

## IGF 2021 DC main session: DCNN briefing paper

### DCNN contribution to the IGF 2021 issue areas

#### 1. About the DC

The Dynamic Coalition on Network Neutrality (DCNN) is a multistakeholder group established within the United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to provide a discussion arena aimed at analyzing the various nuances of Internet Openness, with particular regard to net neutrality. Its goal is to foster multistakeholder debate, promote the elaboration of research and, ultimately, contribute to the identification of best practices, and elaboration of solid policies and regulations.

#### 2. Relevant issue area(s) and policy (questions)

##### I. Economic and social inclusion and human rights

###### Social inequality and the pandemic

1. What can be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic context about the relationship between digital inequality and social and economic inequality?

###### Digital policy and human rights frameworks

1. What is the relationship between digital policy and development and the established international frameworks for civil and political rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and further interpretation of these in the online context provided by various resolutions of the Human Rights Council?

##### II. Universal access and meaningful connectivity

###### Defining universal and meaningful access

- What are the key elements that constitute universal and meaningful Internet access? How can it be measured?

#### 3. DC contribution

##### II. Economic and social inclusion and human rights

###### Social inequality and the pandemic

1. What can be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic context about the relationship between digital inequality and social and economic inequality?

The DCNN and the DC3 have joined efforts to work extensively during the pandemic period to produce a joint report on dedicated “[The Value of Internet Openness in Times of Crisis](#).” The report has explored how the pandemic has exposed the adverse impact of digital divides on social equality and how internet openness, fostered via net neutrality approaches and community network initiatives, may be useful ally to reduce such divides. In July 2021, the French Telecoms Regulator (ARCEP) included in its report on “[The State of the Internet](#)” full section dedicated to “The Value of Internet Openness in Times of Crisis: Net

Neutrality, Community Networks and Digital Self-determination” (page 16-17 of the ARCEP report), drawing on the joint DCNN-DC3 output report.

### **Digital policy and human rights frameworks**

2. What is the relationship between digital policy and development and the established international frameworks for civil and political rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and further interpretation of these in the online context provided by various resolutions of the Human Rights Council?

DCNN will note that internet openness and net neutrality principles play an instrumental role in maintaining the Internet architecture open and decentralised, thus realising the promise of art 19 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, according to which “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.” This has been discussed at length in the first DCNN reports, consolidated in the book [Net Neutrality Compendium. Human Rights, Free Competition and the Future of the Internet](#)

## **II. Universal access and meaningful connectivity**

### **Defining universal and meaningful access**

- What are the key elements that constitute universal and meaningful Internet access? How can it be measured?

DCNN will stress that a key dimension of meaningful connectivity is non-discriminatory access this is essential for content and applications providers (especially start-ups and SMEs) in order to compete on a level playing field, and for individual Internet users, who rely on non-discriminatory Internet connectivity in order to fully enjoy their fundamental rights to communication and freedom of expression. This has been in the [various DCNN reports](#)