

**Responses to questions about national IGF structures: UK Nominet and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) joint response**

**1. Effectiveness of national IGF structures?**

**a) What is your experience with the effectiveness of your national IGF's discussions?**

The UK IGF is a collaborative partnership between Nominet, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, key parliamentarians and other key players in industry and civil society.

The UK IGF cooperation was set up to help the UK be more effectively involved in the IGF and so that the IGF helped inform national thinking. We believe that the UK IGF has been effective in identifying the key issues facing the UK and highlighting the messages for the UK delegation to then take to the IGF meetings. The UK IGF has provided an opportunity to discuss these issues and share examples of best practice. It has also helped us give visibility in the UK to the IGF's work.

The UK IGF provides three things:

- i. The platform to help inform the national contribution to the IGF discussions;
- ii. The forum to inform UK stakeholders of the work of the IGF; and
- iii. A model to use the IGF concept in addressing national issues, with the e-crime reduction partnership, which is a key element in the Government's Digital Britain Report.

**b) How do you make sure that your national IGF discussions do have an impact on the policy discussion and on national legislation process?**

Much of the IGF's benefit is in helping to inform decisions – whether made by individual organisations or collectively. As such we have been keen to model the IGF multi-stakeholder approach and to get the involvement of opinion formers.

In particular, Members of the UK Parliament are actively involved in the UK IGF and Government Ministers have spoken at several of our meetings. A delegation of UK MPs also attends the IGF meetings, as do representatives of the UK government.

The e-crime reduction partnership based on the IGF model has been endorsed in the Government's Digital Britain Report.

**c) How do you make sure that the relevant stakeholders get together and have a constructive exchange?**

The partner organisations that form the UK IGF are seen as central to the Internet in the UK and are able to influence a huge range of Industry and civil society contacts. We use these contacts to promote and invite attendance at our events.

As well as including plenary key-note speech sessions at our meetings, we also ensure that we include breakout workshop sessions with clearly defined subjects and objectives so that efficient and productive discussions can take place.

We host meetings in or near Parliament to benefit from the presence of opinion formers.

For the second year running Nominet is sponsoring the Parliament and Internet Conference and hosting a workshop on behalf of the UK IGF. This allows us to reach out to a wider audience of stakeholders and raise awareness of the UK IGF and the IGF.

**d) How do you make sure that your national IGF helps people to better understand the challenges related to Internet Governance?**

The UK IGF is closely linked with the IGF. We hold two meetings a year. Our autumn meeting is a workshop session at the Parliament and Internet Conference. This session is designed to identify the UK messages to take to the IGF meetings. At the spring meeting the UK delegation report back on the IGF meetings, sharing their experiences of the IGF meeting and the key messages they took from it. We produce a booklet every year to highlight the key messages and themes from the IGF meeting.

The high-visibility, prestigious Nominet Best Practice Challenge is key in showing practical examples making a difference to people's lives and improving understanding of the issues associated with Internet governance.

**2. European Approach on Internet Governance?**

**a) What is "European" about the Internet Governance Discussion in Europe?**

The European stakeholders should come to the debate from a European perspective and background, identifying issues of wider interest across Europe. There are obviously issues and solutions that are particular to Europe, which would be more relevant to a European discussion on Internet Governance than a global discussion. But there are also opportunities to: improve European stakeholder engagement in the IGF; improve the European contribution to the

IGF especially on issues of importance to Europe; and help European stakeholders learn from the experience of others from around the world

**b) What can Europe contribute to the global Internet Governance Discussion?**

Europe has its own issues, opinions and examples of best practice to add to the International debate. In particular, European thought leaders have driven the IGF focus on child protection, freedom of speech and privacy. We should build on this to set the agenda in the IGF.

**c) What are European perspectives, best practices and how should they feed into the global IGF?**

A European initiative would help to join up the separate national initiatives to enable a united European voice to feed into the global IGF. However, the European voice needs to have credibility coming from strong cross-European support from significant European actors. A European initiative could usefully build on national work – the East Africa IGF could provide an excellent model for us. European initiatives that could be useful examples of good practice include the Safer Internet Programme

(<http://www.saferinternet.org/ww/en/pub/insafe/index.htm>) and ECPAT (<http://www.ecpat.org.uk/>).

**3. European IGF: mandate and objectives?**

**a) Is there a need/desire for a European IGF?**

As mentioned previously, a European IGF would help to join up the separate national initiatives to enable a united European voice to feed into the global IGF. It would provide an opportunity to share best practice and experience including on developing national outreach.

**b) If yes, what should be its mandate and objectives?**

Its mandate should be to support the work of the global IGF and to engage European stakeholders in discussion on Internet Governance. It should help to develop a strong European position in the UN process of deciding on the renewal of the IGF mandate next year.

**c) Which stakeholders should participate?**

The aim should be to engage with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, including industry, government, parliament, academia and civil society from across Europe. In particular, European groups (CENTR, Euro-ISPA, RIPE, the European Parliament, European civil society groups etc) need to be visibly involved in the process.

#### **4. European IGF: structure and working methods?**

##### **a) How should such a regional forum work?**

We suggest that it could draw on national experiences to identify the issues of importance to them. Perhaps some form of survey addressed at trans-European stakeholder groups could also help identify European issues. Issues that are shared across a number of countries and stakeholders are the ones we should focus on.

##### **b) How should it be organized and how should it be funded?**

A European initiative should ensure it engages with as many European stakeholders as possible through participation at the meeting(s). However, meetings and events should be organised by a small, dedicated group to avoid problems caused by involving too many organisations at the planning stage.

The UK IGF is a lightweight organisation without any formal membership requirements or charter/constitution. It relies on the voluntary involvement of nationally recognised thought leaders. Nominet has devoted considerable resources to the operation of the UK IGF – funding and organising meetings, setting up and running the Nominet Best Practice Challenge etc.

##### **c) How should it link to national, global and other regional Internet governance initiatives?**

It should engage with national and regional Internet Governance initiatives to feed into the international process and it could also help national initiatives develop by providing an opportunity to share best practice and experience on setting up and developing national IGFs.

There is no need to establish links to other regional initiatives, unless there are shared issues where cooperation will improve our impact.

##### **d) How could it help to improved e-participation in Internet governance in Europe?**

A European IGF could help to increase e-participation in Internet Governance by looking at new and innovative methods to engage with people and by raising awareness of Internet Governance issues

More information about the UK IGF and the Best Practice Challenge can be found on:

<http://www.ukigf.org.uk/>

<http://www.nominet.org.uk/about/bestpracticechallenge/>