

GLOBAL INFORMATION SOCIETY WATCH 2017

*Internet governance from the edges:
National and regional IGFs in their own words*



GISWatch 2017
SPECIAL EDITION

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Global Information Society Watch 2017 Special edition
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Global Information Society Watch 2017 special edition:
Internet governance from the edges: NRIs in their own words

Disclaimer: The views expressed in survey responses are not necessarily the views of APC or of its members.

This report is a special companion edition to Global Information Society Watch 2017: National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs), which can be downloaded from <https://www.giswatch.org/2017-local-and-regional-internet-governance-forums-igfs>

NETHERLANDS IGF

Netherlands

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NRI founding stories and development

*What is the story of the founding of your NRI?
What were its inspiration, its objectives?*

The Netherlands Internet Governance Forum (NL IGF) was established in 2010, as a cooperative venture of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Dutch: Ministerie van EZ), SIDN (the Foundation for Internet Domain Registration in the Netherlands) and ECP Platform for the Information Society. These parties are collaborating to bring the importance of the IGF to the attention of Dutch stakeholders, and put the IGF on the political agenda more strongly. On the one hand, the aim is to realise a firm embedding of the international results into our national policy. On the other hand, efforts are made to make the Dutch voice heard internationally and to put important Dutch themes on the international agenda. In the Netherlands, we are convinced that ongoing exchange between the national internet debate and international developments is crucial. Both sides of the coin reinforce each other. New national issues that come up can progress to the international agenda, and international insights can inform the domestic debate. The Internet Governance Forum facilitates this exchange. The prominent Dutch position in the field of internet infrastructure and use invites and requires us to actively participate in this debate. The IGF is a vital international forum where policy makers, the private sector, academia, NGOs and politicians come together to give their joint input on future policy. The presence of a nationally organised, multistakeholder delegation is therefore of significant importance. By convincing an increasing number of actors in the Netherlands of the importance of the IGF, a mutually beneficial sharing of knowledge and perspectives can be achieved during the IGF. The internet knows no borders: if we want to address issues in the field of internet governance (including cybercrime, IPv6 and the development of digital skills), it has to be done in an international, multistakeholder framework. NL IGF emphasises the relevance of the numerous IGF activities around the world, monitors developments and communicates results,

through organising various meetings and through this website, Twitter and LinkedIn. In short, NL IGF is meant for businesses, non-profit organisations, government (local and national), politicians and other parties who attach value to international cooperation and knowledge sharing around the internet debate and who share a commitment to the importance of the Internet Governance Forum.

How did it develop and what difficulties did you experience along the way?

NL IGF event

Since 2010, NL IGF organises an annual Dutch IGF event. This is a multistakeholder forum, where national parliamentarians, civil servants, scientists, non-profit organisations, the private sector, journalists and other interested parties meet. The aim is not only to share knowledge and experiences related to internet governance, but also to engage in those discussions surrounding internet governance that are thorny and tricky. Like the IGF itself, it is an open consultation, where participants set the agenda of the event themselves. The outcomes of the NL IGF event serve as an important input for the preparations of the Dutch delegation attending the global IGF. Similar to the IGF we have to work very hard to get all the stakeholders “at the table”. Especially law enforcement and politicians are hard to convince to join the internet governance debate, on a national level but also to join the Dutch “delegation” to the IGF. The long travelling and amount of time – a whole week – makes them hesitate.

Young IGF: As the voice of young people should not be missed in the (inter)national internet discussion, the NL IGF organises an annual Young Netherlands Internet Governance Forum (NL Young IGF). Every year we try another format, because it is not easy to find young people to join an internet governance debate just by themselves. Two years ago we organised the Young IGF in cooperation with the Leiden Model United Nations Programme (LEMUN) and this year we work together with the University of Amsterdam to fit in the programme of first year students information science. In 2015 the young

participants presented a list of Top 10 Priorities for internet governance (in no particular order):

- Self-determination of (personal) data
- International internet regulations
- Net neutrality
- Ethical hacking
- Good international approach to combat child pornography
- Protection of copyright
- Tackling cyberbullying
- Human rights
- Implementation of the “right to be forgotten”
- Open and free internet (no censorship).

Dutch workshops and open fora at the IGF

Every year we send in three to five workshop proposals, prepared by the coordinator or together with another organisation in the lead. We pray during the process that the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) honours at least two proposals, because these events are the main vehicle for realising a strong Dutch delegation and for the Netherlands to present and position itself. A few times the Dutch government applies for an open forum. This strategy gives us more assurance of getting a reserved spot at the IGF for the NL IGF delegation. We are proud to have had such a diverse and high-ranking Dutch delegation at the last years of the IGF, bringing together all corners of the “internet world”. NL IGF values a strong Dutch contribution to the forum very highly. NL IGF identifies Dutch participants to the IGF and informs them about both content and logistics of the forum. We also organise a preparatory dinner to get to know each other and share ideas and thoughts on internet governance. We had two times Members of Parliament and a senator joining the delegation for three years, but also because of her important position as chair of the International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE), but creating consistency in politics is hard. Too exotic host countries and too many conference days makes it hard for them to convince their board of the importance of the forum. Same story for private companies, “No return on investment” or threatening agreements to worry about (for lobby or public affairs) .

Dutch visibility

Since the IGF in Kenya, NL IGF organised and manned a Dutch booth at the congress centre, both as a focal point for the Dutch perspective and as a

meeting point for the delegation and guests. Since three years we share this booth with the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE), a global platform for countries, international organisations and private companies to exchange best practices and expertise on cyber capacity building. The aim is to identify successful policies, practices and ideas and multiply these on a global level. Together with partners from NGOs, the tech community and academia, GFCE members develop practical initiatives to build cyber capacity. The GFCE secretariat is based in The Hague. This year we are not rewarded with a booth at the IGF. We think this is really a loss because of the important function. Dutch visibility is always greatly enhanced by the handing out of “tegeltjeswijsheden” (Delftware tiles containing aphorisms on internet governance) throughout the forum. But to let the IGF visitors learn more about the NL IGF and the Dutch vision on the important aspects of internet governance, we have to create some different, more informative, material, which is one of our tasks for this year.

How do you imagine your NRI and its activities in the future?

NL IGF will keep on asking the following questions: What is and what will be the Dutch contribution to the international debate? In which parts of internet governance is the Netherlands leading the way internationally? What questions should we raise and put on the international agenda? NL IGF continues with a multistakeholder approach and a strong networking component, allowing companies, civil servants, NGOs and politicians to meet and exchange perspectives. We keep on working on creating more awareness of the IGF to all stakeholders, bringing together all corners of the “internet world”. The efforts by multiple stakeholders to boost internet governance are crucial. “We must focus on the 3 Ds: Development, Diplomacy and Defence in the field of cyberspace,” our special envoy of the Dutch Government for international cyber policy, Uri Rosenthal, noted. And the importance of listening to the voice of younger generations remains undiminished, and the perspective of the generations that grew up with the internet is indispensable in the debates on the future of the medium.

NRI internal governance and initiatives

Who are the people involved in your NRI and how do they contribute to it?

NL IGF was established in 2010, as a cooperative venture consisting of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, SIDN (the Foundation for Internet Domain Registration in the Netherlands) and ECP Platform for the Information Society. At the NL IGF event about 100 participants, all different stakeholders: Dutch technical community, civil society, national parliamentarians, civil servants, scientists, non-profit organisations, the private sector, journalists, young people (about 10) and other people or organisations who are interested (sometimes in a specific workshop/topic on the agenda). The Dutch delegation for IGF consists of 17 (Kenya) to 34 (Istanbul) participants. It depends on time of the year, location (travelling time). Always at least two young people (under 22) join the delegation.

Have you experienced difficulties in ensuring all stakeholder groups participate fully and more or less equally?

No real difficulties in the last years, we have a civil society and technical community who debate on the visibility at the IGF, but on a national level they are both equal in time and space. Following the successes of previous editions, the format of the event remained unchanged. The agenda of the NL IGF event is drafted by the participants themselves, resulting in a programme with different workshops, from all different stakeholder groups. On a national level it is easier to get all the stakeholders involved, because of course we can influence the programme. But to get all stakeholders in the delegation to the IGF is far more difficult.

Do you measure gender balance in your NRI? Did you undertake measures to encourage gender balance?

It is not a really big theme in the Netherlands. We manage to get enough balance in our debate by itself. But on specific topics like cyber security and ICT it is a problem to find enough female role models. Successful though is the Women in Cyber Security Foundation (WiCS), a discipline-specific community for women working in cyber security. The main goal of WiCS is to foster connections among the under-represented women in the various cyber security fields (research, programming, policy,

architecture, design, management, communications etc.). Together with the WiCS we organised a workshop at last year's IGF on sextortion, the follow-up of which managed to pass the ballotage of the MAG this year too.

How was your last forum organised, what were the topics chosen and the outcomes of discussion? How was it financed?

Our Young IGF will take place on 5 October at the University of Amsterdam — who provides us the location (and students). NL IGF event 2017 is on 10 October in The Hague. It is financed by the parties of our cooperative venture: the Ministry of Economic Affairs, SIDN (the Foundation for Internet Domain Registration in the Netherlands) and ECP (Platform for the Information Society). Keynotes: Louise van der Laan, International Board of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the organisation ensuring the stable and secure operation of the internet; Kees van Baar, Dutch Human Rights ambassador.

Workshops:

- Duties to care and the Internet of Things. A call for global harmonisation, organised by the Dutch Cyber Security Council (input for Open Forum at the IGF 2017 by the Ministry of Justice).
- Out of my hands? Controlling personal digital information especially in the context of sextortion, organised by the WiCS, The Hague University of applied sciences and INHOPE/NL Hotline EOKM (input for workshop at the IGF 2017).
- Human rights and internet infrastructure: Human Rights Impact Assessments, organised by ARTICLE 19.
- Safety in the public space, also online. Workshop organised by the National Police.
- Fake news: Is blockchain the solution to assess information? Organised by Young NL IGF (input for workshop at the IGF 2017, totally organised by young people themselves).
- Critical infrastructure and the internet, where is the boundary of the public core?

Are there controversial topics that have been difficult in your NRI and if so, why?

No response was provided to this question.

Perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance

What is your take about the role of your NRI in internet governance processes, at the level of your country, region and globally?

No, the Netherlands is an open and free country where every subject can be discussed. Of course we had some heated discussions on the openness of the internet for example, net neutrality... and once we had the pirate party filling in a workshop. But this makes open multistakeholder forum as it

should be, there is a place for everybody and we can discuss everything with an open mind.

How do you perceive your role and position towards other NRIs, the IGF and the IGF Secretariat?

We have a long term experience, from the first IGF. We started very low profile with only a preparing workshop, but worked very hard for the visibility of the IGF in our country and managed to organise a large event since 2013. We join the EuroDIG every year and we had youth involvement from day one. For this it helps that ECP is the coordinator of the Better Internet For Kids programme from the European Commission, in the Netherlands too and partner at Insafe. We are not a governmentally established forum but based on public-private partnership. This includes also our way of funding.

Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words

National and Regional Internet Governance Forum Initiatives (NRIs) emerged in response to the success of the first two global Internet Governance Forums (IGFs). The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, the outcome document of the final phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), alongside the call for the creation of the IGF, served as the foundations for the model of bottom-up, multistakeholder internet governance. The first NRIs were set up in 2007 and 2008, and there are now close to a hundred initiatives, comprising national, sub-national, regional and youth initiatives, which organise autonomously and cooperate with the global IGF Secretariat. The importance of NRIs has increased throughout the years, as they have grown in number and their work has expanded in scope. They have acquired such relevance within the IGF that an NRI session was included in the IGF 2016 and 2017 main sessions agendas.

This year, APC has taken the initiative to compile two editions of Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) focused on the work of NRIs. While the main 2017 GISWatch annual report provides independent and analytical perspectives on the role of NRIs in internet governance broadly, the present companion edition, *Internet governance from the edges: National and regional IGFs in their own words*, aims to give voice and visibility to the stories of each NRI, share their experiences and achievements, and highlight their perspectives on internet governance.

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