.

Even though IGF 2019 has concluded, the community created around it endures. YIGF Summit 2019 is proof that bottom-up processes involving youth can thrive, and that young people can bring meaningful contributions without being merely tokenised, meaning for symbolic representation. The essential condition for this success is providing the necessary resources. Meaningful participation needs proper time and space allocated, but also human expertise that can plan and guide such a process.

Last but not least, YIGF Summit 2019 confirmed that a new model of youth participation in the IGF is possible. More than an event, it established a process, bringing a new educational and advocacy approach that could be replicated at all levels. Furthermore, this kind of practice can stimulate even stronger participation from young people in Internet and technology governance, transforming them in proactive stakeholders and valuable resources in their communities.

Programme

The agenda-setting was determined by the inputs of participants, and by the focus themes set by the IGF's Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG). The Youth IGF Summit in Berlin was hosted at Spreepalais am Dom in Berlin, and was opened by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs, the Fraunhofer ICT Group who hosted the convention in their premises, and the German Informatics Society.

The first part of the onsite convention was dedicated to the Youth Messages. The work had already started online in September 2019. The online process of the Youth IGF Summit consisted of seven webinars, of which five were used to exchange on the focus themes, and to gather input from a global network of 120 participants. Each webinar was accompanied by two input cycles before and after the online meeting.

The onsite process of the Youth IGF Summit started from the inputs and statements gathered in the webinars. Participants chose 11 topics most relevant to them, and formed working groups according to interest. In a collaborative, non-formal drafting approach, each group formulated a short-format message. Wordings and concepts were refined throughout several feedback sessions, where the final outcomes were presented to the plenum and accepted using rough consensus before being officially presented to the global community at the IGF.

The second part of the Youth IGF Summit consisted of interactive sessions hosted by partners and participants on a wide array of topics such as freedom of expression online, ethical hacking, digital education, participation and advocacy in Internet governance, and many more.
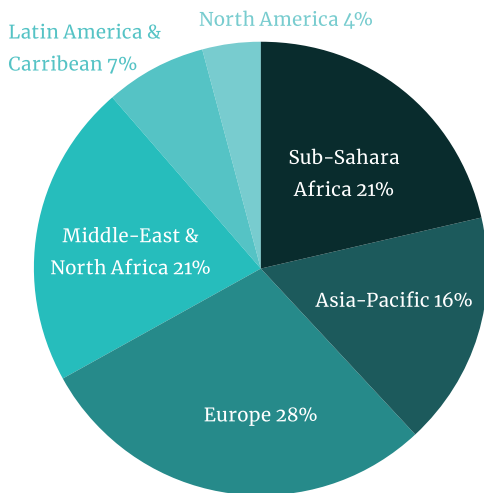
TESTIMONIES FROM YOUTH IGF SESSION ORGANIZERS

Localising Internet Governance
Organizer: Digital Grassroots

"Attendees had a very productive discussion on several topics regarding Internet governance that are part of the localisation issues. They discussed the existing infrastructure, and how some regions that are not properly included such as the Caribbean and Africa. Other topics covered included localisation of data centres; the role of private companies setting up submarine cables; the concern about privacy and General Data Protection Regulation, (GDPR) compliance; Internet shutdowns; and the necessity of community networks. Finally, as topics related to content, we talked about censorship of members of the LGBTQ+ community online; social media taxes; and the issue of social media platforms banning accounts."
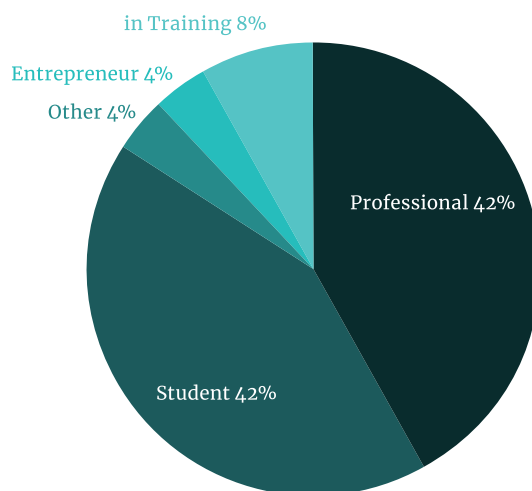*As a conclusion, we determined that localising Internet isn't only a problem of infrastructure, it is also a problem of human rights.*

Participants

Geographic Background of Youth IGF Summit Participants

- Latin America & Carribean 7%
- North America 4%
- Sub-Sahara Africa 21%
- Middle-East & North Africa 21%
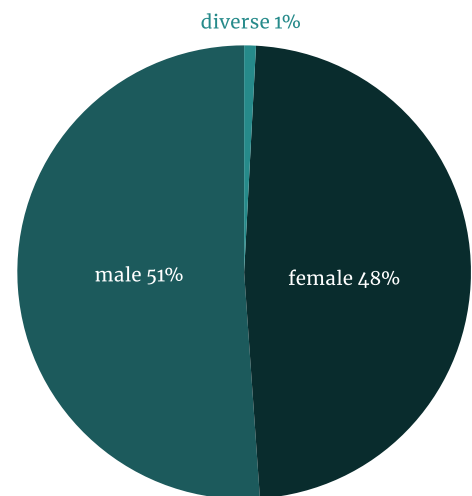- Asia-Pacific 16%
- Europe 28%

After conducting global outreach in summer 2019, more than 300 young people from all regions of the world applied to be part of the Youth IGF Summit. Almost 130 were admitted to participate in the webinars, and thereby contribute to the Youth Messages in a decentralised, collaborative exchange. More than 70% of participants were non-European, in order to truly reflect the global character of the Summit. Gender balance was achieved as well as diversity in background: youth from different stakeholder groups collaborated, turning the multi-stakeholder approach of Internet governance into a lived experience. In the onsite Summit, 100 young people gathered in Berlin, most of which had already actively participated in the webinars.

- in Training 8%
- Entrepreneur 4%
- Other 4%
- Professional 42%
- Student 42%

Occuption of Youth IGF Summit Participants

- diverse 1%
- male 51%
- female 48%

Gender of Youth IGF Summit Participants

Internet Governance in India
Organizer: Youth IGF India

"We organised a session using the fish bowl format to collect different perspectives on Internet governance from the youth country representatives present. Our primary motivation to have this topic of discussion was due to the lack of a national IGF in India as well as to identify a framework for a robust personal data protection law. We received diverse opinions on topics of censorship and Internet governance-related infrastructural issues. Many highlighted how the role of Public-Private Partnerships, civil society, and educational institutions have improved the state of Internet governance and will pave the way for a brighter future for youth participation. With the advent of digital tools, social media can be leveraged to popularise complex issues pertaining to Internet governance through memes and creative posts. The outcomes of the session were fruitful, and enable us to build a national IGF that encourages dialogue with the relevant Indian stakeholders."

Liam Wachter, Germany

"The YIGF was a great experience and opportunity to learn about activism and engagement in international Internet governance, but also to hopefully have an impact. It was a pleasure to work with so many talented young people from all over the world on topics that concern and interest us all."

TESTIMONIES FROM YOUTH IGF SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS

Dajana Mulaj, Albania

"It was a privilege having the opportunity to collaborate with young people from all over the world to produce and present the positions we worked on before and during the IGF. Youth IGF Summit 2019 was empowering to us as young people and an added value to the IGF itself."
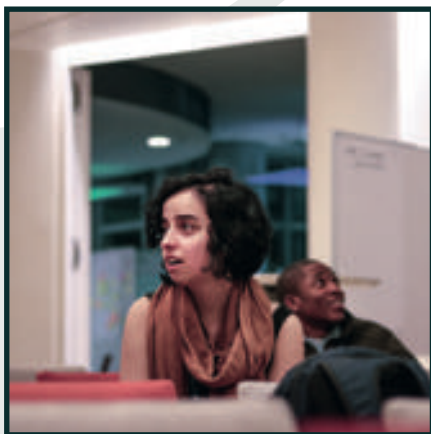

Rhada Barik, Morocco

"I appreciate that it is a gathering of young people who are passionate about digital human rights. It was a fruitful and amazing time for me."

Eileen Cejas, Argentina

"I really enjoyed the vibe of the Summit, exchanging points of view with participants around the world. I felt we had an open and collaborative space at Youth IGF Summit 2019, and I would like to see more spaces like this. Thanks to the organisers for giving me a place to participate here not only as attendee, but also as speaker. Let's continue engaging more youth in Internet governance!"

Gustavo Paiva, Brazil

"I learned a lot from the Youth IGF Summit, and found ways to apply my learnings to my own projects immediately. An opportunity came up to apply my city for our national IGF – and we won! Thanks to you, this will be the most diverse Brazilian IGF ever, and the first one organised by a young person."

Raashi Saxena, India

"The Youth Summit gave me access to an incredibly supportive and robust network of young professionals and industry experts. I had the invaluable opportunity to engage with them in meaningful debates and discussions about the rapidly changing Internet governance landscape. The amount of encouragement and support truly felt like I belonged to the community, and surely the knowledge gathered here will be applied towards advocating for a fair, equal, and open internet for all."

Juliana Novaes, Brazil

"As a member of a youth organisation, I participate in several discussions that involve the issue of representation and active presence of people within the 18-30 age range in Internet governance spaces. However, it is not very usual that we, youth from all over the world, get the opportunity to sit together during an entire day to discuss our objectives and perspectives. Most of us only have the opportunity to do so at the local and regional levels. That is why I believe this youth summit has a unique value. We had a chance to gather as a global community of youth engaged in these topics and actually come up with concrete results. Hopefully this initiative will be followed by others of similar nature, and we will be able to strengthen our community with more young voices."

Paola Gálvez, Peru

"It was my very first time participating in a Youth IGF, and I am very inspired by the enriching discussions we had among young people from all over the world on the Internet issues that have the most impact on our day-to-day lives. I believe that despite being a major stakeholder of the Internet, youth is still underrepresented. But this kind of forum is a big step to making our voices be heard. The week after the IGF, I co-organised with four young Peruvians the Youth IGF Peru, and it was a magnificent opportunity to discuss the 11 messages we devised during Youth IGF Summit 2019 in Berlin. It was the beginning of our Peruvian youth community in fostering the sustainability, security, stability, and development of the Internet."

Partners

The Youth IGF Summit was organized by the German Informatics Society, and made possible with the support of partners from all stakeholder groups.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, as the host of the 2019 IGF, supported the Youth IGF Summit, and granted the status of a host-country initiative.
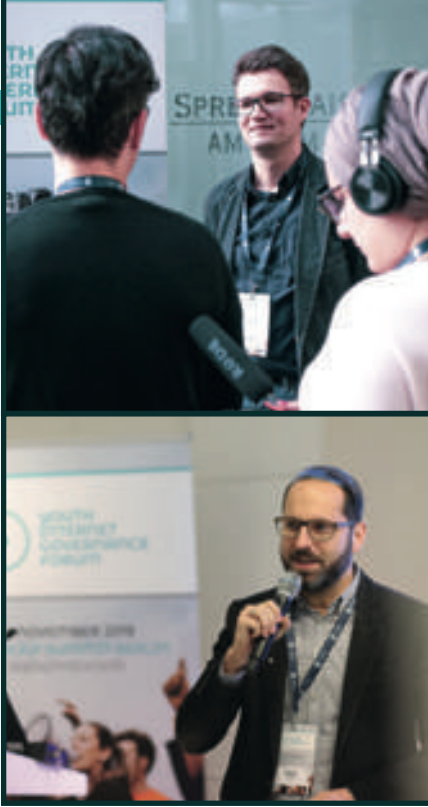
The supporting partners are Vodafone Foundation Germany, Google, Fraunhofer ICT Group, Goethe Institute, Internet Society, and the Council of Europe Youth Department. Their financial contributions, thematic inputs, and availability for expertise enriched the Youth IGF Summit.

Collaboration with the United Nations Secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum ensured the legitimacy of processes and outcomes.

Thematic contributions and support also came from the following organisations:

- » Youth IGF Movement
- » Digital Grassroots
- » Youth Observatory
- » Deutsche Welle Academy
- » NetMission Asia
- » Betterplace Lab

As well as several national youth Internet governance initiatives.
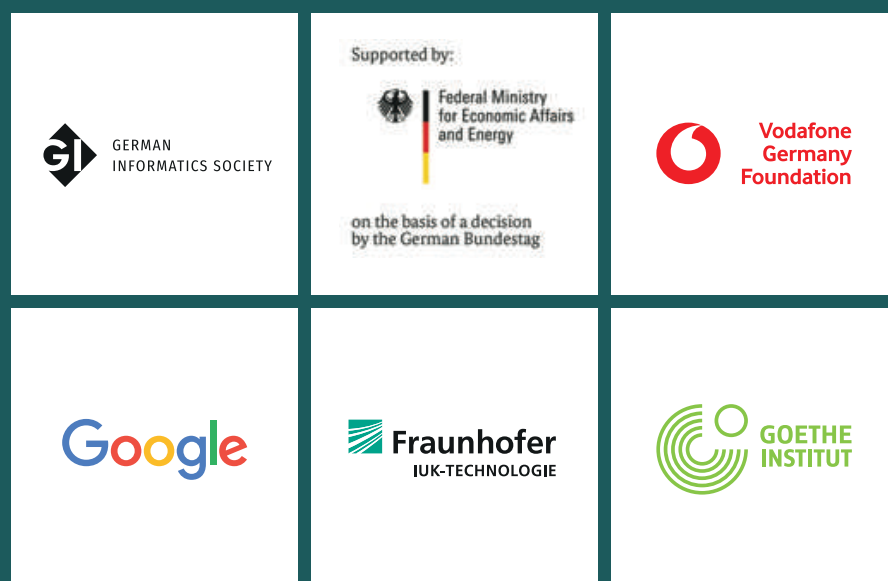
TESTIMONIES FROM YOUTH IGF SUMMIT PARTNERS

Vodafone Foundation Germany
(supporting partner)
by Lars Thies

"With its initiatives, the Vodafone Germany Foundation seeks to increase young people's capacity to participate in the digital society. Be it on climate change, education, or digitalisation, young people can contribute valuable perspectives and insights to pressing political discussions. Yet, far too often they are underrepresented or their voices neglected. This is why the Foundation is also committed to facilitating dialogue between young people and politicians, and opening up spaces in which young people can directly address their concerns.

Internet governance is another area where we need to listen to youth and their expertise. Young people have unique experiences on how the Internet is used and on how Internet governance can influence civil liberties, equality, and political participation. That is why the Vodafone Germany Foundation strongly supported Youth IGF Summit 2019.

The results of the summit are impressive. The messages coming out of the Youth IGF not only touch upon many important topics, but also show without any doubt that young people are well informed and eager to contribute. Their demands are ambitious but sensible, and show a will to shape a world with larger equality, responsibility, and sustainability. The Vodafone Foundation therefore hopes that the Youth IGF will set an example, and will ultimately lead to more formal representation and inclusion of young people's voices in the discussions on Internet governance and other topics."

Digital Grassroots
by Eileen Cejas, Uffa Modey

As part of Digital Grassroots, we have been providing online courses on digital literacy for young people between the ages of 14 and 29. One of the initiatives is the Digital Grassroots Ambassadors programme, where participants from around the world learn online the basics of Internet governance and then they continue their journey in this environment. The other programme we have is Community Leaders, where this year will be the Open Leaders for Internet Health in which we want to achieve the creation of a new generation of leaders for an open and secure Internet for all with the support of Mozilla Foundation.

This year, acting in my own capacity with other participants of the Creating Networks Project Competition, we co-organised a project called "Project WeAre," where we conducted webinars on gender inclusion for people around the world. In this series of webinars, we talked about the inclusion of women and the LGBTQ+ community and how to advocate online. This project was awarded as "The Most Inclusive Project" of the competition. From both experiences, I became more aware of the indispensability of digital literacy in order to create more young leaders with the enthusiasm, knowledge, and creativity needed to tackle the present and future of Internet governance. It is imperative that young people suggest grassroots changes that are needed to fix the current inequalities vexing both the online and offline worlds. Old recipes won't fix the problems; innovative solutions from young people are essential to shaping a fairer Internet for everyone.

Youth IGF Summit 2019 is essential to include more young people on Internet governance debates. This event is just one step on the journey to demonstrate that young people are involved, have unique and innovative ideas to provide as stakeholders, and can implement solutions on Internet governance issues. Now that Youth IGF Summit 2019 has concluded, I have strong conviction that youth must be a stakeholder on its own, and not just young people without the proper visibility within Internet governance fora. Youth should be part of policymaking processes that shape the present and future of the Internet. Nothing with us without us!"

» Rather than focusing on a specific date or event, creating a decentralised exchange over a longer time period helps to facilitate a legitimate, deliberated output, such as the Youth Messages.

» Capacity building is crucial for sustainable involvement of young people as well as for policy development. We need to design for active participation to avoid tokenism, referring to merely symbolic participation.

» Online meetings and educational webinars alleviate the financial, logistical, and environmental pressures of traveling, especially in international settings. Such remote activities need a clear aim and a concise format. Non-formal educational methodologies encourage inclusive processes.

» Opportunities to participate in on-site meetings are necessary to build networks and to effectively advocate. Young people need to be supported as they are currently an underrepresented group in Internet governance fora.

» Youth programmes benefit from being youth-led, and from having partners from different stakeholder groups such as public authorities, businesses, academia, and the technical community. Together, outcomes can be communicated and thereby take effect in a multi-stakeholder Internet governance environment.

» Youth initiatives can amplify their activities by exchanging best practices and innovative approaches. It proves beneficial to offer opportunities with a global reach to mirror the global characteristics of Internet policies.

YOUTH INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

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