

ACTIVITY REPORT 2025

Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV)

Internet Governance Forum | Period January – December 2025

Chair: Dr. Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond

1. Introduction and Background

The Dynamic Coalition on Core Internet Values (DC-CIV) is one of the longest-standing thematic coalitions operating within the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) framework. Conceived at the IGF Workshop held in Egypt in 2009, with then-Internet Society President Lynn St Amour as Chair, the Coalition set out to address foundational questions: What is the Internet? What are its architectural principles? What core values underpin it, and how are these values evolving in the face of new technologies and governance pressures?

The DC-CIV has convened sessions at every global IGF since 2010 and has also engaged in inter-sessional work at regional IGFs and governance fora worldwide. The Coalition's mission is to define, emphasise, and advocate for Core Internet Values — encompassing both the technical architectural principles upon which the Internet was built (openness, interoperability, decentralisation, end-to-end connectivity) and the social and universal values that emerge from the way the Internet functions for its global community of users.

The year 2025 was a landmark for global Internet governance, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and the comprehensive WSIS+20 Review. Against this backdrop, the DC-CIV's work took on renewed urgency, as debates around artificial intelligence governance, Internet fragmentation, and the permanent mandate of the IGF itself placed Core Internet Values at the heart of international digital policy deliberations.

2. Key Activities and Engagements in 2025

2.1 EuroDIG 2025 — Flash Session, Strasbourg (May 2025)

On 14 May 2025, the DC-CIV convened a flash session titled 'From Talk to Action: Safeguarding Core Internet Values in Today's Digital Governance' at the Pan-European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG), held at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg, France. The session was archived and made publicly available for the wider internet governance community.

The session addressed a longstanding critique of the IGF as a forum producing only talk without tangible results. Drawing on analysis conducted during the WSIS+10 Review, the DC-CIV presented evidence that IGF dialogues — including those initiated by Dynamic Coalitions — have produced concrete outcomes over the years, including policies that moved to specialised fora and agencies. The session explored how the IGF's formal outputs, such as messages from each annual meeting and the

work of the High-Level Panel, have channelled Coalition advocacy into actionable digital governance decisions.

In the context of the WSIS+20 Review, the Strasbourg session emphasised that Core Internet Values must remain central to any governance architecture that emerges from the review process. The DC-CIV argued that protecting openness and interoperability as foundational principles is especially critical as new technologies, including AI, reshape how the Internet is experienced and governed.

2.2 IGF 2025 — Lillestrøm, Norway (June 2025)

The 20th annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum took place in Lillestrøm, Norway, from 23 to 27 June 2025, under the overarching theme 'Building Digital Governance Together'. The event attracted more than 8,000 participants from 160 countries and was the largest UN conference ever held in Norway. It served simultaneously as a key milestone in the WSIS+20 Review process, bringing together governments, civil society, the technical community, private sector representatives, and international organisations.

Dynamic Coalitions, including the DC-CIV, participated across dedicated cluster sessions and the main DC session. The programme included four DC Cluster Sessions as well as a main Dynamic Coalitions session that brought together the output of inter-sessional work. The DC-CIV contributed to discussions on the future of multistakeholder governance, the role of Core Internet Values in the WSIS+20 outcome, and the urgent challenge of Internet fragmentation.

The DC-CIV was also one of the select few that were allocated a workshop slot during this year's session slot-restricted IGF meeting. "WS #187 Bridging Internet & AI Governance: From Theory to Practice" was exceptionally well attended.

A central theme of DC-CIV participation at IGF 2025 was the extension of Core Internet Values — particularly openness and interoperability — to the governance of artificial intelligence. Building on work developed jointly with the Dynamic Coalition on Network Neutrality (DC-NN) at IGF 2024, which had examined lessons from Internet openness for AI governance, the DC-CIV in 2025 contributed to advancing a values-based approach to AI regulation. Coalition members cautioned against over-regulation of AI technology itself, stressing instead that governance frameworks should focus on human behaviour, intentions, and rights rather than on the technology per se. A federated, multistakeholder approach to AI governance was advocated.

The Coalition also engaged with the IGF's Policy Network on Internet Fragmentation, which held a dedicated main session on 27 June 2025. The DC-CIV contributed to the view that Internet fragmentation — arising from censorship, digital protectionism, and competing assertions of digital sovereignty — represents one of the most serious contemporary threats to Core Internet Values. It argued that an open Internet constitutes critical peace infrastructure and that fragmenting it by geography undermines global cooperation, trade, and the free exchange of knowledge.

2.3 WSIS+20 High-Level Event — Geneva (July 2025)

Following IGF 2025, the WSIS+20 High-Level Event was convened in Geneva from 7 to 11 July 2025. This event represented a critical waypoint in the UN-level review of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes, with a formal WSIS+20 outcome document expected by the end of 2025. The DC-CIV's inter-sessional work and its contributions to IGF 2025 directly informed the broader community's engagement at this event.

The WSIS+20 process ultimately produced a landmark outcome: the IGF was granted a permanent mandate as a forum of the United Nations, to be placed on a stable and sustainable basis with appropriate staffing and resources. This decision validated years of advocacy by Dynamic Coalitions, including the DC-CIV, for a durable and well-resourced multistakeholder Internet governance forum. The outcome document also established a joint implementation roadmap aligning the WSIS+20 follow-up with the Global Digital Compact, recognising the importance of the global network of national, regional, and youth IGF initiatives.

3. Thematic Focus Areas in 2025

3.1 Core Internet Values and Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence emerged as the dominant technology policy issue of 2025, and the DC-CIV placed significant emphasis on ensuring that AI governance be grounded in Core Internet Values. Coalition member Alejandro Pisanty emphasised the need to preserve values such as openness and interoperability as they are extended to the AI domain, cautioning against the temptation to over-regulate the technology itself rather than the behaviours and intentions of those who deploy it.

DC-CIV participants contributed to broader IGF 2025 discussions in which experts noted that AI governance has become a crowded but fragmented space, shaped by overlapping frameworks such as the OECD AI Principles, the EU AI Act, UNESCO's AI ethics recommendations, and various national strategies. The DC-CIV's contribution was to assert that these frameworks should be evaluated against Core Internet Values — ensuring that AI governance does not inadvertently replicate or deepen the fragmentation risks already threatening the open Internet.

Questions of gender, diversity, and data quality in AI were also raised within the DC-CIV's sphere of engagement. Coalition member Wanda Muñoz emphasised the importance of analysing Internet governance values through a gender and diversity lens and drew on feminist AI scholarship to highlight structural inequities embedded in current AI development practices.

3.2 Internet Fragmentation and Digital Sovereignty

Internet fragmentation — whether technical, governance-related, or experienced by end users — continued to be a central concern for the DC-CIV in 2025. The Coalition contributed to the view that the Internet's role as a global, interoperable platform is being progressively eroded by a range of pressures: national censorship regimes, assertions of digital sovereignty that prioritise territorial control over global connectivity, commercial decisions by large platforms, and the growing risk that AI systems and digital services will be built in nationally or regionally siloed architectures.

At IGF 2025, fragmentation was addressed in dedicated sessions, with stakeholders advocating for measurable frameworks and sustained multi-stakeholder dialogue through national and regional IGFs. The DC-CIV reinforced that Core Internet Values — particularly interoperability and end-to-end connectivity — provide the normative foundation against which fragmentation risks should be assessed. It advocated for Article 29C of the Global Digital Compact, which addresses Internet fragmentation, to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with these values.

3.3 Action-Oriented Outcomes from Internet Governance Dialogue

The theme of moving from dialogue to concrete outcomes ran through DC-CIV activities throughout 2025, most explicitly in the EuroDIG flash session in Strasbourg.

The Coalition drew on the IGF's history since the WSIS+10 Review to demonstrate that multi-stakeholder discussions, including those initiated by Dynamic Coalitions,

have produced demonstrable policy results. This narrative was advanced to counter the perception of Internet governance forums as mere 'talk shops', and to make the case for the permanent institutionalisation of the IGF under the WSIS+20 outcome.

The DC-CIV also continued its longstanding practice of contributing to IGF open consultations and Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) meetings to ensure that Dynamic Coalition perspectives — and the concept of Core Internet Values specifically — are embedded in the IGF's annual agenda-setting process. Chair Dr. Olivier Crépin-Leblond provided interventions emphasising the wealth of knowledge residing in Dynamic Coalitions and the bottom-up, community-driven nature of their contributions to the global governance process.

4. Coalition Governance and Membership

The DC-CIV continued to operate under the leadership of Dr. Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond as Chair, with a multi-stakeholder membership drawn from civil society, academia, the technical community, and international organisations. The Coalition engages with its members primarily through its mailing list and inter-sessional virtual meetings, as well as through in-person sessions at the global IGF and at regional Internet governance events.

The Coalition maintains its public-facing presence through its website at coreinternetvalues.org and through the IGF Secretariat's platform at intgovforum.org. In 2025, the DC-CIV continued to archive its session recordings and documentation, including the EuroDIG flash session, through publicly accessible platforms to ensure transparency and accessibility for the wider Internet governance community.

The Coalition's governance structure emphasises the bottom-up, voluntary nature of Dynamic Coalition participation, consistent with the broader IGF model. Members are drawn from diverse stakeholder groups and geographies, contributing expertise on a pro bono basis. The DC-CIV also maintains collaborative working relationships with related Dynamic Coalitions, including the DC on Network Neutrality (DC-NN), with which it has co-hosted joint sessions on topics such as the relationship between network neutrality principles and AI openness.

5. Significance of 2025 and Looking Ahead

The year 2025 was arguably the most consequential year for global Internet governance since the original WSIS process in 2003–2005. The WSIS+20 Review culminated in an outcome that permanently institutionalised the IGF within the United Nations system, validated the multistakeholder model of Internet governance, and established linkages between the IGF, the Global Digital Compact, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For the DC-CIV, this outcome represented an important vindication of over fifteen years of work defining, defending, and advocating for Core Internet Values as a reference standard for Internet policy.

Key challenges remain, however. The rapid advancement of AI technologies, the persistence of Internet fragmentation, the constant eroding of other Core Values, and the concentration of digital power in the hands of a small number of actors all pose ongoing threats to the values the Coalition was established to protect. The DC-CIV's

work in 2025 laid important groundwork for extending the Core Internet Values framework to these new domains, and this agenda is expected to intensify in the coming years as AI governance frameworks mature and as the newly permanent IGF begins operating under its enhanced mandate.

The Coalition's dual emphasis on technical architectural principles (openness, interoperability, decentralisation, end-to-end connectivity) and social values (universal access, human rights, freedom from harm, gender equality) positions it uniquely to bridge technical and policy communities at a moment when those communities urgently need to speak a common language about the Internet's foundational principles. As the IGF enters a new era with a permanent mandate, the DC-CIV intends to continue serving as a space where that common language is developed, refined, and championed.

6. Summary of Key Activities at a Glance

Date / Event	Activity	Key Theme / Outcome
May 2025 EuroDIG, Strasbourg	Flash session: 'From Talk to Action: Safeguarding Core Internet Values in Today's Digital Governance'	Demonstrating concrete outcomes of IGF/DC dialogue; WSIS+20 advocacy
June 2025 IGF 2025, Norway	DC-CIV sessions and cluster participation at the 20th IGF, Lillestrøm	AI governance through Core Values lens; Internet fragmentation; WSIS+20 inputs
June 2025 IGF 2025, Norway	Cross-coalition engagement with DC-NN and Policy Network on Fragmentation	Internet openness as model for AI openness; fragmentation as threat to Core Values
July 2025 WSIS+20, Geneva	Contribution to WSIS+20 High-Level Event; IGF permanent mandate advocacy	IGF granted permanent UN mandate; multistakeholder model reaffirmed
Throughout 2025	Inter-sessional work, mailing list, virtual meetings, MAG engagement	Continuous advocacy for Core Internet Values in emerging technology policy

7. Core Internet Values Tracking (The Core Internet Values Observatory (CIV OBS))

The DC CIV has, over the years, examined a wide range of developments that may affect Core Internet Values,, including both technical changes and policy interventions. These have included issues such as IPv6, Network Address Translation, content delivery networks, Cloud Services, and 5G, as well as broader governance concerns arising from the evolving use of Internet-based technologies and services. The Coalition has also consistently highlighted the risks posed by unilateral government action, including suppression of political dissent, national firewalls, and Internet shutdowns, all of which contribute to the fragmentation of the global Internet. In parallel, it has drawn attention to practices such as data prioritisation and traffic shaping, which may undermine openness, interoperability, and end-to-end connectivity.

At the same time, the growing concentration of digital power in the hands of a small number of major technology companies has raised further concerns. Major tech giants continued to consolidate their power. The expansion of closed ecosystems and “walled gardens” can restrict user choice, limit access to information and services beyond proprietary platforms. This centralisation stifled competition and innovation, as smaller companies struggled to compete with the monopolistic practices of these dominant players.

The coalition also recognises that the rapid spread and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) may create new pressures on Core Internet Values. AI systems are increasingly shaping how information is produced, distributed, moderated, and accessed, while also influencing infrastructure, platform governance, surveillance

practices, and the broader digital economy. These developments raise important questions about how Core Internet Values may be affected and underscore the need for continued attention and analysis.

In a fast-changing technological and geopolitical environment, the need to monitor, assess, and better understand pressures on the Core Internet Values is greater than ever. The DC-CIV considers such tracking and analysis an important part of its ongoing contribution to Internet governance discussions and has developed plans for a Core Internet Values Observatory. The initiative builds on the Coalition's long-standing concern with threats such as fragmentation, shutdowns, platform concentration, and AI-related risks, and aims to create a more systematic and evidence-based public resource for monitoring how such values are strengthened or eroded over time.

Progress has been gradual, reflecting the complexity of the current international political and governance environment. The Coalition acknowledges and appreciates the continued efforts of Dr. Pari Esfandiari in advancing this work. A draft blueprint for the Core Internet Values Observatory now exists – and organisations interested in sponsoring its further development are invited to contact the DC-CIV Chair.

8. References and Further Reading

DC-CIV official website: <https://www.coreinternetvalues.org>

IGF Dynamic Coalition page:

<https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/dynamic-coalition-on-core-internet-values-dc-civ>

EuroDIG 2025 session archive: <https://archive.org/details/dc-civ-eurodig2025>

IGF 2025 sessions and reports: <https://www.intgovforum.org/en/igf-2025-reports>

IGF 2025 WS #187 Bridging Internet & AI Governance: From Theory to Practice: Report:

<https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2025-ws-187-bridging-internet-ai-governance-from-theory-to-practice#edit-group-report>

Video Recording: <https://youtu.be/nDp9MWtHtgg?si=YtkSWvmt6T9YIKEP>

WSIS+20 outcome and IGF permanent mandate:

<https://www.internetsociety.org/blog/2025/12/wsis20-reaffirms-multistakeholder-governance-and-a-lasting-igf/>

DC-CIV Activity Report 2024 (covering IGF Kyoto to IGF Riyadh): Available via the IGF Secretariat and the DC-CIV mailing list archive on

https://intgovforum.org/en/filedepot_download/46/29535

Global Digital Compact: <https://www.un.org/global-digital-compact/en>

*Report submitted by Dr. Olivier MJ Crépin-Leblond, DC Core Internet Values Chair
31 March 2026. Contact: ocl (at) gih.com*