

1. The Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

The IGF has emerged from the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) as an annual multi-stakeholder, non-decisional forum to facilitate forward-looking discussions on Internet issues amongst all stakeholders. The initial mandate of the IGF was from 2006 to 2010 and was renewed by the UN General Assembly until 2015. The EU and a few of its Member States have been solid supporters of the IGF since its inception (the EU has been one of the main financial contributors of the IGF Secretariat for several years). The 9th IGF will take place in Istanbul on 2-5 September 2014, with the overarching theme "Connecting Continents for Enhanced Multistakeholder Internet Governance".

2. What is the current situation?

There is broad recognition of the value of this forum, which has now become an important element in the Internet ecosystem. The IGF improved in its attempts to find right balance between continuity and incremental improvements in its themes and format. It has brought together an extensive range of participants from the many communities interested in Internet governance, providing a unique opportunity to have frank and open discussions among players with very different ideas.

There is a growing sense that the IGF has turned into a "talk shop" without any real impact. A [UN Working Group on Improvements to the IGF](#) was convened and produced in 2012 a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening the impact of the IGF, including by producing **tangible outputs**. The WG also recommended improvements in terms of visibility of the forum, working modalities, funding, outreach to and interaction with other internet governance related entities, broader participation and capacity-building in order to enhance stakeholders' understanding of Internet-related issues. The NETmundial "multi-stakeholder statement" calls for the implementation of these recommendations by 2015 and suggests a number of areas for specific improvements.

3. European Commission's perspective

- The European Commission strongly advocates a full and quick implementation of the Recommendations of the UN Working group on Improvements to the IGF.
- While preserving its unique nature as a truly open platform for discussion, the IGF should not remain a mere "talk shop".
- Stakeholders who until recently were not very open to this idea are showing a change in attitude. The time is ripe to produce outcome documents, such as policy recommendations for voluntary adoption.
- We are committed to continue financially supporting the IGF secretariat (until 2015) and we support initiatives to collect additional funds.
- It is important that all Stakeholders, particularly EU Member States and European companies, step up their financial and non-financial contributions.
- We will continue to actively participate and engage in the IGF, including ensuring high-level representation (VP Kroes has participated in several editions of the IGF).
- We are confident that a strengthened IGF will progressively become an important driver of successful Internet governance; however, the necessary improvements to the IGF should not be a reason to delay other urgently needed activities.