

YOUTH 4 DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A
SUSTAINABLE DIGITAL FUTURE

NOVEMBER 2020



ABOUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following twelve messages and recommendations are the result of a collaborative deliberation of several months. Young experts from all world regions came together in four working groups, each focusing on a different aspect of digital sustainability.

The members of the working group **GREENING THE INTERNET** offer insight into the environmental challenges and opportunities of a digitized world.

The working group **FAIR DIGITAL BUSINESSES** raises awareness for sustainable practices by and for the digital private sector.

The members of **INTERNET FOR SOCIAL COHESION** advocate for an Internet that leaves no-one behind.

The working group **SUSTAINABLE INTERNET GOVERNANCE** promotes a holistic approach to governing the Internet and emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Their outcomes reflect not only youth's expertise in regards to the environmental, social, and economic impact of the Internet and information and communications technologies (ICTs), but also highlight the urgency with which all Internet governance stakeholders need to incorporate digital sustainability as a multifaceted issue, which can only be addressed in a collaborative multi-stakeholder approach.

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Recommendations

GREENING THE INTERNET

1

We should actively strive to mitigate the environmental impact of the Internet and ICTs. Both public and private stakeholders should strengthen collaboration by following a framework that allows for responsible growth, consumption of digital resources, and promotion of innovation.



2

Promoting access to the Internet and other ICTs is inherently a matter of sustainability. If we want to connect the next billion, we must do so in an eco-friendly way, taking into consideration the significant environmental impacts that digitalization comprehends.



3

The environmental impact of the Internet and ICTs must be communicated in an accessible and effective language. It's important to compel stakeholders to action by framing the environmental crisis as an opportunity for change, while being based on scientifically accurate information.



Recommendations

FAIR DIGITAL BUSINESSES

4

Businesses should champion diversity and sustainability by (1) hiring C-Suite representatives and/or consulting subject matter experts and (2) strengthening their commitment towards principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and ecological digital infrastructure.



5

Governments should offer economic incentives to businesses that commit to a circular economy model and Fair Trade standards, in order to re-imagine supply chains that discourage e-waste, and improve the quality of life of those residing in emerging economies.



6

Businesses should create an open data environment to promote transparency. By acquiring user consent and anonymizing personal data, businesses can demonstrate their commitment to carbon neutral and humane practices that encourage behavioral changes in consumption practices.



Recommendations

INTERNET FOR SOCIAL COHESION

7

Youth accounts for one out of three active users of media content platforms. Such platforms need to assure youth representation in internal advisory bodies and self-regulation processes to improve on the decisions that affect this age group.



8

Big Tech and other companies that produce Internet products and services should have more indigenous languages built into automated translation tools and technologies to help bridge the language barriers and Western cultural bias of the Internet.



9

Women and gender diverse people are facing restrictions in accessing information on the Internet and participating meaningfully. To establish healthy and equal societies, youths should urge governments and civil societies to guarantee the rights to freedom of online expression for these communities.



Recommendations

SUSTAINABLE INTERNET GOVERNANCE

10

We urge states to pursue cross-border alliances in the governance of the Internet as a shared resource based on democratic ideals. Entities collecting and managing data should adopt alternative forms of data governance that grant individuals greater control over their data.



11

Rules for AI and standards for ethical AI should be formulated through a multistakeholder approach rather than by technology companies. AI systems should be audited based on these rules by external parties for fairness and their working should be made transparent to the public.



12

The companies that develop and sell AI systems should be held accountable for them and any entity that uses these systems should implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system throughout the lifetime of the system.



YOUTH

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DIGITAL SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUPS

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