

Consultation on WSIS'20 review
Contribution by Comitato IGF Italia
Rome, October 2nd, 2025

On behalf of the Italian IGF Committee, we are sending the following document commenting on the WSIS'20 review “zero draft paper.”

The Italian IGF would like to thank the two co-facilitators, Her Excellency Ambassador Suela Janina and His Excellency Ekitela Lokaale, Ambassador of Kenya, for their careful work in listening to the various Internet communities. The zero draft paper is an excellent starting point for the work to be done in New York in the coming months during the winter session of the United Nations General Assembly, under the chairmanship of the newly elected Annalena Baerbock.

However, like all zero draft papers, it is still subject to improvement, and we hope to contribute some with this document.

POINTS IN THE ZERO DRAFT THAT WE PARTICULARLY APPRECIATE.

Let's start, however, with the good things in the draft that we want to be preserved and maintained against possible attempts at downward revision.

As Italian IGF – in line with what has already been expressed by the European Union and the Swiss Confederation in their respective contributions, which we attach here for convenience – we welcome:

Points 103 and 104 of the draft

Which recall the principles of the Tunis Agenda for Internet governance that is truly multistakeholder and the result of sincere collaboration between governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia, and the technical sector;

- Point 112 of the draft

Which highlights the success of the global IGF's twenty years of experience in providing citizens of the world with a multistakeholder platform for discussion on Internet governance issues;

- Points 113, 115, 117, and 118 of the draft

Which recognize that the Global IGF has evolved from a single annual global event into a complex ecosystem covering 170 countries through NRIs (including the Italian one), which is contributing to the debate and aims to make the Global IGF a permanent tool at the disposal of the United Nations. A tool that must be able to evolve in its operating methods to make its contribution even more effective and must be able to rely on a stronger Secretariat with more resources.

- Points 122 and 125 of the draft

Which recognize the importance of ensuring the alignment of all the tools currently available to the UN Secretary-General to govern the digital transition, namely the IGF, the WSIS follow-up, the 2030 SDG agenda, the Pact for the Future, and the Global Digital Compact, so that they act in a coordinated and synergistic manner, avoiding overlap. And in which the ODET is asked to strengthen this coordination.

Last but not least, we also welcome:

- Point 38 of the draft:

Which recalls the importance of extending the benefits of the new digital revolution to small and medium-sized enterprises: a goal that also requires the modernization of systems for access to capital and financial support.

We also welcome the paragraphs referring to the need to implement tools for monitoring the actions taken and measuring the progress achieved, as well as to ensure follow-up mechanisms and periodic review of the objectives, which should enable the desired coordination between all the initiatives put in place by the United Nations to be effective and capable of producing the expected results.

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ZERO DRAFT

As Italian IGF, we hope for and propose improvements to the following points in the text:

Introduction – point 7

current text:

“We note that the widespread availability of the Internet has transformed traditional structures of public discourse. This has had significant impacts on societal behaviour, policy-making processes and the dynamics of information reliability and public trust.”

Proposed integration to be added at the end:

*..”and public trust, **posing substantial challenges to democratic societies**”*

Chapter on Bridging digital divides – point 21

The data provided does not cite any sources and is written in a way that lends itself to ambiguous interpretations. The 95% figure cited can only be achieved by including satellite distribution (but this is not specified). There is certainly a tendency to overestimate the theoretical coverage of distribution, without taking into account the fact that not everyone can access satellite coverage or mobile phone coverage for technical and cost reasons.

Chapter on Digital economy – point 40

current text:

“We note that digital technologies have had significant impacts on employment, including changes in workplace environments and training requirements, opportunities for more flexible working and the emergence of digital labour platforms, and that automation, robotics and artificial intelligence are expected to have further substantial impacts on employment opportunities, including the displacement of some professional, clerical and manual types of work.”

Proposed integration to be added at the end:

..”of work. *All these deep societal changes need to be properly and with anticipation tackled through public policies at global, regional and national levels”*”

Chapter on Human Rights – point 78

current text:

“We reaffirm our commitment to the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and to the framework of rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We reaffirm that democracy, sustainable development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as good governance at all levels, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.”

Proposed integration to be added within the phrase:

*..” the Convention on the Rights of the Child **and** , the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities **and the UNESCO Convention 2005 on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.**”*

This is because we at IGF Italia believe that the right to cultural diversity is threatened by the commercialization of the Internet and that it must therefore also respect these principles related to the specific characteristics of different cultures and languages.

Points 90 and 91

IGF Italia fully supports this point, which touches on one of the greatest risks posed by the reckless use of the Internet: the polarization of societies. However, it proposes to strengthen it by combining the safety of journalists with the need to guarantee the integrity of the media (against deep fakes or manipulation of information).

Point 90 Current text:

“We underscore the need to respect the independence of media, including digital media. We express particular concern about increased threats to the safety of journalists. In this context, we reaffirm that digital transformation must serve to uphold and advance, not restrict, fundamental rights and freedoms....”

Proposed integration to be added within the phrase:

*“We underscore the need to respect the independence of media, including digital media **and we support the media integrity principle as agreed by G20 in Brazil last year.** We express particular concern about increased threats to the safety of journalists. In this context, we reaffirm that digital transformation must serve to uphold and advance, not restrict, fundamental rights and freedoms....”*

Point 91 Current text:

“We recognize that digital and emerging technologies can facilitate the manipulation of and interference with information in ways that are harmful to societies and individuals, and negatively affect the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as the attainment of the

Sustainable Development Goals. We will work together to promote information integrity, tolerance and respect in the digital space, as well as to protect the integrity of democratic processes...

Proposed integration to be added at the end of the phrase:

*“... as well as to protect the integrity of democratic processes, **especially in times of elections**”*

Chapter on Internet Governance – point 105:

Current text:

“We recognise the need to promote greater participation and engagement in Internet governance discussions of Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders from all countries...”

Proposed integration to be added at the end of the phrase:

*“and all other relevant stakeholders from all countries. **In this sense the role of traditional media is essential in order to reach the whole of the society and not only the young generations**”*

Chapter on Monitoring and measurement – point 137:

Current text:

“We also call upon United Nations and other relevant organisations and forums to periodically review the methodologies for information and communications technology indicators, taking into account different levels of development and national circumstances, put in place data infrastructure at the national level on information and communications technologies, and share information about country case studies...”

Proposed integration to be added at the end of the phrase:

*“We also call upon United Nations and other relevant organisations and forums to periodically review the methodologies for information and communications technology indicators, taking into account different levels of development and national circumstances, put in place data infrastructure at the national level on information and communications technologies, and share information about country case studies, **using also the opportunity of the National and Regional IGF networks around the world**”*

ANNEXES:

Contribution of the European Union and of the Swiss Federation sent to the two Co-facilitators