



Membership Survey on Internet Governance – July 2007

The Internet Society conducted a survey of its members on the topic of Internet Governance (IG) in May 2007. The purpose of the survey was to assist ISOC in addressing Internet governance issues in the discussion up to and including the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in November 2007.

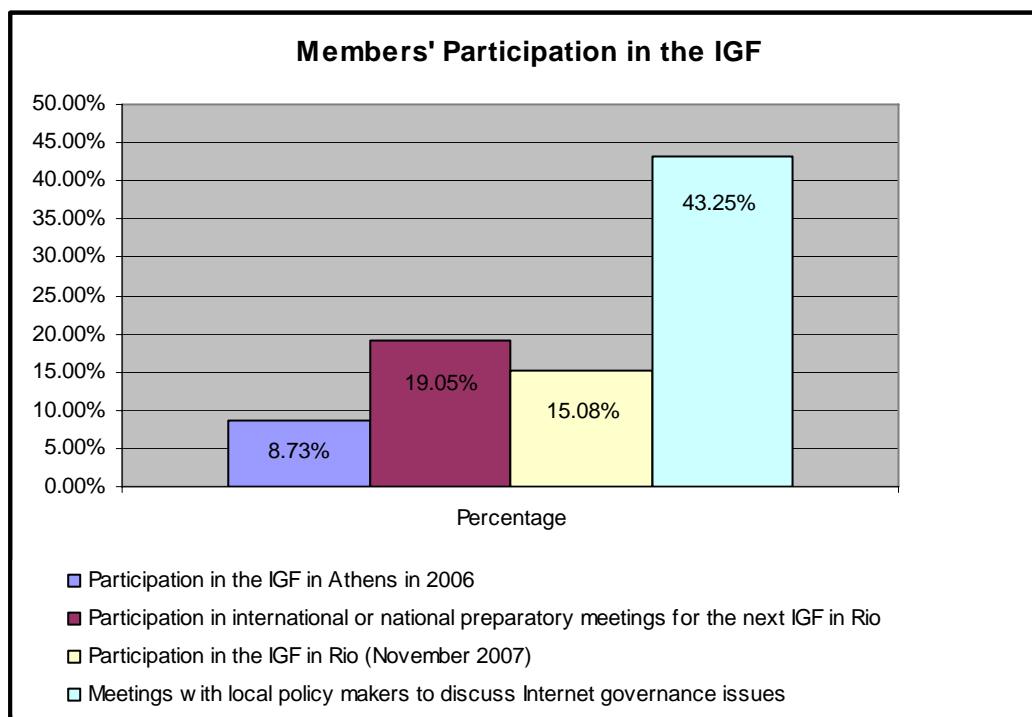
The IGF provides the framework of an institutionalized international dialogue on the subject of Internet Governance. Following the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS in 2003 in Geneva and 2005 in Tunis) the United Nations has planned to hold annual IGF meetings until 2010 to provide a forum for discussing a range of issues of importance in the area of ICTs, the Internet and economic development.

Since the very first Internet governance discussions, the Internet Society has been fully engaged in the Internet Governance debate (<http://www.isoc.org/pubpolpillar/governance>) and has been a firm advocate of multi-stakeholder, democratic and transparent participation.

The survey attracted responses from 252 individuals representing chapters and organization members from more than 80 countries. Their participation provided the Internet Society with an understanding of the state of the Internet governance debate in their countries.

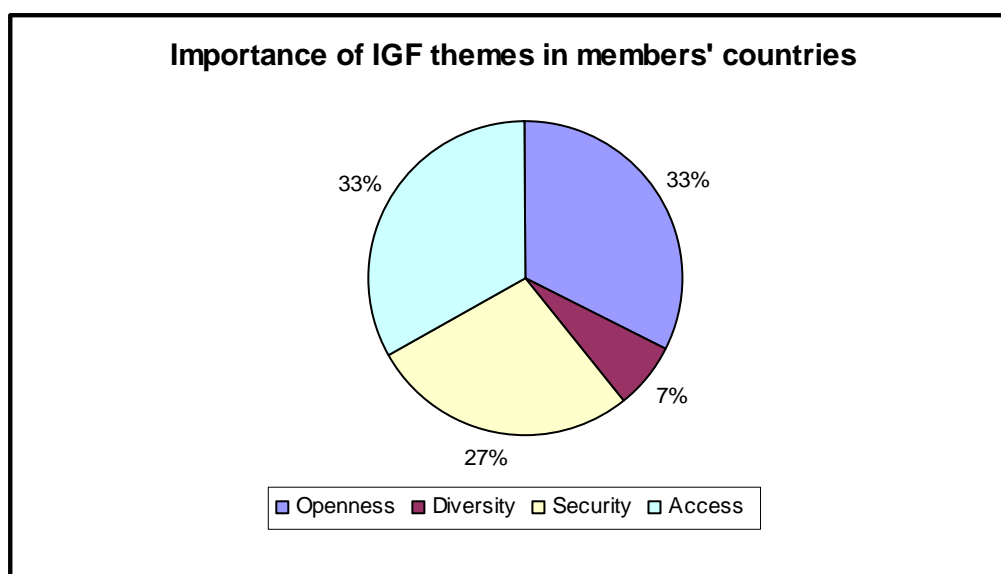
ISOC members increasingly involved in IGF

The survey shows that 9% of respondents participated in the IGF meeting in Athens in 2006. This proportion should increase (15%) for the next IGF meeting in Rio (November 2007). A significant number of members (43%) have met or are planning to meet with local policy makers to discuss Internet Governance issues and prepare for Rio.

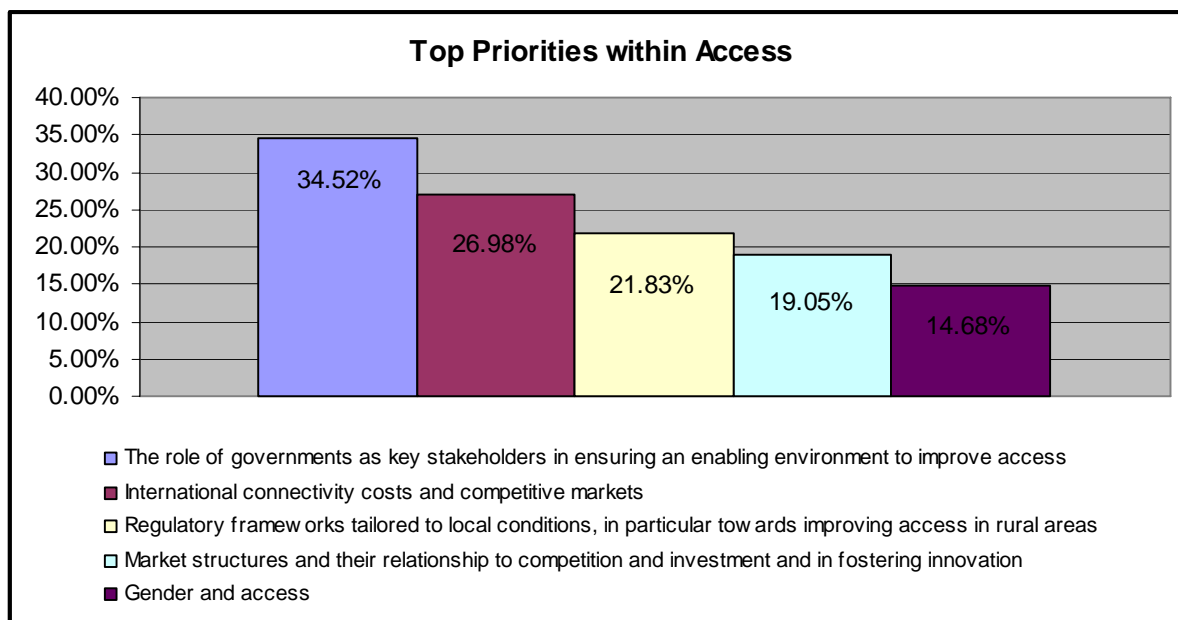


The evolving IGF agenda

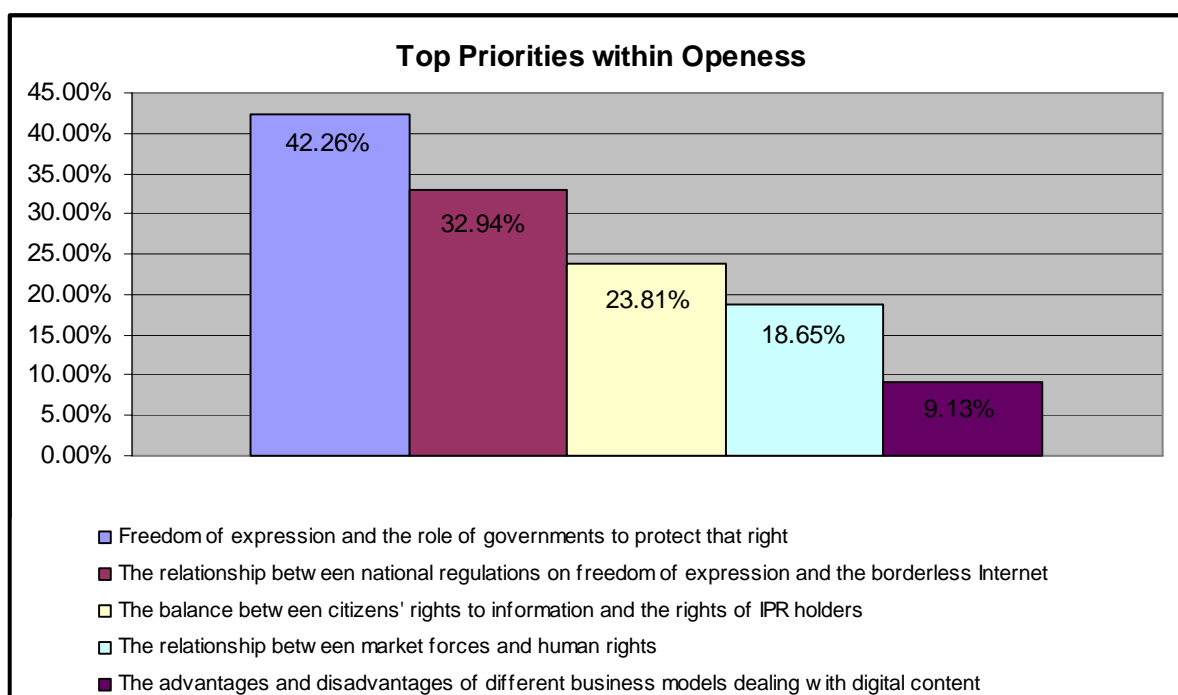
Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the four key themes of the IGF meeting in Athens. Openness and Access were selected as the most critical issues, closely followed by Security.



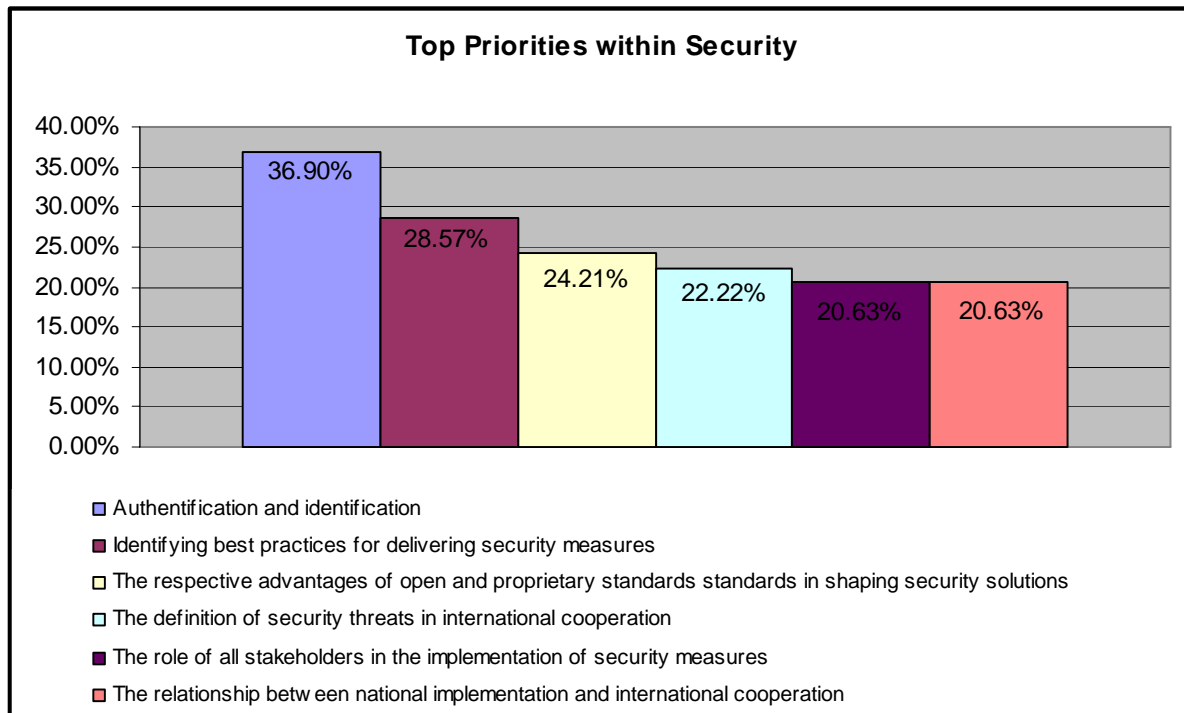
The IGF secretariat’s planning document outlines issues within these four themes. In anticipation of the next IGF meeting in Rio, respondents were asked to indicate if these issues were top priorities. Within the theme of improving access to the Internet, 34% of respondents ranked “the importance of an enabling environment to improve access and the government’s responsibility to bring about that environment” as a top priority. 27% of the interviewees also designated “international connectivity costs and competitive markets” as a top priority.



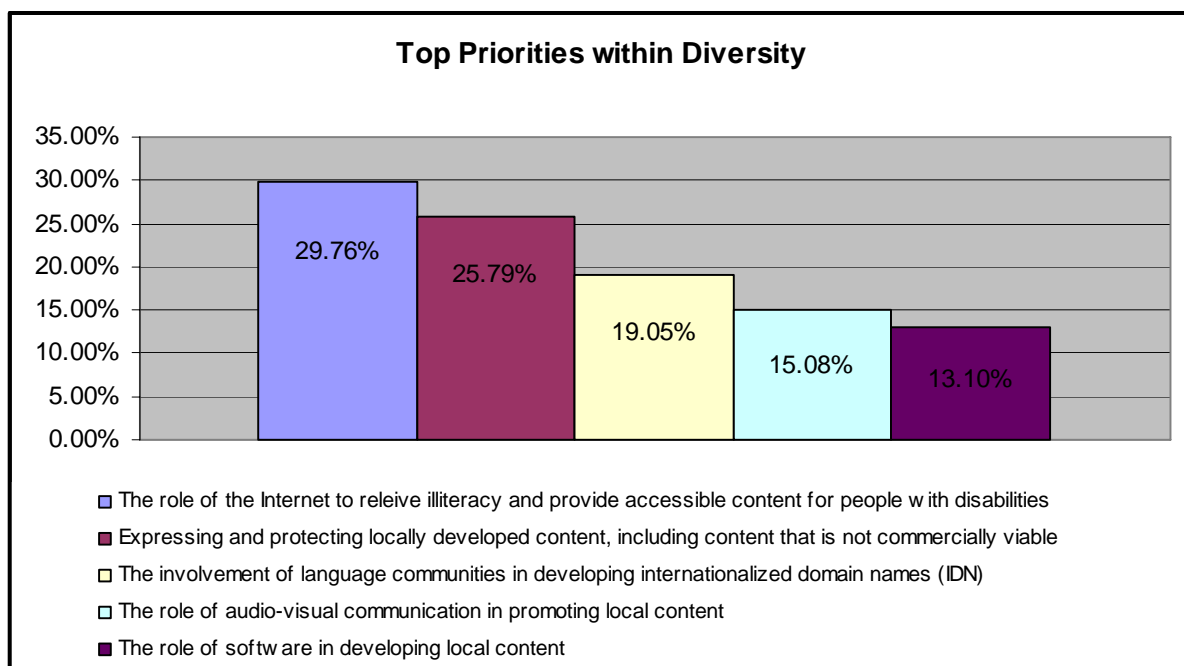
Within the theme of Openness, “freedom of expression and the role of governments to protect and promote that right” was considered as a top priority by 42% of the respondents, and 33% also identified “the relationship between national regulations on freedom of expression and the borderless Internet” as an issue of the highest importance.



Within the theme of Security, 37% of the respondents estimated that “authentication and identification” is a top priority. 29% also designated “the identification of best practices for delivering security measures” as a top issue.



Within the theme of Diversity, 30% of respondents indicated that “the role of the Internet to relieve illiteracy and provide accessible content for people with disabilities” was a top priority.



Other possible topics for Rio

Survey participants suggested that the discussions in Rio could also address other potential topics, including:

- Enhancing the Internet's technical openness and accessibility: broadening participation in standards bodies (IETF, W3C, etc.), and exploring governments' role in fostering interoperability.
- Enhancing multistakeholderism in Internet policy formulation, enforcement and dispute resolution: developing public-private regional and international cooperation, encouraging the development of internationally recognized best practices, structuring the multistakeholder debate at the national and local level, and enhancing participation in developing countries in international discussions.
- Adopting an adequate international legal framework through fostering the development of common rules (cybercrime, spam, intellectual property rights (IPR), e-identity, privacy, e-commerce, etc) and encouraging appropriate transborder cooperation (treaties, MoUs, etc.) to enforce them.
- Deepening educational discussions through recognizing the role of the Internet as an educational tool, improving education of ICT professionals and ICT users, leveraging e-learning for developing countries, and empowering youth and catalyzing its potential to leverage the Internet.
- Initiating an international and multistakeholder debate on network neutrality through a state of play analysis, identification of key issues and a focus on ensuring the retention of the Internet's openness.
- Developing a truly global information society through considering progress on a common acceptance of an Internet Bill of Rights, understanding how technology can improve human connections and relationships, how it can foster democracy throughout the world, and how it can create new communities, new interests and new democratic tools.

Localizing the debate

Survey participants also expressed a range of ideas to help localize Internet Governance discussions so that national stakeholders have the opportunity to share their ideas at IGF meetings, and to encourage IGF leaders to structure discussions at the national level (bottom-top process):

- Develop fellowship programs similar to the ISOC IGF ambassadors' programme to support participants from developing countries.
- Improve means of remote participation (webcast sessions and videoconferencing).
- Improve multilingual participation.
- Organize national/regional events (national/regional IG forums) between annual IGF meetings, in close collaboration with ISOC chapters.
- Focus on more specific issues to allow the emergence of credible and useful guidance to stakeholders.
- Encourage governments and other stakeholders to implement mechanisms to diffuse IGF results broadly and efficiently.

We would like to thank the survey participants for their contributions to the IGF discussion.