



## **Youth participation in Internet Governance: Internet Governance Forum 6-10 December 2021 and/or online**

### **About Internet Governance Forum (IGF)**

The sixteenth IGF will be hosted by the Government of Poland under the overarching theme: **‘Internet United’**

Internet Governance Forum (IGF) is a platform for discussions which brings various people and stakeholder groups to the table as equals to exchange information and share good policies and practices relating to the Internet and technologies. While the IGF may not have decision-making mandates, it informs and inspires those who do. It facilitates common understandings and knowledge exchange of how to maximize Internet opportunities and address risks and challenges.

While national authorities are expected to continue to apply a risk-based approach in implementing measures related to COVID-19 and international travel, preparations are being made to organize the IGF as a hybrid event, allowing qualitative participation of onsite and online to achieve the goal of making the IGF as inclusive as possible.

### **Youth Participation in Internet Governance**

The Council of Europe, as a partner of the event, follows particularly human rights debates such as data protection and security, artificial intelligence, internet regulations and policies, cybercrimes, online hate speech, access to services.

Youth participation in Internet Governance gained relevance for the Council of Europe during the No Hate Speech Movement campaign which mobilised young people for better human rights protection in cyberspace. Youth participation in Internet Governance remains a priority in the Youth for Democracy programme which emphasises the development of competences of

young people for influencing decision making processes in respect to e-forms of youth participation and promotion of human rights online.

In 2017, the Youth Department organised [a seminar on youth participation in Internet Governance](#) that resulted in a set of conclusions that emphasise the importance of recognising young people as a stakeholder group and recommends “to give a priority to youth participation in Internet Governance in youth, education and children policies” and to “include a youth representatives in every panel in Internet Governance conferences”.

The youth sector of the Council of Europe has remained actively contributing in Internet governance fora in 2018 and 2020 while advocating for genuine forms of youth participation and promoting human rights-based approaches to Internet governance and youth participation therein.

### **Youth participation in IGF**

Youth participation in IGF is primary about having a say on youth-related issues, networking, and advocacy. Participants invited by the Council of Europe are expected to:

- actively participate in the plenary sessions, workshops and side events of IGF that are tackling human rights, youth participation, antidiscrimination, inclusion etc.
- bring expertise and be visible in the plenary sessions and the workshops
- learn about and become familiar with different topics related to Internet governance
- Share the learning and communicate key messages and conclusions from the events through online channels of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

Participants must also fill in an evaluation form. Like all fora, IGF is a unique occasion to make relevant contacts, carry out advocacy actions and do networking.

As in previous years, the Council of Europe will prepare a group of youth “delegates” or participants in IGF. Those participants should be able to convey the values and priorities of the Council of Europe and use the experience for their personal and personal development as well as for their role as multipliers in youth organisations.

### **Participants profile**

The Council of Europe youth participants “delegation” will include:

- Representatives of Advisory Council on Youth
- Youth experts in the topic of Internet Governance
- Youth leaders, activists, representatives of youth NGOs of 18-30 years old, with relevant experience in youth participation in Internet governance, including experiences of the youth campaign No Hate Speech Movement
- English is the working language of IGF. All participants are therefore expected to be able to work in English.

### **Financial arrangements:**

Travel expenses to/from Poland will be reimbursed by bank transfer after the event. Accommodation and food will be covered with a per diem or organised in an alternative way.

**How to take part:**

Apply online at: <https://youthapplications.coe.int/Application-forms>

Register also on IGF website: <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/igf-2021>

Deadline: 30 September 2021. Application results will be announced by 11 October 2021

There will be a preparatory meeting scheduled in November 2021 online.