

Origin, Purpose, and Working Structures

The IGF Dynamic Coalition on Privacy was established at the first IGF annual meeting in Athens in November 2006. In coherence with the IGF mandate, its purpose is to foster and facilitate public policy debate on privacy issues in the digital age. The Coalition has produced a detailed FAQ page (available at the coalition wiki, see below) to describe its activities and working methods. Its work is coordinated through

- a mailing list at <http://lists.apc.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/privacy-coalition>
- a public wiki at <http://wiki.igf-online.net/wiki/Privacy>

Participants in the Coalition have met in Geneva in February 2007, in Montreal in May 2007, and at the IGF in Rio de Janeiro in November 2007. Between meetings, work was coordinated on the mailing list, and individual members have been meeting at relevant privacy-related conferences throughout the world.

Membership Development

The Coalition is still growing slowly and now gathers participants from more than seventy entities (see the full list at the coalition wiki). The coalition has members from all world regions as well as from governments, industry, international organizations, civil society, and data protection authorities.

Participation is open to any individual interested in supporting the purpose of the Coalition. In order to facilitate broad participation and open discussion, the views expressed by participants are not considered as official statements by their respective entities, unless explicitly stated.

The biggest challenge still seems to be the active involvement government representatives, even with the previous sentence as a “shield” that was introduced at the setting-up of the coalition to make their participation easier. Outreach efforts to attract new participants, especially from the developing world, have been difficult, because of the lack of funding for coalition activities, including the important face-to-face meetings.

Themes and Activities in 2008

The draft synthetic issue papers on privacy and identity, privacy and development, and privacy and freedom of expression have been further refined. These and other documents are available at the coalition wiki site.

At the meeting at the IGF 2007, participants also agreed that the Coalition work should go beyond the original three themes discussed in Athens in 2006, including conceptual work on

- the difference between privacy offline and online
- privacy and surveillance
- the value of privacy and the “nothing to hide” argument in the web 2.0 context.

Follow-up has been slow, though, mainly for the reasons mentioned above. There have been no tangible outcomes yet, though members of the coalition have continued to cooperate individually on these issues.

The Coalition members at the IGF 2007 also agreed there is a need to build bridges

- between technologists and policy-makers
 - deliverable: PETs workshop at IGF2008 (submitted)
- between privacy community and development policy / developing countries
 - deliverable: workshop at IGF2008 (not submitted)
- between experienced actors and newcomers
 - on privacy practices, processes, etc.
 - on case studies of privacy breaches and how to deal with them.
 - deliverables:
 - reporting template on privacy breaches (available as draft v.1)
 - possible workshop at IGF2008 (not submitted)

The Coalition facilitator Ralf Bendrath has stayed in continuous contact with the coordinators of the IGF Dynamic Coalition on an Internet Bill of Rights.