

# Policy Matters

## Glossary of 75 Key Terms for Understanding Internet Policy—2025

Policy issues and discussions that result in decisions and laws can seem too complex, technical, context-heavy, or far removed from everyday life. However, their outcomes shape how we all experience the Internet and our ability to connect, create, and thrive online.

This is why Internet policy literacy is for everyone, not just policy practitioners. With the right approach, anyone can understand the concepts and make a difference.

This glossary offers quick and straightforward explanations of key Internet policy-related vocabulary, consisting of selected English terms.

In addition to promoting consistency and informed engagement across languages, this glossary, as a tool, empowers Internet users like you to take proactive/responsive/reactive actions as needed in defining Internet policy moments. Where useful, reliable source materials are hyperlinked for deeper context and synthesis.

The Internet is for everyone, and its policy matters for all. When more of us choose to pay attention and understand what's at stake, we are better equipped to do our part in shaping, protecting, nurturing, and/or influencing the future of the Internet and the digital world around us, allowing it to be a force for good that works for everyone, everywhere.

## A

### TERM

### DEFINITION

#### Access

People's ability to get online, stay connected, and use the Internet, as a public resource, for greater economic, social, and cultural development. It includes access to e.g. connectivity, relevant content, local languages, and scripts.

More than two billion people still don't have reliable, affordable Internet access. That's why the [Internet Society's](#) global community is working on [connecting the unconnected](#) to help close the digital divide.

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>The design and regulation of digital spaces (and their products and services) so that everyone, including people with disabilities, older adults, and those with limited literacy or digital skills, can access and use them effectively.</p> <p>Understanding accessibility helps you recognize when digital spaces are usable by all. It may also empower you to support inclusive design and advocate for better tools and services that ensure that everyone can fully participate in the digital world.</p>
<b>Action Lines (WSIS)</b>	<p>In 2003-2005, the United Nation’s World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) established a list of “Action Lines”. These are a set of focus areas like access, skills, online safety, and cultural diversity, to guide how countries and organizations can build a more inclusive digital world.</p> <p>Knowing them matters because they turn big global goals into concrete steps, making it easier for governments, organizations, and communities to work together on how people use and benefit from the Internet.</p> <p>In 2025, the United Nations General Assembly will review the progress made in the implementation of the WSIS Action Lines, making it a pivotal year for the Internet. Find out more on the <a href="#">best way to navigate today’s challenges with a forward looking vision by building upon the WSIS framework</a>.</p>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<p>Actively supporting or promoting a cause or amplifying the voice of your community in matters like digital rights, online safety, or affordable access through public awareness, education, and engagement with policymakers to stop the legislative threats to the Internet.</p> <p><a href="#">Understanding advocacy</a> and the power of your voice can help us create a more open and inclusive Internet.</p>
<b>Algorithm</b>	<p>A set of mathematical constructs that a computer follows to solve a problem or complete a task. It is the unambiguous, precise, list of simple operations applied mechanically and systematically to a set of tokens or objects (Definition from the OECD). In the case of social media, these are the Proprietary rules used by platforms to filter, define and determine what you see online—news, ads, videos, and search results.</p> <p>Understanding the role that algorithms play matters because they quietly shape what we see online every day, even though we don’t usually notice them at work, and knowing about them helps us question and shape our digital experience.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Age Verification</b>	<p>The process of determining a user's age before granting access to certain online content, platforms, or services.</p> <p>Age assurance is the term for all age check methods. Age verification is the more common term but applies specifically to age checks using an authenticated source like a government ID or financial account.</p> <p>Governments are increasingly requiring age verification to try to restrict access to certain types of online content and services. <a href="#">These laws</a> may be well-intentioned with the aim to prevent exposing children to adult content, but they can also introduce accessibility, privacy, and security risks for users of all ages.</p>

## B

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Backdoor Access</b>	<p>Any method that gives a third-party access to encrypted data, thereby creating a major vulnerability that weakens the security of users' personal information and the Internet at large.</p> <p><a href="#">Backdoor access</a> may sound like a safety tool, but it can quietly open the door to misuse, surveillance, or hacking, so knowing about it helps you make informed choices about the tools and platforms you trust.</p>
<b>Bill</b>	<p>A formal proposal for a new law or a change to an existing one. In Internet policy, this could affect users' right to privacy, access, free expression, or online safety. Learn more about key issues from these <a href="#">policy briefs</a>.</p> <p>Keeping a close eye on the policy space to know what bills are under discussion gives you a chance to weigh in and influence decisions before they become law. Vocalizing, sharing, or echoing concerns or even signing petitions can help hold policymakers accountable.</p>
<b>Botnets</b>	<p>A collection of Internet-connected user computers (bots) infected by malicious software (malware) that allows the computers to be controlled remotely by an operator (bot herder) through a Command-and-Control (C&amp;C) server to perform automated tasks, such as stealing information or launching attacks on other computers.</p> <p>Find out more from our <a href="#">Botnets Policy Brief</a> on the challenges, considerations, and guiding principles.</p>



# C

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Child Online Safety</b>	<p>Legal and regulatory efforts aimed at protecting children on the Internet.</p> <p>Countries use a mix of measures like content filters, user empowerment, and stakeholder cooperation. While some argue encryption hinders child protection online efforts, its crucial role in safeguarding children’s privacy and safety is often overlooked in policy debates.</p>
<b>Client-Side Scanning (CSS)</b>	<p><a href="#">A method</a> where devices, like your computer or phone, scan content before it is encrypted and sent, to detect illegal material.</p> <p>This undermines encryption in the name of safety and can turn your personal device into a surveillance tool without your knowledge.</p>
<b>Content Blocking</b>	<p>This is a worldwide and growing trend in which case governments or service providers prevent people from accessing certain material online, often for reasons like child protection or national security. While blocking is sometimes used against illegal material (for example, child abuse content), there is little international agreement on what should or should not be blocked.</p> <p>While <a href="#">content blocking</a> may look like a quick solution, it doesn’t actually remove the material from the Internet. It can also unintentionally block legitimate websites and services, affecting both users and businesses. People who try to bypass blocks with tools like VPNs may end up with weaker privacy or security, making their Internet use less safe.</p>
<b>Content Filtering</b>	<p>A practice in which Internet users are denied access to certain, usually illegal, online content based on government requirements.</p> <p>National authorities may enact public policies to restrict or prevent access to content such as child abuse material, content that violates intellectual property laws, threatens national security, or is prohibited for a range of cultural or political reasons.</p>
<b>Content Moderation</b>	<p>The process by which private companies like Facebook, TikTok, or YouTube monitor, review, remove, or flag content on their platforms based on their own rules (community guidelines or terms of services).</p> <p>This impacts what you can say and see online—yet often lacks transparency or accountability.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Content Regulation</b>	<p>How governments use laws, policies, or official mandates to define what kinds of content are allowed or prohibited online. This can limit the user's access to information.</p> <p>This has recently been a matter of public concern and debate, with the need to raise awareness about national laws and measures which pose risks to human rights. Censorship is the number one concern.</p>
<b>Cyberbullying</b>	<p>A growing phenomenon affecting children and young people. Studies have established that nearly 43% of children are victims of cyberbullying (online harassment) and girls are twice as likely to be targeted. Students who experienced cyberbullying suffer drops in school grades and have more suicidal thoughts than those who had never dealt with such forms of peer aggression. There is a link between cyber harassment, victimization, and noncompletion of school, resulting in increased risk of poor education and substance abuse in adulthood.</p> <p>Cyberbullying prevention in schools is crucial to defend students from this new face of violence.</p>
<b>Cybercrime</b>	<p>Crimes committed online such as hacking or online scams.</p> <p>Security researchers indicate that cybercrime continues to grow with the number of connected devices and the value of online activities. This requires countering actions such as the uniform implementation of basic security measures like regular software updates and patches, increased international law enforcement cooperation, and tougher cybersecurity laws in several countries.</p>
<b>Cybersecurity</b>	<p>The practice of protecting the security and privacy of networks and programs from digital attacks by using technical and technological solutions.</p> <p>Cyberattacks are usually aimed at accessing, changing, or destroying sensitive information, extorting money from users via ransomware, or interrupting normal business processes.</p> <p>Not every crime that occurs on the Internet is covered by the term cybersecurity.</p>



# D

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Data</b>	<p>Any information that is collected, stored, processed, or transmitted, online, such as your location, clicks, images or messages.</p> <p>In many jurisdictions, there is a requirement that data be stored in specific ways or within certain geographic locations, often called data localization with the intention to protect privacy, security, or comply with local laws.</p> <p>Intentionally treating and sharing sensitive data is important, which is why it is crucial to uphold <a href="#">responsible data handling</a> best practices.</p>
<b>Data Governance</b>	<p>Rules about how data is collected, used, and protected.</p> <p>The Internet Society advocates for transparent and accountable data governance frameworks that safeguard individuals' privacy and personal data. To ensure that data policies are designed in ways that protect the rights of users while fostering innovation and trust in the digital ecosystem, we support open standards for data management and advocate for the use of encryption and other technologies that enhance data security. Additionally, it promotes global collaboration to develop data protection laws to ensure that data integrity is respected, while balancing the need for global digital interoperability.</p>
<b>Data Localization</b>	<p>A requirement data to be stored within a country's borders.</p> <p>Data localization requirements do not enhance security but rather have the opposite effect, fragmenting the Internet and making it more difficult to protect data from cybersecurity threats.</p> <p>Countries and the public should advocate for policies that promote data security and privacy through international cooperation and the adoption of strong cybersecurity standards and should push back against protectionist measures that isolate countries, harm businesses, and limit the free flow of information.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Data Privacy</b>	<p>The protection of an individual's personal information (online data) from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. It involves ensuring that individuals control how their data is collected, stored, processed, and shared by organizations or entities.</p> <p>There are many helpful online privacy tools. Use them to protect your online privacy and to keep track of what information you share as you browse. Here are two links to resources we hope you will find relevant and useful in protecting your online privacy.</p> <p>The Internet Society's tutorials on identity and privacy, and managing your digital footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Understanding your digital identity and privacy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Understanding your digital footprint</a></li> </ul> <p>Knowing that your data may be collected and understanding your rights helps you avoid risks and regain control every time you use an app or website.</p>
<b>Data Security</b>	<p>Measures used to protect all types of personal and non-personal information online (data), so that it remains confidential and available.</p> <p>This involves using encryption and controlling access to secure and safeguard your data. Find out more: <a href="#">Best Practices for Data and Information Security</a>.</p>
<b>Digital Divide</b>	<p>The gap between those who have Internet access and those who don't.</p> <p>The <a href="#">digital divide is multifaceted</a> and includes many factors that contribute to lack of access, such as physical connectivity, affordability, quality of service, and relevance.</p>
<b>Digital Equity</b>	<p>The concept that every person should have equal opportunity to access digital technologies, including the Internet.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Digital Footprint</b>	<p>The trail of data that is left behind by an individual's online activity. It includes all the digital interactions and information associated with a person across various online platforms and services, including social media, online purchases, web browsing history, app usage, and location data. Our digital footprints increasingly include data collected passively by systems like numberplate recognition, urban CCTV, fitness trackers, mobile phone networks, and so on. Our digital footprint encompasses data that does not simply result from your own deliberate online activity.</p> <p>While it is impossible to have zero digital footprints, you can take <a href="#">simple steps toward reducing your digital footprint</a>.</p>
<b>Digital Inclusion</b>	<p>A comprehensive approach to providing equitable access to digital services and technologies for everyone (e.g. youth, women, elders, minorities, and persons with disabilities)</p>
<b>Digital Literacy</b>	<p>Acquiring digital and technical skills to safely and effectively use digital technology, communication tools, and networks for navigating the digital world.</p> <p>These skills enable people to confidently and responsibly use technology to achieve various goals, from learning and working to accessing services and engaging with communities.</p>
<b>Digital Sovereignty</b>	<p>A nation's ability to determine its digital autonomy and government-driven policies that explicitly co-opt for it.</p> <p>Although Internet needs and goals vary by country, <a href="#">digital sovereignty</a> policies include efforts to fragment the Internet by closing regions off from the global network.</p>
<b>Disinformation</b>	<p>Information that is deliberately created to deceive people. This is different from misleading information, otherwise known as "misinformation."</p>
<b>Doxxing</b>	<p>The act of publishing an individual's private or personally identifiable information (such as full name, home address, or family details) online, without their consent, with the intent to harass or harm.</p> <p>This is concerning because anyone can be a target, and it has real consequences for the person being targeted. Knowing its privacy consequences can help us significantly reduce personal data sharing, demand better digital guiderails, also take active measures to protect personal data online.</p>



# E

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Encryption

A process that protects data from unauthorized viewing by making it unintelligible to anyone who does not have the key to decode it. An unauthorized person can still access the encrypted data, but it will be indistinguishable from random data.

You should use and uphold [encryption](#) to protect both your stored and transmitted data. It plays a critical role in protecting your day-to-day digital activities like online banking and shopping by making sure your private messages stay private.

Additional resource: [a parents' guide to encryption](#).

### End-to-end Encryption (E2EE)

The process of encrypting data at the point of transmission and decrypting it only at the point of receipt.

The aim of E2EE is to ensure that no intermediaries (such as email or messaging servers) can access the content of communication, even if they play a legitimate part in relaying the data from sender to recipient.

# F

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Forced Data Localization

Also known as mandatory data localization, it refers to government requirements that control the storage and flow of data to keep it within a particular jurisdiction. Data localization laws—sometimes called “data residency” or “data sovereignty”—are typically intended to keep personal or financial transaction data in-country where they are subject to access and local regulation.

Mandatory data localization measures range from obligations to physically locate data in the country where it originates to restricting or even forbidding its transfer to other countries. Here is a use case on [what this means to the Internet Way of Networking](#).

### Fragmentation

The division of the unified, open, global Internet into smaller, isolated networks subject to different rules, regulations, and technical standards—which may not be able to interconnect or interoperate seamlessly.

This is a big deal as it results in blocked sites affecting your online experience. Read more about [why you should pay attention to this issue](#).



# G

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Global Digital Compact (GDC)

[A proposed comprehensive global framework](#) to set shared principles for a safe, inclusive, open, and human-centered digital future, developed by the United Nations. It aims to guide how digital technologies, especially the Internet, are governed worldwide.

This matters because it might influence the future of the Internet and your access to it, influencing digital connectivity, Internet fragmentation, data protection, human rights online, and the promotion of a trustworthy Internet.

# I

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Identity Theft

A privacy concern whereby criminals steal user identifiers, passwords, and associated information so they can impersonate other Internet users. The motivation for identity theft is often simple economic gain; by stealing your information and impersonating you, criminals may be able to order goods and services, redirect existing shipments, or transfer funds.

While the technology has changed, the basic motivations and behaviors of these types of thieves are age-old. There are many existing legal protections, such as consumer-protection laws, that may also apply to Internet users with the best policy practice being to balance privacy protection, economic development, and an open Internet.

### Intermediary Liability

Whether online platforms or service providers such as Amazon, Facebook, WhatsApp, or YouTube can be held legally responsible for what their users post. These platforms don't create the content—they just host or transmit it.

If platforms fear punishment for user content, they may over block content to protect themselves, thereby limiting what users can say, share, or see online.

By understanding this, users can support balanced policies and regulations that protect free and responsible expression while addressing real harms.

[More resources on this are available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Arabic.](#)



<b>Internet</b>	<p>A “network of networks,” made up of almost 70,000 independent networks that use the same technical protocols and choose to collaborate and interconnect.</p> <p>Further explore the basics of <a href="#">how the Internet works</a>, <a href="#">who runs the Internet</a>, and what sorts of Internet behavior are desired and what sorts are constrained by technical realities. Making the Internet a safe space and a force for good is a collaborative, collective responsibility.</p>
<b>Internet Impact Brief</b>	<p>Shorter reports produced by the Internet Society, members of our community, and other partners that analyze how different policies or new technologies may affect what the Internet needs to <a href="#">exist</a> and <a href="#">thrive</a>.</p> <p>Are you interested in producing your own Internet Impact Brief? Visit our <a href="#">Internet Impact Assessment Toolkit (IIAT)</a> to learn more.</p>
<b>Internet Governance</b>	<p>The policies, rules and decision-making processes that shape how the Internet is managed and used. It involves key players like governments, private companies, the technical community and civil society organizations.</p> <p><a href="#">The way the Internet is governed</a> directly impacts how it functions, who has access, and how open, secure, and inclusive it remains.</p> <p>Check out the <a href="#">Footprints of 20 Years of Internet Governance Forum</a> report to find out how the Internet is successfully governed using the consultative and multistakeholder model.</p>
<b>Internet of Things (IoT)</b>	<p>Internet-connected everyday objects that have powerful data analytic capabilities that promise to transform the way we work, live, and play. IoT is widely debated as it raises surveillance concerns and privacy fears (E.g. smart home appliances and electronic devices).</p>
<b>Internet Protocol Address (IP address)</b>	<p>A unique identifier assigned to each computer and device (e.g., printer, router, mobile device, etc.) connected to the Internet. It is used to locate and identify the node in communication with other nodes on the network, so that devices can communicate over the Internet.</p>
<b>Internet Shutdown</b>	<p>An intentional disruption of Internet-based communications within a specific geographic area, rendering online services inaccessible or effectively unavailable, for a specific population. Examples include attempts by governments to control the flow of information during elections or national exams.</p>



## Internet Society (ISOC)

A global charity with the mission of promoting and developing an [open, secure, and trustworthy Internet for everyone](#).

The [Internet Society](#) supports and promotes the development of the Internet as an impactful global technical infrastructure, a resource to enrich people's lives, and a force for good in society.

## Internet Society Foundation

It's the philanthropic arm of the Internet Society that funds initiatives worldwide to help make the Internet open, secure, and accessible to everyone.

It supports the global Internet community of researchers, developers, nonprofits, educators and more, through a dozen of [grant programs](#) that champion the use of the Internet as a critical technical infrastructure to bring communities better education, healthcare and economic opportunity among other important areas of focus.

## Internet Society Pulse

[Pulse](#) is a central website that aggregates reliable and accurate Internet data from many sources, giving insight into matters like the impact of Internet shutdowns and the resiliency of a country's Internet. This offers background information and context to journalists covering Internet issues around the globe.

## Internet Way of Networking (IWN)

The foundation of a strong and successful Internet that works the way it does thanks to the [Five Critical Properties](#) which, when combined, drive how it operates and evolves.

# L

### TERM

### DEFINITION

## Lawful Access Solutions

A mechanism that allows government authorities to access private communications or data, often via warrants or court order—weakening security for everyone.

If this kind of access is not carefully regulated, ensuring strict oversight, transparency, and limits, it can threaten privacy and freedom. It opens the door to mass surveillance or backdoor mandates in the name of "lawful" anti-encryption terms.



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Licensing Approaches (Community Networks)</b>	<p>Licensing refers to the legal permission needed to operate parts of a community network. Different countries have different rules, and some allow more flexibility to community networks or propose affordable licenses, so communities can build their own network when service providers don't. Supportive licensing lets everyday people step in, set up affordable connectivity, and bring their communities online.</p> <p><a href="#">Explore the licensing frameworks</a> that help close the digital divide.</p>
<b>Local Content</b>	<p>Content that is locally generated, relevant, and adapted to the local realities of a particular country. This content drives the growth of local, regional, or national Internet as it is relevant to the communities and economies of that specific country.</p>

## M

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Mass Surveillance</b>	<p>Untargeted or “blanket” surveillance of individuals’ behavior or communications. In the Internet context, this is the goal of some government policies, particularly in repressive or authoritarian societies.</p> <p>Regardless of the stated justification (which may be for national security, or to counter terrorism or child abuse), mass surveillance is, by definition, disproportionate in a democratic society. This practice threatens online freedom of expression and the safety, privacy, and autonomy of the citizen.</p>
<b>Meaningful Connectivity</b>	<p>Having more than Internet access. It means having fast, regular, reliable, and safe Internet access that enables people to fully participate in the digital world for work, education, communication, or accessing services.</p>
<b>Misinformation</b>	<p>False or misleading information which results from simply getting the facts wrong.</p> <p>This is different from disinformation, false information that is deliberately created and spread to mislead or manipulate—often for political, financial, or ideological gain.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Multistakeholder Approach</b>	<p>A model of governance that involves the participation and collaboration of various stakeholders from different sectors of society in decision-making processes related to the governance and management of the Internet.</p> <p>These stakeholders consist of for instance governments, the technical community, the civil society, academia and the end users. Unlike traditional models of governance that are characterized by top-down, hierarchical structures and centralized control, the multistakeholder approach emphasizes inclusivity, transparency, and collaboration among such diverse stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Here is <a href="#">why the multistakeholder approach works</a>.</p>

## N

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Network Neutrality</b>	<p>Also known as net neutrality, it is the principle that all online data should be treated equally. While network operators may use traffic management techniques to maintain performance, there are concerns that such practices can be used to favor certain data, block competing content, or give unfair advantage—especially when driven by revenue goals.</p> <p>These actions risk undermining the open and transparent nature of the Internet and harming end users.</p>

## O

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Online Safety</b>	<p>Policies, regulations, and measures aimed at protecting individuals from risks such as cyberbullying, harassment, privacy breaches, and exposure to harmful or illegal content while using the Internet.</p> <p><a href="#">Online safety</a> affects everyone's experience of the Internet, especially children, youth, and marginalized users. It is a collaborative effort, with Internet security being a shared responsibility that no single entity can achieve alone.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Open Internet</b>	<p>An Internet that's free, accessible, and not controlled by any one group.</p> <p>One of the key operational features of the Internet is that it is built as an open platform for innovation and sharing ideas.</p>
<b>Open Source</b>	<p>A decentralized software development model that encourages open collaboration by making the source code freely available for any peer modification/improvement.</p>
<b>Open-Source Standards</b>	<p>Publicly available rules or guidelines that anyone can use, share, or build upon freely.</p> <p>In the Internet governance spaces, the Internet is fundamentally based on the existence of these open, non-proprietary standards. They are key to allowing devices, services, and applications to work together across a wide and dispersed network of networks.</p> <p>Read <a href="#">about the organizations that are behind the open Internet standards</a>, making sure open standards have freely accessible specifications, are unencumbered, have open development, and are continuously evolving.</p>

## P

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Personal Data</b>	<p>Any information that when pieced together can be used to identify a particular person.</p>
<b>Phishing</b>	<p>An attack that attempts to steal your money or your identity by getting you to reveal your personal information, such as credit card numbers, bank information, or passwords, on websites that pretend to be legitimate.</p>



TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Platform Accountability</b>	<p>Regulation that holds digital platforms like Facebook or YouTube responsible for how they manage content, user data, algorithms, and other aspects of their services that impact society. This would negatively impact three pillars of the Internet: its open architecture of interoperable and reusable building blocks; decentralized management and distributed routing; and technology neutral, general-purpose network.</p> <p>There could be increased costs and risks for operators or service providers, leading to decreased investment, diversion of critical resources to non-core activities, a limitation on innovation, and a less effective network overall. This could influence what you see, share, and believe online, and impact how your personal data is handled.</p>

<b>Privacy</b>	<p>Your right to control who sees your personal information online. Privacy also means respecting individuals through fair and transparent handling of their personal data, limiting collection and use, and ensuring responsible data stewardship and security.</p> <p><a href="#">Check best practices in privacy and related resources.</a></p>
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## R

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Ransomware</b>	<p>A type of malware attack whereby hackers can infiltrate your data. Here are <a href="#">6 tips for protecting yourself against it</a>.</p>
<b>Regulations</b>	<p>Laws or rules set by authorities to control Internet use or behavior. While regulations aim to address societal risks online, many are poorly defined or impractical, often leading to unintended harm to the Internet's infrastructure.</p>
<b>Responsible Data Handling</b>	<p>The ethical principles of transparency, fairness, and respect used to treat sensitive data. It can protect our privacy and autonomy and build the trust needed for digital innovation to flourish in ways that benefit everyone.</p> <p><a href="#">Find out more about the rationale, the challenges, and the best practices.</a></p>
<b>Right To Be Forgotten</b>	<p>The legal right of an individual to request that specific information about them be dissociated from their name, as an obstacle to searching for it online. (For instance, searching for "John Smith fraud scandal" would not retrieve the information in question).</p>



# S

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Spam</b>	Any kind of unwanted and annoying e-mail, text message, phone call, or message that you receive in bulk from people or companies who want to advertise their products or broadcast their political or social views.
<b>Spectrum Approach</b>	<p>In the context of community networks, this is a flexible strategy that allows different ways of accessing and managing signals—so local, community-driven projects can also build and maintain their own networks.</p> <p>Helping advocate for a fairer spectrum approach means people in remote or underserved areas can create affordable, local Internet—instead of waiting for big companies. <a href="#">Find out how policy changes can help Internet providers share spectrum more effectively and connect more people.</a></p>
<b>Surveillance</b>	<p>Consists of watching or tracking people’s actions—often using cameras, online tools, or data—to gather information about them. This is often done by Governments, but they’re not the only ones.</p> <p>It’s not just about “having nothing to hide”, it’s about your right to privacy, consent, and control over your digital life that needs to be protected as it poses serious safety risks too, if the data is misused.</p>

# T

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Trust Online</b>	<p>The confidence users have that the Internet—and the systems, platforms, and services built on it—will function securely, reliably, and in a way that respects their rights, privacy, and data.</p> <p>Strengthening trust through transparency, accountability, secure technologies, and fair rules is key to ensuring peoples and businesses continue to benefit from the Internet.</p> <p><a href="#">Find out more about why we need trust and how we can achieve it.</a></p>



# U

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Universal Acceptance

A principle of internationalization and accessibility related to achieving a multilingual Internet. The use of Latin-based alphabets should not be a precondition of using the Internet.

### Universal Access

Part of the universal right of freedom of expression for people to have an inclusive, equitable, and affordable Internet regardless of where they live or their origin.

Read the [inspiring related story](#) from the remote community of Ulukhaktok, which launched the Arctic's first community network in the midst of Canada's worst forest fire season. The network strengthens local Internet resiliency and helps prevent people from losing Internet access when they need it most.

# Z

## TERM

## DEFINITION

### Zero-Rating

When mobile providers let users access certain apps or services without using up their data. It's often marketed as a user benefit, but usually involves deals between big tech and telecom companies.

While it can lower costs for users, it raises concerns about competition and net neutrality—the idea that all online content should be treated equally. [Discover how it plays out.](#)

## The Internet is for Everyone

Founded in 1992, the Internet Society is a global charitable organization that believes the Internet is for everyone. Through our community of members, special interest groups, and 120+ chapters worldwide, we defend and promote Internet policies, standards, and protocols that keep the Internet open, globally connected, and secure.

Learn more at [InternetSociety.org](https://www.InternetSociety.org)



The Internet Society is a U.S. 501(c)(3) charity (EIN 54-1650477) with a multi-year top 4-star ranking from Charity Navigator.