

Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values Activity Report

(Period December 2022 – February 2024)

This report summarises the activity of the DC on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV) since its session at the hybrid IGF in Addis Ababa in December 2022 and until the hybrid IGF in Kyoto in December 2023 – with an additional description of the response provided to Leadership Panel “The Internet We Want” consultation.

BACKGROUND ABOUT THE DC (STANDING EXPLANATION)

Over the last 15 years our work as an IGF Dynamic Coalition is focused on defining and emphasizing Core Internet Values, which comprise of the technical architectural values by which the Internet was built, and, more importantly, what can be called ‘social’ or, in other words, ‘universal’ values that emerge from the way the Internet works.

The first is that the Internet is a **global** medium open to all, regardless of geography or nationality. It's **interoperable** because it's a **network of networks**. It doesn't rely on a single application. It relies on **TCP/IP, a common, open protocol**. It's **free of any centralized control**. The only supposed control is the domain naming system, which provides a single translation system between domain names and IP addresses, and that's, of course, needed by design. It's **end to end**, so traffic from one end of the network to the other end of the network goes unhindered. It's **user centric**, and users have control over what they send and receive. And it's **robust and reliable**.

As the Internet expands with newer products, services and applications, there are emerging needs for focused pursuits on important aspects of the Internet, for instance, **freedom from harm**. (In 2017, the Coalition put together a discussion paper focusing on freedom from harm as proposed by Vint Cerf in the context of addressing the rise of criminal use of the Internet and the solutions towards prevention of harm to the users of the Internet, including the harm that arises unintended from the staggering growth of IoT technologies, causing billions of devices connected to the Internet which in turn bring about new regulatory concerns.)

The Coalition was formed following the IGF Egypt workshop in 2009 titled “Workshop on Fundamentals: Core Internet Values” chaired by the then Internet Society President Lynn StAmour. As a DC, meetings were held at the IGF annually since IGF2010 and has also held sessions at EuroDIG.

ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN THE PAST YEAR 2023

The DC-CIV participated in DC coordination meetings¹ throughout the year and responded to consultations and surveys that were shared through the group. It co-organised a pre-meeting event at EuroDIG 2023 in Tampere, Finland. It also organised a session during the annual IGF meeting in Kyoto, Japan.

It also undertook its own consultation to respond to “The Internet We Want” consultation launched by the IGF Leadership Panel in early 2024.

Events in collaboration with the Dynamic Coalition on Internet of Things (DC-IoT).

The Dynamic Coalition on Internet of Things (DC-IoT) and the Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV) co-organised a pre-meeting event at the EuroDIG in Tampere, Finland, on 19 June 2023 entitled: “Progressing Core Internet Values and Global Good Practice for the Internet of Things”.

The main topic was Global Good Practice for IoT towards 2030, taking into account where we are in IoT deployment, policy and regulatory developments around the world, and the role of AI/ML in governing IoT ecosystems, based on Core Internet Values. It also served to further develop the concept of what it means to have “meaningful transparency” to all stakeholders in the chain, and “real accountability” to those stakeholders that can reasonably be expected to bear that responsibility.

This activity was a collaboration between DC CIV, DC IoT, with the support of DC IS3C and linked to the Policy Network on Artificial Intelligence and other relevant DC activities. Speakers were Wout de Natris (on behalf of DC IS3C, on current IoT regulations and policies), Alejandro Pisanty (on behalf of DC Core Internet Values, about the impact of current developments on Core Internet Values that also attribute to IoT good practice), and Thomas Schneider (Chair of the Council of Europe’s AI group), on the role and impact of AI developments and the exploration on best ways to deal with this.

Full details including a recording of the session can be found on the [2023 EuroDIG WIKI](#).

2023 Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values Session

The 2023 Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values Session was entitled: “[Evolving Regulation and its impact on Core Internet Values](#)” taking place on Tuesday, 10th October, 2023 (07:20 UTC) - Tuesday, 10th October, 2023 (08:50 UTC)

Key takeaways from this session:

- The Internet has been self organizing with as little regulation as possible for it to work and if strong regulation is introduced it will hinder its technical functioning. Too much regulation will damage interoperability. As Internet networks evolve into Space with no borders there are question marks as to how its Core Values will be sustained.
- One of the major policy tensions in digital life pits anonymity against accountability. Anonymity has been a key aspect of Internet activity, but we have painfully learned that full anonymity can be exploited in ways that allow bad actors to escape being held accountable for the harms they cause. Systems must be developed to bring accountability without compromising essential anonymity - and layering identity levels is one way to do it.
- Such systems must be designed with clear and minimal implications for deep architectural changes. A layered approach (possibly in the application layer) may be desirable.

¹ DC Coordination Group: <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/dc-coordination-activities>

Call to Action:

- All stakeholders should actively engage in understanding, appreciating, and expanding knowledge of the Internet's Core Values and the damages that may arise from actions that, deliberately or as unintended consequences, impinge negatively on them. The list is not long and it starts by layered architecture, packet switching, "best effort" i.e. design for resilience against failure, interoperability, openness, robustness (Postel), end-to-end (meaning that most functions that are not packet transmission are a responsibility of the "edge", and implying network neutrality), decentralization, scalability, and, as a consequence, universal reach and "permissionless innovation".
- Laws, norms, and treaties must all be commensurate with these values and only impinge on any of them after a deep analysis by all stakeholders, and with safety valves to avoid irreversible unexpected consequences down the road.
- The Internet community including the private sector, civil society, technical community should actively engage with governments to make them understand why a multistakeholder IGF is important.
- Use of encryption needs to continue - as without encryption many of the functions of the Internet's safety will be negatively impacted.

The Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values would like to thank the excellent speakers that took part in this Session: Lee Rainie (Former Director, Internet and Technology research at Pew Research Center) - how have things changed over the years which the Pew Research Center has studied the Internet. Jane Coffin (Senior Executive International Infrastructure and Internet Issues, Connect Humanity) - speaking about how we have seen regulation erode the Internet Invariants over the years. Nii Quaynor (Chairman of the Board, Ghana.Com) - speaking about how AFRINIC, African's Regional Internet Registry was affected by local legislation in Mauritius - and what impact this could have on for Regional Internet Registries. Iria Puyosa (DFRLab, Atlantic Council) - speaking about protecting point to point messaging systems globally and why it is important? Ref: <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/point-to-point-messaging-apps/> and Vint Cerf (Internet Evangelist, Google) - speaking about likely effects of some regulations which are well intended but may have unexpected or undesirable side-effects. The session was expertly moderated by Sébastien Bachollet (EURALO Chair).

Involvement in the 2023 Dynamic Coalition on Internet of Things Session.

The 2023 Dynamic Coalition on Internet of Things Session was entitled: "[DC-IoT Progressing Global Good Practice for the Internet of Things](#)", taking place on Tuesday, 10th October, 2023 (23:45 UTC) - Wednesday, 11th October, 2023 (01:15 UTC)

Key takeaways from this session:

- When using IoT devices and services, strong identification becomes key to protect these from tampering. This identification may be between devices, for instance those that together provide a service, or form together a so-called "cyber physical system" such as a car, a house, an airplane, etc. When this identification is between people and devices, there needs to be sufficient measures in place to ensure privacy by default.
- With the ongoing growth of IoT deployment throughout our world, scaling issues are important to consider. Going forward to design imperatives need to be taken on board: (1) security by design - every device needs to be protectable (and updatable when needed); and (2) every device needs to be as carbon neutral as possible (as there will be many, including those that are dependent on power).

The involvement of the DC-CIV members on this panel provided input into the discussion focussing on Core Internet Values: Alejandro Pisanty/Olivier Crépin-Leblond, DC CIV on a Core Internet Values perspective in which concepts like best-effort, interoperability, openness, robustness, decentralization, end-to-end, scalability and permissionless innovation both affect and are affected by the expansion of the IoT in different scenarios (e.g., whether the IoT's development is inertial, less regulated or more strongly regulated than present.) The increased prevalence of AI tools within the IoT is an emerging challenge. This relayed what was reflected in the discussion during EuroDIG in June 2023.

CORE INTERNET VALUES TRACKING

In 2023 the erosion of Core Internet Values has continued.

However, the DC-CIV noted that, thanks to the work of the Leadership Panel and the IGF on “The Internet We Want”, work focussing on risks brought by the changing nature of the Internet has widened to other fora. It is hoped that this renewed focus will, on the one hand, slow down the erosion of Core Internet Values and on the other, enhance the efforts worldwide to reinforce the “Internet Way of Networking” that some have quoted. This topic has become front stage, thus we look forward to organising more discussions that will guide Governments and other stakeholders that are working to produce legislation and regulation, into safeguarding Core Internet Values whilst

Report submitted by Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond, DC Core Internet Values Chair
29 March 2024

Appendix A

Response to the Internet We Want Consultation (February 2024)

The DC-CIV coordinated its response with the Dynamic Coalition on IoT (DC-IoT) and the Internet Rights and Principles Coalition (IRPC), leading some cross-referencing of responses in between Dynamic Coalitions.

In its introduction, the DC-CIV emphasized how the principles developed by the Leadership Panel for The Internet We Want reflected the Core Internet Values:

“Based on its mission, the DC-CIV is very happy to contribute to the IGF Leadership’s panel’s call and supports its call to come together and collaborate on the existing commitments, so as to ensure creating the Internet We Want, that it be:

- *human-centric*
- *for everyone*
- *unfragmented*
- *balanced between allowing for the free flow of information and ensuring data protection and privacy*
- *safe, including cybersecurity so as to minimise potential harms*
- *an open environment for collaboration to foster innovation*
- *environmentally friendly*
- *inclusive of the next generation to achieve sustainability*
- *multi-stakeholder in its governance approach*
- *In particular, we believe it is crucial to remind ourselves at every step that this Internet we created together was only possible to develop because of the adherence of the technical community to Core Internet Values that made it possible to create one Internet for everyone: open, free, globally connected, interoperable, unfragmented, and stable.*

Per section, we indicate what we believe to be key, from this perspective, for that specific section of the five points presented by the IGF Leadership Panel:

1. Whole and open;

The DC CIV agrees with this point..

In particular, the DC CIV emphasises the risk of fragmentation, wholly commercial exploitation and digital exclusion if this point is ignored.

2. Universal and inclusive;

The DC CIV agrees with this point as the Internet is Global.

In particular, the DC CIV emphasises the user centricity of the Internet, which brings its inclusiveness.

3. Free-flowing and trustworthy;

The DC CIV agrees with this point since it brings together the concept of sharing and trust.

In particular, the DC CIV emphasises the capacity for the Internet to be both free-flowing and trustworthy due to its layered approach.

4. Safe and secure; and

The DC CIV agrees with this aim.

In particular, the DC CIV emphasises the development of standards that make Internet use as well as devices safer to use. This is particularly valid for Internet of Things (IoT) devices that have a lower unit device cost.

5. Rights-respecting.

The DC CIV agrees with this focus.

In particular, the DC CIV emphasises the user (human) centricity of the Internet, which brings with it obligations when taking a human rights approach to Internet Governance, Coordination and Development.

The above points shared by the Leadership Panel are at the heart of our community's work and we firmly believe that it is these principles that have made the Internet the Global success that it has become, thanks to its overwhelming positive effects on the world's development."