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# Slovenian Internet Governance Forum 2016

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## **Annual Report**

Ljubljana – February 2017

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## Introduction

The Slovenian Internet Governance Initiative was launched in 2016 with the aim of establishing an inclusive and long-term multi-stakeholder platform. Stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, government, academia and the technical community joined to launch a national Internet governance dialogue and organise the first annual forum.

The idea of establishing a national platform for open dialogue on Internet Governance (IG) in Slovenia emerged from inspiring and successful initiatives worldwide, such as the *South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance (SEEDIG)*, the *Pan-European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG)*, and a plethora of national initiatives that had sprung up all over the globe under the umbrella of the *United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF)*.

### SLO IGF 2016 Preparatory Process

The preparatory process for the first *Slovenian Internet Governance Forum (SLO IGF)* started in early 2016 with stakeholder meetings. It was agreed that SLO IGF should function as a process that would include an annual meeting and related preliminary activities. Additional events such as workshops and webinars were also envisaged in-between annual meetings. SLO IGF was agreed to be an open, inclusive and transparent bottom-up process in accordance with the IGF Code of Conduct.

It was agreed that SLO IGF 2016 would take place in Ljubljana on 16 May 2016. In April, the following leading topics were identified and confirmed by the stakeholders:

- Who governs the Internet?
- Net neutrality
- Digital divide

The Organising Committee invited moderators to get involved in preparing the programme, selecting session formats and choosing panellists.

Sessions were intended to be highly interactive, igniting vivid discussions and involvement of all participants. In accordance with the agreed session formats, up to five panellists were envisaged for each session. Moderators were encouraged to combine interventions from panellists with interactive discussions among all session participants.

Each session had a rapporteur whose role was to write down discussion messages and convey them to the audience at the end of the session in order to select key messages.

Over one hundred invitations were sent to representatives of all stakeholder groups. SLO IGF 2016 was also announced on its web page and on social media.

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## SLO IGF 2016 Organising Committee

Members of the Steering Committee of the first Slovenian Internet Governance Forum – SLO IGF 2016 ([sloigf.si](http://sloigf.si)) were:

<b>Dušan Caf</b>	Executive Director of Digitas Institute and Chairman of the Electronic Communications Council of the Republic of Slovenia	<a href="http://digitas.si">digitas.si</a>	Civil Society
<b>Darja Demšar</b>	Beletrina Publishing Institute	<a href="http://studentskazalozba.si">studentskazalozba.si</a>	Civil Society
<b>Barbara Povše Golob</b>	Head of .SI Registry, Academic and Research Network of Slovenia (ARNES)	<a href="http://arnes.si">arnes.si</a>	Technical Community
<b>Alja Isaković</b>	CodeCats and Former Special Advisor to European Commissioner Nellie Kroes	<a href="http://codecatz.org">codecatz.org</a>	Technical Community
<b>Benjamin Lesjak</b>	Lecturer at Faculty of Management, University of Primorska	<a href="http://fm-kp.si">fm-kp.si</a>	Academia
<b>Peter Sterle</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport	<a href="http://www.mizs.gov.si">www.mizs.gov.si</a>	Government Body
<b>Aleš Špetič</b>	FriedWorks and Digital Champion of the Republic of Slovenia	<a href="http://friedworks.si">friedworks.si</a>	Private Sector
<b>Jan Žorž</b>	Executive Director of Institute go6 and Member of the Board of SINOG	<a href="http://sinog.si">sinog.si</a>	Technical Community

## SLO IGF 2016 Programme

SLO IGF 2016 was a one-day event with the following agenda:

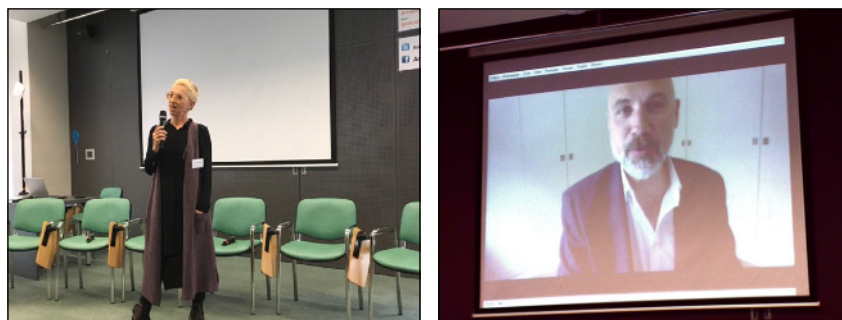
09:00 – 09:30	Registration	
09:30 – 09:45	<b>Opening and Welcome Address</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/wx4jiZ">https://goo.gl/wx4jiZ</a> *
09:45 – 11:30	<b>Session 1: Who Governs the Internet &amp; Regional Experience</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/BjonNR">https://goo.gl/BjonNR</a> *
11.30 - 12:00	Coffee Break	
12.00 - 13:30	<b>Session 2: Net Neutrality</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/rFFMCS">https://goo.gl/rFFMCS</a> *
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch break	
14:30 - 16:00	<b>Session 3: Digital Divide</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/MXPHwh">https://goo.gl/MXPHwh</a> *
16:00 – 16:15	<b>Conclusions</b>	
19:00	<b>Cocktail Reception and Forum Dinner</b>	

\* *Link to the video archive.*

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## Opening and Welcome Address

The forum was opened by Ms Barbara Povše Golob, Head of .Si Registry, Academic and Research Network of Slovenia (ARNES).



The welcome address was given by Mr Frédéric Donc, Bureau Director of Internet Society European Bureau. He saw the Slovenian Internet Governance Initiative as a clear and direct outcome of a broader discussion at the regional South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet governance. In Mr Donc's opinion, SEEDIG was not only a platform for regional engagement, but, as shown by SLO IGF, also provided leverage for local stakeholders to take over the discussion, bring it back home and continue at a local level. He expressed his gratitude to members of the SEEDIG team who cooperated closely with the SLO IGF Organising Committee by sharing their experience and engaging in the creation of the programme. He also thanked the ISOC staff in Slovenia for their active involvement in the organisation of SLO IGF, and called for the involvement of the local ISOC chapter.

Mr Donc emphasised his support for a multi-stakeholder process, which is a set of good practices. Once again, its value and strengths were demonstrated by bringing all stakeholders together at SLO IGF 2016 to discuss different perspectives of Internet governance and issues related thereto. The process has already been proven to be very robust, and it has been shown that it should be promoted further. Although it has not turned out to be a panacea, a multi-stakeholder approach could be used for any dialogue that required multiple skills, exploring issues from different perspectives and, most importantly, multiple responsibilities in the implementation of outcomes. It has been proven successful in tackling environmental challenges. Likewise, it has been important in tackling Internet governance. The process was initiated at the *World Summit on the Information Society* in Tunis in 2005. It was also applied by the *Council of Europe* and by the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*. Its strengths were demonstrated in the process of defining a set of OECD recommendations on cybersecurity. That was a very complex issue, and the multi-stakeholder model was crucial in gaining

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trust and building consensus among governments and other stakeholders in order to define a robust and valid set of cybersecurity recommendations.

The opening presentation and welcome address can be viewed at the following link: <https://goo.gl/wx4jiZ>.

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# Session 1: Who Governs the Internet & Regional Experience

**Keywords:** co-operation, dialogue, governance, Internet, Internet governance, participation, principles, stakeholders

## Issues Discussed

- Who governs the Internet? Is it governments, the United Nations, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) or someone else?
- Where do people discuss and decide on issues that influence the use and evolution of the Internet?
- Can an ordinary Internet user have a say in such discussions and decisions?



## Session Description

The aim of the introductory session at the Slovenian IGF was to raise awareness and build capacities related to Internet governance and similar issues. To achieve that aim, the discussions revolved around a couple of central questions: What is Internet governance? Who governs the Internet and how? Why and how to participate in IG processes? In trying to answer these questions, the session was divided into two parts:

1. **Introduction — Explaining the term »Internet governance«** — How and why IG appeared as a term (with reference to the World Summit on the Information Society, the Working Group on Internet Governance, and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society)? How is IG defined? What issues are usually referred to as IG issues? What are the main categories of stakeholders involved in IG? What are the principles that (should) lay at the foundation of all IG processes.

2. **Internet governance in practice** — How does IG work at the global, regional and national levels? Who is/should be involved? An overview of the global IG ecosystem was given, with examples of organisations and processes such as ICANN, ISOC and

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IGF. The discussion then moved to the regional and national levels and looked at aspects such as: IG issues considered important at the regional/national level; IG mechanisms at the regional/national level (management of country code top level domains, public policy making processes, national IGF initiatives) — with examples of good practices from the region. The importance and relevance of participating in IG processes and organisations (at global, regional, and national levels) were also discussed, with an emphasis on motivation, opportunities, challenges and modalities to overcome them.

## Main Participants

Key participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aida Mahmutović, Centre for Internet Governance /IGF, Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) / ICANN, Bosnia and Herzegovina</li><li>• Andrea Beccalli, ICANN</li><li>• Davor Šoštarič, Institute for Information Science (IZUM), Slovenia</li><li>• Désirée Miloshevic, Internet Society</li><li>• Dušan Stojičević, SEEDIG, Serbia</li></ul>
Moderator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sorina Teleanu, DiploFoundation, Romania</li></ul>
Rapporteur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Barbara Povše Golob, ARNES, Register.si, Slovenia</li></ul>

## Key Messages

The animated discussion between the panellists and the audience proved that it was the right decision for SLO IGF to begin the first annual event with a search for answers to the question of who governs the Internet and how. Regional good practices also attracted a lot of attention. The discussion raised relevant issues regarding Internet governance in Slovenia. A consensus was established among the participants about the following key messages:

- Internet governance is mainly about dialogue and co-operation between different stakeholders: the government (or the public sector at large), the private sector, the civil society, the technical community, and academia, as well as international organisations. All are equally important stakeholders in the dialogue.
- The Slovenian IGF should bring together all stakeholders and promote dialogue between them; an emphasis should be put on building up capacities of the civil society, which brings up important issues. Discussions should be designed in a bottom-up manner.
- The government and the private sector should be more open for dialogue, firstly within their own stakeholder groups, and secondly with other stakeholders.



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- IG policy decisions have a direct or indirect impact on the daily lives of all end users; therefore, the IG bottom-up processes should follow the principles of multistakeholderism, inclusiveness and openness, respect for diversity, tolerance, consensus, transparency and accountability.

- Internet governance is not only about technology, it is mostly about how technology is used and how it evolves. Technology should be neutral, and technical staff accountable and more open towards policy issues.

- The main IG issues in Slovenia, as identified by the participants, are: net neutrality, cybersecurity, privacy, lack of dialogue between stakeholders, and the nonexistence of a local Internet community.

- Stakeholders, especially the civil society, have emphasised that continuous discussions between stakeholders are critical. The Slovenian IGF should serve as a platform for dialogue on Internet-related issues. The next Slovenian IGF meeting should be organised very soon.

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## Session 2: Net Neutrality

**Key words:** business practices, national regulatory authorities, net neutrality, open Internet, regulation, specialised services, traffic management, »zero-rating«

### Issues Discussed

- What is net neutrality and why is it important?
- Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
- What are the effects of the new European Regulation laying down measures concerning open Internet access?
  - How does the Regulation safeguard net neutrality? Is it clear enough?
  - What is the role of European regulators in safeguarding net neutrality — at the EU and national levels?



### Session Description

In November 2015, the European Parliament adopted the Regulation laying down measures concerning open Internet access. The Regulation aims to protect end-users and simultaneously to guarantee the continued functioning of the Internet ecosystem as an engine of innovation. The Regulation respects the fundamental rights and observes the principles recognised in particular by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, notably the protection of personal data, freedom of expression and information, freedom to conduct business, non-discrimination, and consumer protection.

Stakeholders have understood the Regulation differently. On the one hand, electronic communications operators and large content providers were pleased with its provisions, and on the other hand, a range of smaller companies, content providers and citizens expressed concerns, fearing that their rights were not protected sufficiently and that net neutrality could be compromised. Due to these major differences among stakeholders, the question arose whether the Regulation was sufficiently precise and

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unambiguous or the differences were only due to different interpretations of the provisions. The implementation of the Regulation would also depend on the guidelines for the implementation of the obligations of national regulatory authorities, issued by the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC). Could divergent regulatory practices of national regulatory authorities in Member States ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of the provisions of the Regulation throughout the European Union? How could citizens and other stakeholders efficiently protect their rights?

Panellists looked at net neutrality from different perspectives and sparked discussion among the participants. The focus was on regulatory aspects, as BEREC was expected to publish the draft implementation guidelines in early June.

## Main Participants

Key participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alja Isaković, CodeCatz, Slovenia</li><li>• Dušan Caf, Digitas Institute, Chairman of the Electronic Communications Council of the Republic of Slovenia</li><li>• Jan Žorž, Internet Society</li><li>• Zdravko Jukić, Member of the Council, Croatian Post and Electronic Communications Agency (HAKOM), and representative of the Republic of Croatia in Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)/ICANN</li><li>• Žiga Turk, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Civil and Geodetic Engineering, Slovenia</li></ul>
Moderator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aleš Špetič, FriedWorks and Digital Champion of the Republic of Slovenia</li></ul>
Rapporteur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Živa Jalovec, Alivea, Slovenia</li></ul>

## Key Messages

The participants agreed on the following key messages:

- Net neutrality is important for the development of a competitive market, for innovation and for the protection of fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression.
- Due to net neutrality, the Internet expanded throughout the world and allowed for development of new services and ultimately became the environment for the creation of the web giants of the digital economy.
- The debate on net neutrality in Slovenia has been going on for two years, but there is still a lack of awareness of its importance and implications. It would be useful to promote discussions among stakeholders and listen to each other, as there were divergent views and hardly any consensus.

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- Operators of electronic communications exploit technology to create a competitive advantage in the market. By doing that, they might hinder market development, particularly in the case of vertical integration.

- Legislation should establish clear net neutrality rules. The regulators should then monitor whether operators obey the rules and ensure their rights of freedom of economic initiative are not hindered.

- New EU net neutrality regulation is based on principles that are to be defined in more detail by the BEREC's implementation guidelines. The implementation may differ among Member States, and jurisprudence will be important.

- Slovenia paved the way to net neutrality in the EU as it was the second Member State that enshrined net neutrality in its legislation. Unfortunately, Slovenia didn't exploit that advantage. The problem was with the implementation of the legislation as well as with regulatory supervision of controversial practices.

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## Session 3: Digital Divide

**Keywords:** deployment of new technologies, digital divide, government policy, inclusive society, knowledge society, persons with disabilities, regulation, skills

### Issues Discussed

- What is the digital divide and how can it be bridged?
- The digital divide is commonly defined as existing between the »haves« and »have-nots«, or as the inequality of skills and usage. Does it exist only among individuals or also among regions and countries? Where does Slovenia stand?
- What does the digital divide encompass apart from different conditions of accessing the Internet and information and communication technology in general?
- How does deployment of new technologies affect the lives of people with disabilities?
- What will the digital divide look like in the future, when we are all connected?
- Who are the key stakeholders in the process of bridging the digital divide?



### Session Description

The digital divide is not just about access and use of the Internet or, in broader terms, information and communications technology (ICT). It is also about the skills needed to make use of the technology and services. It refers to the gap between individuals, households, businesses, countries, and even different parts of the world.

Panellists emphasised that the inclusion of individuals into society depends on their access to technology and on them possessing skills on how to use it. Similarly, it is at the country level where the digital divide determines the ability of countries to participate in global economic and trade flows. These are the reasons why relevant policies and measures should be established aimed at preventing and bridging the digital divide.

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Regarding Internet use, Slovenia has been lagging behind developed countries in the past decade. A turnaround is possible, but proper structures and policies are required.

Digital skills are crucial to bridging and overcoming the digital divide. However, the divide is not only about the capabilities necessary to use ICT devices, systems or services. A gap is also forming and increasing between users who are able to create content, services or even technologies, and those who can only use digital technologies and services. Countries that include advanced teaching of informatics in their educational processes are creating a competitive advantage.

New digital technologies and services are also important for people with disabilities. On the one hand, they can foster better integration of people with disabilities into society. On the other hand, if not properly designed and accessible, they also represent a barrier and strengthen exclusion. Our society should dedicate more attention to helping people with disabilities acquire skills related to new technologies.

A digital policy aimed at fostering research, development, deployment and use of new technologies, as well as on the regulation of electronic communications, would also have an impact on the digital divide. Uncritical advocacy of only wireless Internet connectivity deployment in rural areas can, in the long term, lead to the isolation of these areas with regard to new information services. Such developments could also have an impact on the neutrality of Internet.

Each panellist outlined the digital divide from their perspective. The moderator encouraged the audience to actively participate in the discussion and contribute to define the key messages.

## Main Participants

Key participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Darja Demšar, Beletrina Publishing Institute, Slovenia</li><li>• Andrej Brodnik, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Computer and Information Science, Slovenia</li><li>• Katja K. Ošljak, EU Code Week Ambassador, Slovenia</li></ul>
Moderator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Domen Savič, Institute Citizen D, Slovenia</li></ul>
Rapporteur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Benjamin Lesjak, Faculty of Management, University of Primorska, Slovenia</li></ul>

## Key Messages

- The digital divide manifests itself in different ways; therefore, it is also defined in different ways. There are three different aspects: access, use and creation of content,

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services and technologies. The different dimensions of the digital divide also depend on the social status of individuals, their age, gender, physical and cognitive ability, etc.

- The digital divide should be recognised, understood and subsequently reduced among social groups and beyond. To eliminate it, it would be crucial to improve access to technology, education and training. Usage and creation of ICTs require knowledge and skills. In Slovenia, we lack a broad and deliberate policy to overcome the digital divide.

- Reducing the digital divide should begin among young people. At all levels education, but especially in primary and secondary schools, more attention should be devoted to advanced aspects of the use of ICT and to ensuring that pupils and students receive the appropriate knowledge and skills. Young people should also have access to basic knowledge in computer science and informatics. Such content should become mandatory. It is essential to involve teachers in the process and train them accordingly. The issue should be addressed comprehensively and resolved at the systemic level.

- Awareness of the importance of advanced ICT use should be raised among women. In Slovenia, there are several good practices. Better support for their practices and projects should be provided.

- Special attention should be paid to people with disabilities and those with special needs. The blind, the visually impaired, the deaf or hard of hearing, the physically disabled and those with cognitive or mental health issues need some adjustments in order to obtain equal access to information and communications, including information and communications systems, audio-visual media services, etc.

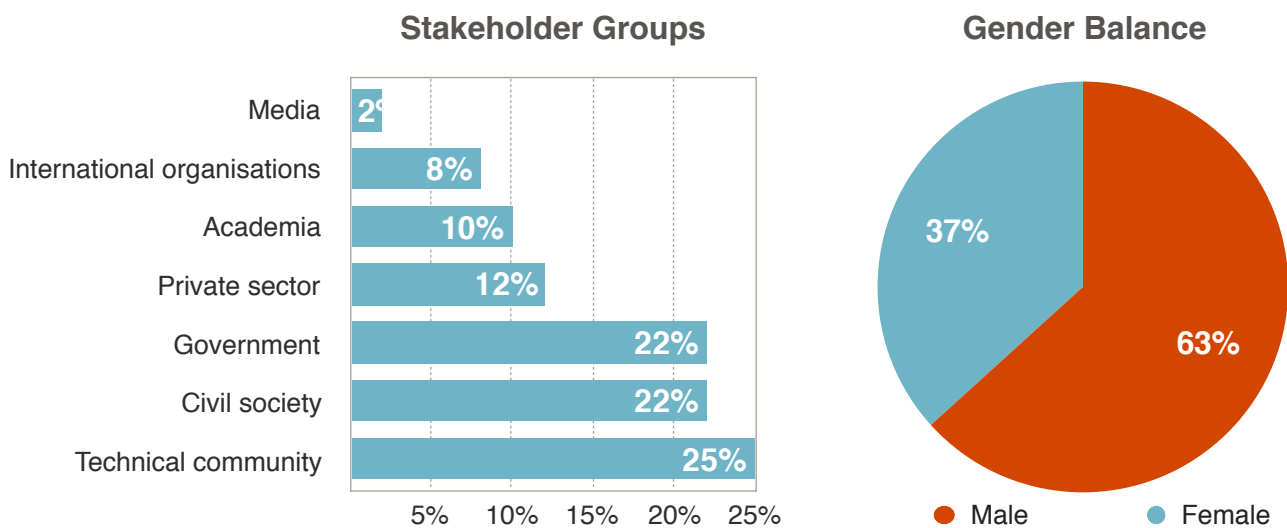
- Equally important is care for elderly people. In countries with an average life expectancy of over 70 years, an individual in her or his life spends about eight years with a disability (e.g. sensory, physical, cognitive, etc.).

- Design and production of devices, applications and services should follow a principle of universal design and accessibility for all. Hence, usability will be improved for all users and accessibility will be provided for persons with disabilities or special needs.

## Participation

There were 58 participants who registered online. The technical community was the stockholder group with the highest representation (25%). The civil society and the government were also stakeholder groups with high representation (22% each). They were followed by the private sector (12%), academia (10%), international organisations (8%) and media (2%).

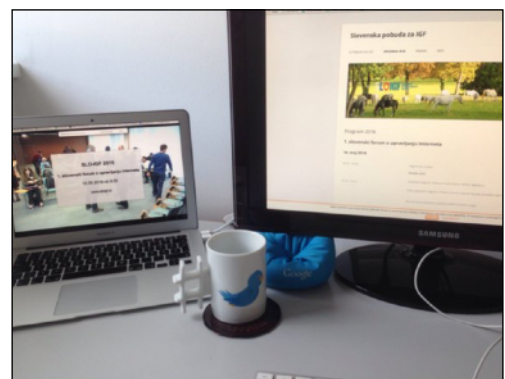
The gender balance among participants was 37% women and 63% men. A slightly better gender balance existed among the panellists, moderators and rapporteurs – 40% to 60%.



The Organising Committee tried to engage students, but was not very successful. Only a few students attended SLO IGF 2016.

A challenge for the next SLO IGF would be to attract more participants, especially from underrepresented stakeholder groups, to improve gender balance and engage more students.

SLO IGF 2016 had an outreach with live video streaming. It was widely watched and individual sessions have been available in the online archive. The most viewed session was the one on net neutrality with almost 1800 views. The session on Internet governance had over 900 views. The opening and welcome address and the session on the digital divide had over 800 views.





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## Conclusions

The first Slovenian IGF was successful. It managed to bring together all stakeholder groups and initiate spirited discussions among participants. It was well gender-balanced, with some room for improvement. The challenge for the next annual event would be to engage students through dedicated sessions, special topics or student awards.

The participants of the first Slovenian IGF expressed firm support for the further strengthening of the national dialogue on Internet governance. They also shaped key messages sent to stakeholders and published at the Slovenian IGF web page.

## Special Thanks

The first Slovenian Internet Governance Forum, SLO IGF 2016, was successful thanks to the broad and active participation and support of the Internet community in the preliminary process and at the forum.

We would like to thank our friends from Afilias, ICANN, Internet Governance Forum Support Association (IGFSA) and ISOC for their help and support. We would like to express our gratitude to their representatives Mr Andrea Becalli and Ms Désirée Miloshevic who joined us at the first SLO IGF and contributed to our discussions and outcomes.

We were also delighted to host our friends from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Romania who joined us at the event in Ljubljana.

Special thanks go to ARNES for its strong organisational, financial and technical support.

We would also like to thank Mr Markus Kummer of IGFSA for his advice and support, and Mr Frédéric Donc of Internet Society for his support and his inspiring welcome address.

And last but not least, we would like to thank all of the participants of the first SLO IGF. They actively participated in the discussions among stakeholders and contributed to the success of the initial SLO IGF.

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## Stay Informed and Contact Us



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[@SloIGF](https://twitter.com/SloIGF)

More information on the Slovenian Internet Governance Forum and its activities in 2016 can be requested from Dušan Caf: [info \(at\) digitas \(dot\) si](mailto:info@digitas.si).

## Organisers



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