



# Portuguese Internet Governance Forum Initiative 2017

## MESSAGES FROM LISBON

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# WHAT FUTURE FOR THE INTERNET?

The Internet upholds a paradigm shift which sustains our contemporary society. Its existence has changed dramatically our ways of being, of thinking, of working and, ultimately, the way we all relate with one another.

The contributions of the different stakeholders are vital to further enrich the content and the amplitude of the ongoing discussion, its thematics and problematics, in a process allowing different perspectives to complement each other, with the purpose of having a better and broader comprehension of our reality. This, in turn, empowers us to better define the pathways to improve inclusion and digital competences, to protect individual data and fundamental rights, and to face up the challenges tied to issues like cybercrime, cyber surveillance and cybersecurity.

Local initiatives which are growing in significance are setting the scene for active discussions on Internet Governance issues, thus having impact on public policies on this matter, at national level and consequently on the organisation of the annual meeting of the IGF – Internet Governance Forum.

The youth participation has been acknowledged, given its capacity of thinking outside the box. Indeed, their different views and boldness translate into an important and transversal contribute, which will necessarily produce a short-term impact in the Internet Governance discussion.

All these diverse perspectives, actors and stakeholders result in an inter and intra disciplinary mosaic where we can recognize the main internet scenarios for today and tomorrow, but also, and perhaps most importantly, its different uses, its advantages and the challenges it entails.

## **CAN FULL CITIZENSHIP BE DULY ACHIEVED WITHOUT DIGITAL INCLUSION?**

Both inclusion and digital literacy are fundamental in what regards fully exercising citizenship. Indeed, accessibility and digital competences allow the citizen to interact and participate in society, exercising both his rights and duties.

In Portugal, there has been an important phenomenon pertaining to the use of digital tools and content. Despite its fast deployment, the adoption of ICT-based solutions (Information and Communication Technologies) by end-users remains scant. In the light of this development and the mass use of technology, the digital divide may tend to widen in the upcoming years, deepening the gap for vulnerable groups and those that are excluded or at risk of being excluded (particularly people with disabilities).

The solution for this challenge comprehends cooperation between all actors through a multistakeholder approach that will allow a better implementation of policies and measures that seek to address the current reality.

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH, DIGITAL FOOTPRINT AND INTERNET PRIVACY

In this session, the following main ideas were emphasized:

- Increase the offer of digital literacy contents in basic and secondary education curricula, notably on privacy and ethics in the Internet, and encourage higher education establishments to restructure their courses on information technologies and systems based upon a perspective that is imbued *ab initio* with the concepts of ethics, legality, security, and data privacy and protection.
- Continue the dialogue on these themes, with the special concern to provide young people with the opportunity to express their views, as well as to actively involve politicians in this debate.

# TRUST IN THE INTERNET AND GDPR

In this session, the following main ideas were emphasized:

- The importance of the right to privacy, as a founding principle of citizenship and freedom of expression, in building trust between the citizens, the private companies and the government;
- To ensure control over data privacy and the right to be forgotten are done in accordance with the applicable law;
- To ensure the protection of personal data and privacy through an adequate monitoring of information;
- Existence of Privacy Policies adapted to the structure of each organization, but always in accordance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation);
- Relevance of the creation of the figure of the "Data Protection Officer", which in some structures becomes mandatory.

# INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY AND NATIONAL COHESION

International connectivity is essential for the whole Internet ecosystem to operate. It is a basic infrastructure for socio-economic development, as well as for national and international projects related to innovation and scientific research. These two vectors clearly justify the establishment of new international submarine arteries.

It is necessary to engage in a debate for defining a national strategy involving the international connectivity of continental Portugal and its Autonomous Regions, in order to defend the interests of Portugal and achieve social and economic cohesion across all the Portuguese territory. We emphasize, in particular, the importance of Portugal becoming independent, in the medium to long term, of a third country for its international interconnection, thus avoiding being a peripheral player in the context of international connectivity.

An abstract graphic consisting of several white, curved lines that intersect and overlap on a solid green background. The lines create a sense of movement and depth, resembling a stylized globe or a network of connections. The lines are thin and white, contrasting sharply with the vibrant green.

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