Intersessional Event 2023

Avoiding Internet Fragmentation

8 – 12 October 2023 | Kyoto, Japan

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IGF Messages 2022 - Avoiding Internet Fragmentation

The Global Digital Compact provides an opportunity to reassert the value of an open interconnected internet for the realisation of the UN Charter, achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and exercise of human rights. There is widespread agreement within the Internet community about the value of a global, unfragmented Internet as a platform for human activity.

The issues raised in discussions of Internet fragmentation are multi-layered, and different stakeholders give a variety of meanings and interpretations to the term. Some are most concerned with technical and infrastructural aspects of the Internet, while others focus on public policy issues including access, rights and impacts on user experience. These are explored in a draft framework prepared by the IGF Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation. Respect and understanding for different people’s perceptions and experience of fragmentation is essential if we are to reach effective and coordinated responses.

A wide range of political, economic, and technical factors can potentially drive fragmentation. However, diversity and decentralisation should not be mistaken for fragmentation. These are fundamentally positive aspects of the Internet’s architecture and operations.
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*Internet fragmentation and its different aspects is being discussed by IGF intersessional activities and National, Regional and Youth Initiatives (NRIs)*

→ The **Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation (PNIF)** is an IGF intersessional activity to further the discussion on and to raise awareness of the technical, policy, legal and regulatory measures and actions that pose a risk to the open, interconnected and interoperable Internet.

→ In 2022, based on community discussions in open webinars, the PNIF developed a **Framework for Discussing Internet Fragmentation**. to serve as a general guiding and orienting tool for continuing the dialogue about fragmentation and bringing in more people and stakeholders, allow a more holistic and inclusive debate, and at the same time create a space for focused discussion and work towards concrete solutions, policy approaches and guidelines.
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PNIF framework for discussing fragmentation

- Fragmentation of the User experience
- Fragmentation of the internet's Technical Layer
- Fragmentation of Internet Governance and coordination

- Technical, political, and commercial developments and their intended or unintended consequences, that may or may not have an impact on the fragmentation of the user experience and/or technical layer fragmentation and/or Internet Governance.
The PNIF in 2023 further refines the three dimensions of the Framework by
◆ UNPACKING - Fragmentation of [x]: What is it? What is it not?
◆ PRIORITISING - Which manifestations of [x] fragmentation should be avoided or addressed?
◆ ADDRESSING - What practices, guidelines, or principles could help to address or prevent fragmentation of [x]?

3 working groups are further exploring the 3 dimensions of the framework. Volunteers and input from other Intersessional activities appreciated.

www.intgovforum.org/en/content/policy-network-on-internet-fragmentation
Dynamic Coalitions have differing views on fragmentation as they focus on different topics. For example, the **DC-Core Internet Values** focuses on the Internet Network itself:

- **Global**
- **Interoperable**
- **Open**
- Decentralized
- End-to-end
- User-centric
- Robust and reliable

Breaching Core Internet Values shown in **Green** results in fragmentation.
Discussion

● input from other intersessional activities?

● Q&A?
THANK YOU