



GLOBAL NETWORK OF **INTERNET AND SOCIETY** RESEARCH CENTERS – SECRETARIAT

NoC **PROGRESS** **REPORT** **2025**

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INTRODUCTION

2025 has been a year of adaptation. Rapid technological advances, large geopolitical shifts and international conflicts have created a challenging landscape. Nevertheless, the Global Network of Internet & Society Research Centers (NoC) has continued to grow its community, foster connection across the globe and encourage discussions across countries.

A flexible mindset and cost-effective management have enabled the NoC and its centers to respond and adapt to global challenges and stay ahead of new trends, developments, and emerging technologies.

To this end, the NoC Secretariat has focused on the pursuit of three overarching objectives

1

Adapting to global change: ensuring the Network evolves in the face of technological, geopolitical, and institutional transformation.

2

Maintaining engagement in times of fragmentation: preserving dialogue and cooperation across regions when international collaboration is under strain.

3

Supporting new research agendas and global positioning: empowering our centers to lead on cutting-edge issues in digital governance and new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI).

In the face of shifting paradigms worldwide, the NoC and its centers remain committed to redoubling efforts to translate research into impact, and to anchor the NoC as a leading force for digital policy experimentation worldwide.

This year the NoC proudly welcomed nine new centers from across the globe, geographically expanding the network's reach and enriching its scope with new perspectives. Five more prospective members are in the final stages of evaluation.

This report elaborated by the NoC's Secretariat compiles the achievements and results attained this year by the NoC and the centers that make up its network. To do so, the content has been divided into four thematic sections each following one of the NoC's areas of work:

- **Expanding Tech Policy Capacity and Inclusion in the Majority World**
- **Supporting Global Tech Governance and Multilateral Engagement**
- **Research, Knowledge, and Network Strengthening.**
- **Strategic Outcomes**

This report celebrates the work carried out this year by the NoC centers, which has been supported by the Secretariat. This report serves as an invitation for dialogue and collaboration to continuously shape together to the future of the NoC.

EXPANDING TECH POLICY CAPACITY AND INCLUSION IN THE MAJORITY WORLD

One of the NoC's areas of engagement is tech policy capacity and inclusion in the Majority World. This section spotlights the activities carried out to further training, infrastructure, and regulatory experimentation with the aim of strengthening governance capacity in the Majority World, with a focus on Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

TRAINING AND INCLUSIVE INNOVATION

AI Governance Session – 2025 Tech Policy Hackathon (Africa)

Over 50 African young policy makers and college students designed AI-enabled regulatory solutions in collaboration with the NoC Secretariat and the Center for Law and Innovation in Rwanda. Evaluators guided participants in translating concepts into scalable policy models.

Symposium Information Resilience & Integrity (IRIS, Jakarta)

Co-hosted with Indonesia's SAIL Lab (NoC Center in Indonesia), IRIS convened policymakers and scholars to address generative AI's impact on trust and democratic resilience in the Asia-Pacific. NoC co-organized sessions and developed research inputs now circulating among ASEAN institutions.



AI Observatory (Zurich & Kyoto)

Support the design and data collection of this global platform, hosted by the Center for Information Technology, Society, and Law-ITSL at University of Zurich (NoC Center in Switzerland,) and the Kyoto University Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Law and Policy (KILAP) (NoC Center in Japan). The platform tracks AI policies and regulations across jurisdictions and has already received more than 10,000 visits in six months, becoming a key reference for policymakers.

LEARNING CALLS

Learning calls remain crucial to foster open discussions and to connect with leading voices in technology, research and policy worldwide. This year's highlight's include

Taxing AI as a Governance Tool

With the Digital Law Center at the University of Geneva (NoC Center in Switzerland).

The Evolving Role of AI Safety Institutes in Uncertain Times –A New Wave Ahead?

Aside meeting of the AI Action Summit in Paris, organized with Center for the U.S. and Mexico at Rice University's (NoC Center) and ITS Rio.

Data Embassies and Digital Sovereignty in Africa

Featuring Samuel Frank Martinou, Isobel Acquah, Prasenjit Mitra, and Sofie Schönborn.

China's AI Business Ecosystem

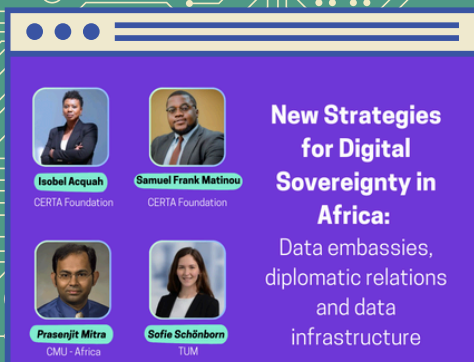
Focusing on DeepSeek and its global ripple effects.

The AI Agenda in Latin America: A Focus Towards Potential and Collaboration

Analyzing the impact of AI in job markets and innovation ecosystem in the region

Academic Freedom: Challenges, Experiences and Perspectives (NoC Internal Call)

Co-hosted with Nexa Research Center for Internet and Society at the Politecnico of Torino (NoC Center in Italy)



New Strategies for Digital Sovereignty in Africa:
Data embassies, diplomatic relations and data infrastructure

Isobel Acquah
CERTA Foundation

Samuel Frank Martinou
CERTA Foundation

Prasenjit Mitra
CMU - Africa

Sofie Schönborn
TUM

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

Global EPOCH Initiative (AI Augmentation & Replacement):

Adapted from MIT's tool, EPOCH enables countries with scarce datasets to measure AI's impact on labor. In collaboration with the MIT team and Center for Law and Innovation in Rwanda, we are helping to adapt and apply this methodology, particularly in Majority World countries. Current pilots in Ghana with EGIGFA (NoC Center in Ghana) and Chilean agencies ensure that evidence-based policymaking incorporates perspectives and experiences from these contexts.

Regional High-Performance Computing (HPC)

Access Program (CAF):

The Secretariat supports a distributed supercomputing network in South and Central America, enabling universities and public agencies to access frontier computational capacity. Governments in Costa Rica, Chile, the Dominican Republic, and Uruguay have pledged to host the first nodes.



AI Safety and Opportunities Institute for the LAC Region:

Based on the research developed with ITS Rio in Brazil and with the support of the Centro-i (NoC center in Mexico), the Secretariat is advancing plans for a regional institute on AI safety, ethics, and innovation. Discussions are ongoing with Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Brazil's Presidency. Once operational, the Institute will serve as a permanent platform for responsible AI governance, fostering South-South cooperation and linking local innovation ecosystems to global governance.



INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

Advancing Equitable Education with AI in Australia:

Support colleagues at the University of Melbourne (NoC colleagues in Australia) in the incubation and development of REACT Initiative: Rethinking equitable assessment in classrooms using AI-enabled technologies.



LEXam: Benchmarking Legal Reasoning

Collaborating with colleagues at the Legal Design & Code Lab, University of Lausanne (NoC center in Switzerland), together with researchers from ETH Zurich, on a global project to benchmark and analyze how LLMs perform legal reasoning. Facilitate and coordinate engagement with the Centre for Communication Governance at National Law University Delhi (NoC center in India) to initiate a collaboration on information collection in India for the technical project led by ETH.



REGULATORY SANDBOXES AND EXPERIMENTATION SPACES

Chile's First AI Sandbox (Autonomous Vehicles and Logistics):

With the Ministry of Economy, the Secretariat is guiding the design of Chile's first sandbox focused on autonomous vehicles, aligned with Chile's National AI Strategy and pioneering in Latin America. The project is developed with support from NoC Centers in the Netherlands, Norway and Singapore.

AI Sandboxes at UNESCO Global Forum (Bangkok):

At the Ethics of AI Forum, the NoC co-hosted "AI Sandboxes: Regulatory Learning in Action". Regulators from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America exchanged lessons, creating a foundation for interregional cooperation.

Policy Briefs on AI Sandboxes (TUM Think Tank):

In partnership with TUM Think Tank (NoC Center in Germany), we produced comparative briefs on sandbox design and their role in regulatory learning. These informed debates in Brazil's Congress, CARICOM, OECD, ECLAC and UNDESA.

SUPPORTING GLOBAL TECH GOVERNANCE AND MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

The Secretariat has become a trusted partner for international institutions, contributing directly to UN bodies, multilateral processes, and global frameworks. At present, we participate in, help design, and co-lead several initiatives in this regard.

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND MULTILATERAL BODIES

ITU Academic Advisory Body on Emerging Technologies:

Contributed to the configuration and design of this new advisory body, which will shape ITU's AI governance agenda. In addition to two members of the secretariat, participation from NoC colleagues in Egypt (A2K4D Cairo Center) and the United States (Institute for People and Technology in Georgia Tech) was achieved.

UNESCO Civil Society AI Network

Participate in this platform reviewing updates to UNESCO's Global Ethical Recommendations on AI, ensuring academic rigor and regional representation.

AI Capacity Building – Funding, Governance, and Digital Cooperation

Co-hosted a global consultation following the UNGA Resolution A/RES/78/311 (*Enhancing International Cooperation on Capacity-building of AI*) and the Global Digital Compact. Work aligns with the High-Level Advisory Body on AI.

UNDP AI Trust & Safety Programme:

Advised and led on program design, mentored participants, and supported implementation. The program now includes 20+ fellows from the Global South.

UN AI Tourism Global Report:

Lead the technical team in the integration of ethical safeguards in AI applications for sustainable tourism and cultural heritage.



GLOBAL INDEXES, STANDARDS, AND FRAMEWORKS

Global Index on Responsible AI (GIRAI)

Provided methodological inputs to NoC Centers in South Africa (African Observatory on Responsible AI) and data access for the first global index measuring AI commitments across 140+ countries, ensuring Majority World representation.

Hemispheres Project (EU-LAC Cooperation):

Reviewed deliverables, connected Latin American voices to EU policymakers, and reinforced cross-regional exchange on digital economy agendas. This project is done in collaboration with NoC Centers and colleagues in Argentina (CETYS), Brazil (ITS Rio), Chile (Universidad de Chile) and Norway (Nordic Centre for Internet and Society), among others.

Quantum Computing and the G20 (Policy Brief)

Co-authored a G20 policy brief on quantum governance with TUM's Quantum Social Lab (Director Fabienne Marco).

Countdown to G20

Supported Stellenbosch University and Research ICT Africa (NoC Center in South Africa) in advancing South Africa's digital economy agenda within the G20 framework.



RESEARCH, KNOWLEDGE, AND NETWORK STRENGTHENING

The Secretariat continues to position the NoC as a global intellectual hub by producing research, convening debates, and expanding its reach.

ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND NEW PROJECTS

Baker Institute – AI Policy and Governance Project:

Launched in February 2025, exploring AI's intersections with U.S.–Mexico labor markets, health, commerce, and growth strategies. NoC supported the incubation of this new project and the design of its research agenda for the next few years.

Civic Machines Lab – White Paper Launch:

Produced with TUM Think Tank, examining mission-driven AI deployments and governance dilemmas. Launch featured a multi-stakeholder panel bridging research and practice.

International Congress on Technology Standardization (Santiago, Chile)

Hosted by UC's Program on Law, Science, and Technology (NoC Center in Chile), with Professors Urs Gasser and Christian Fieseler. Focused on AI standards, cross-regional collaboration, and regulatory learning.



NETWORK EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION: NEW CENTERS

New Centers!

9 centers joined from South Africa, Japan, United States, and Canada, among others

Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions (CSDI)

University of British Columbia, Canada

CSDI advances interdisciplinary, publicly-engaged research, teaching, and dissemination of knowledge about innovation in democratic practice and institutions at the local, national, and international level.



GIPLI | Ghent IP Law Institute

Universiteit Gent, Belgium

GIPLI is a research institution with a heart for intellectual property law, rooted in Ghent University and open for collaboration with legal practitioners and the academic world.



Global Center on AI Governance

South Africa

A global team working together to build inclusive and ethical approaches to AI governance. Our strength lies in our diversity, deep subject-matter knowledge, and shared commitment to reducing global inequalities exacerbated by AI.



Institute for the Future of Work (IFOW)

United Kingdom

The Institute for the Future of Work is an independent research and development institute exploring how new technologies are transforming work and society.



NETWORK EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION: NEW CENTERS

Knowledge Technology Institute (ITC)

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

The ITC's mission is to improve society through Knowledge Technologies. To this end, it promotes collaboration between UCM research groups from different areas, as a multidisciplinary research space .



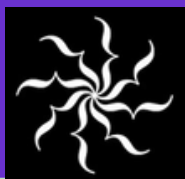
Legal Design & Code Lab

University of Lausanne (UNIL), Switzerland

An inherently interdisciplinary research hub that brings together scholars and practitioners interested in the intersection of law, technology, and design.

Open Data and Intellectual Property Institute Slovenia

ODIPI is a research, educational, consultancy, and advocacy institution working in the fields of internet law and the information society. ODIPI is a non-profit organisation that specialises in providing legal information and legal advice on copyright issues.



The Chief Justice Meir Shamgar
Center for Digital Law & Innovation
Tel Aviv University

The Shamgar Center for Digital Law and Innovation

Tel Aviv University, Israel

The Center promotes research aimed at exploring legal policies and harnessing technological advances to address these challenges. It brings together scientists and scholars to generate new and exciting cross-disciplinary research.

Zentrum verantwortungsbewusste Digitalisierung

Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany

ZEVEDI is a research network that combines the scientific expertise of researchers based at Hessian universities in order to analyze the ethical and legal dimensions of digital transformation, thus contributing to shaping this transformation

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NETWORK EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION

New Centers!

5 more centers are in the final stages of application to join the NoC

The humAIne project (MIT Sloan)

United States of America

The humAIne Project exists to re-center human value in a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence.



Stern Center for Business and HumanRights (NYU)

United States of America

We are helping to write a new playbook for business and human rights, renegotiating the responsibilities corporations have to the people and communities they affect.



Center for Digital Society (University of Gadjah Mada)

Indonesia

Our institution was founded by the development and dynamics of contemporary socio-political life in the world, marked by the influence of technological information.



Kyoto University Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Law and Policy

Japan

KILAP is engaged in interdisciplinary and international research on cutting-edge legal policy issues through collaboration between theory and practice



The Bernard Center – GW Center for Law & Technology (George Washington University)

United States of America

The Bernard Center provides education, events, scholarship, and dialogue about intellectual property, privacy, data security, and technology law.



Policy Innovation Lab (Stellenbosch University)

South Africa

We advance responsible AI to transform policymaking and drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.



COMMUNICATIONS

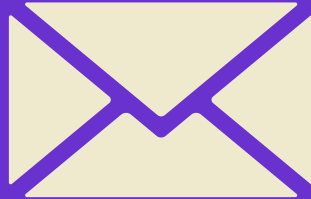
The NoC Secretariat has continued expanding its reach and encouraging engagement with stakeholders across the world.

THE SECRETARIAT'S
MAILING LIST

INCLUDES OVER

700

PARTICIPANTS



THE NOC SECRETARIAT'S

LinkedIn

HAS REACHED

1K+

FOLLOWERS

DURING THE 2025 IGF THE SECRETARIAT

CREATED THE IGF 2025 PROPOSALS HUB

a collaborative platform designed to foster engagement and co-develop proposals for the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Norway. Multiple workshops developed through the hub were selected for the IGF.



HOSTED THE NOC IGF VIRTUAL BOOTH

A space to share work, meet colleagues and collaborate online

THE NOC CO-HOSTED
THE MIDSUMMER'S EVE CELEBRATION
DURING THE IGF

COMMUNICATIONS

THE NOC SECRETARIAT PARTICIPATED IN MULTIPLE EVENTS



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

2025 ANNUAL MEETING

THROW THINGS IN THE AIR AND SEE WHAT STICKS : THE EU'S APPROACH TO REGULATING PLATFORMS AND AI

ORGANIZED BY TWO NOC CENTERS



Information Society Project
Yale Law School



ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT
INSTITUTE FOR INTERNET
AND SOCIETY

GLOBAL SUMMIT ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING TECH LAW, AND GOVERNANCE

ORGANIZED BY
THE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE LAW HUB AND SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

IN PREPARATION FOR



**AI
IMPACT
SUMMIT**
भारत 2026 INDIA

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

The NoC Secretariat has positioned itself not only as a facilitator of dialogue but also as an architect of global digital governance. This support has enabled the Secretariat to transform ambitious commitments into tangible results and to ensure Majority World perspectives are present in global deliberations.



KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION:

Research has been translated into governance tools. Policy briefs informed legislative debates in Brazil and regional dialogues in CARICOM, Asia, and Europe. Chile's sandbox on autonomous vehicles provided a model for adaptive regulation. Comparative indices and observatories now equip policymakers with data-driven tools.



GLOBAL REACH:

By welcoming new centers in Asia, reinforcing partnerships in Africa, and consolidating Latin American collaborations, the NoC redefined itself as a global research network influencing Geneva, Washington, and Brussels as well as Accra, Jakarta, Santiago, and Kigali.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



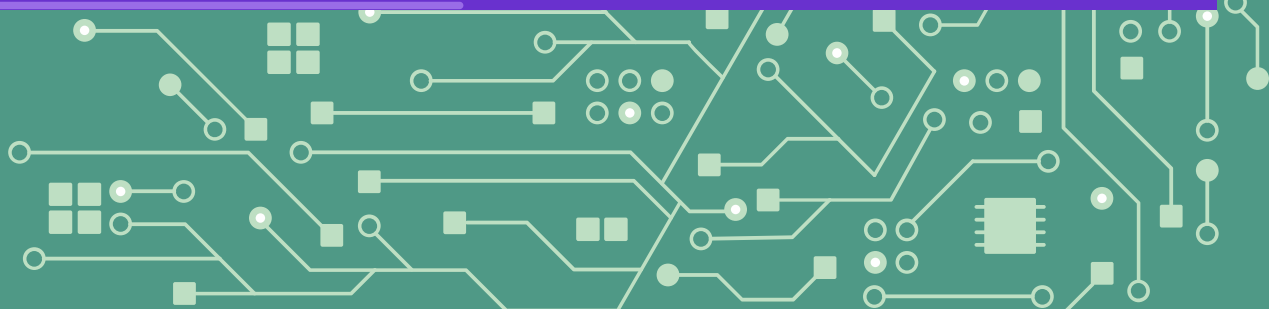
INNOVATION IN GOVERNANCE:

Initiatives such as Global EPOCH and the HPC Access Program provide methodologies for governments to respond adaptively to technological disruption. EPOCH pilots in Ghana and Chile are generating labor market insights, while HPC prepares shared computational capacity in Latin America.



TRUSTED CONVENOR:

The NoC is now a partner to UNESCO, UNDP, ITU, and the G20. Its contributions are sought not only for thought leadership but also for implementation, underscoring its credibility and trust.



LOOKING AHEAD

The achievements celebrated in this report illustrate how the NoC has not been simply documenting technological change but actively shaping how societies adapt to it. As the NoC charges forward there are key aspects to prioritize to keep momentum and prepare for possible shifts in the global landscape.



Advancing regional hubs and increasing engagement:

Strengthening regional structures will be essential to anchor activities closer to the communities they serve, foster collaboration among local actors, and ensure that knowledge and resources circulate more effectively across the network.



Re-connecting with Centers whose participation has dwindled:

It is important to re-engage Centers that have been less active, creating opportunities for renewed involvement. Their contributions are vital to maintaining the richness and diversity of perspectives within the NoC.



Network sustainability:

Focused efforts to ensure continuity of projects and activities. Ensure reliable sources of funding despite changing global paradigms and support the centers' initiatives.



Reflecting on how to operate within the new roadmap:

As the NoC moves into a new phase guided by its updated roadmap, it will be critical to reflect on current practices, identify areas for adaptation, and ensure alignment with the long-term vision.

Throughout the years, the Secretariat has established itself as a bridge between research and policy, between Majority World institutions and global forums, and between innovation and governance. Every year the centers from the NoC partake in exciting and relevant activities that look into the global future of technology governance, and 2025 was not the exception.

This year has brought monumental changes on the international stage. In the face of these shifts, the NoC's mission resonates more powerfully than ever.

**THANK
YOU!**



GLOBAL NETWORK OF **INTERNET AND SOCIETY** RESEARCH CENTERS – SECRETARIAT