

**Brazil's approach to multistakeholderism: multi-participation in the  
Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGL.br)**

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## Abstract

This case study examines different stakeholders participating inside the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br). CGI.br's performance is analyzed as a manifestation of the multistakeholder model in practice. The Committee acts as a manager that unites the private sector, the civil society, the academic community and the State in Brazilian Internet development. Interviews with elected CGI.br's counselors were conducted to expose pros and cons of the Brazilian approach to multistakeholderism.

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## I. Introduction

Internet Governance often has global proportions and involves various actors. Ideally, governments, businesses, experts, scholars and civil society come together for the establishment of Internet regulatory mechanisms. At the base of these actors' insurgencies is multistakeholderism, a common model adopted within Internet governance (IG).

In Brazil, the body responsible for formulating policies related to the use and development of the Internet is the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br). This Committee claims to follow the multistakeholder model in its composition and procedures.

This case study seeks to analyze the functioning and dynamics of different stakeholders' participation inside CGI.br's multistakeholderism. The Brazilian Internet Steering Committee's performance is used as an object of analysis of the multistakeholder model in practice.

## II. Research problem

There is no wide consensus on what defines the multistakeholder model<sup>1</sup>. Still, the term is widely used to characterize the type of governance applied to the Internet – including in Brazil. This article seeks to provide appointments concerning participation and real representation of all stakeholder groups involved in the Brazilian Internet governance deliberative process. It aims to answer the question of whether multistakeholderism is indeed something new being considered in the Internet environment or if the term refers to activities and models already known in the Brazilian public deliberation sphere of multiple actors participating in a heterogeneous environment.

The Brazilian Internet Steering Committee was appointed by the government to be an independent body responsible for most Internet-related issues in the country. CGI.br celebrated its 20-year anniversary in 2015. Since its origin, the Committee stated its goal of following multistakeholder standards, including open and plural engagement of various stakeholder groups, in its policies' formulation. Created in 1995 and redesigned in 2003 by a presidential decree, CGI.br sought to establish guidelines regarding the use and development of the Internet in Brazil.

The Committee is not part of the Brazilian government, even though the Executive branch created it. CGI.br acts as a manager that unites private sector, civil society, academia and the State. Therefore, the Committee acts as both a forum of debate and deliberation between stakeholders and as one actor among many within the Brazilian Internet ecosystem.

Objectively, the Committee is responsible for technical issues such as the formulation of guidelines for the Domain Name registration, allocation of Internet Protocol addresses and the administration of the domain ".br." Overall, CGI.br is also related to the promotion of studies and recommendations of procedures for the security of the Internet, the coordination of all Internet services in the country and to the dissemination and quality of available services.

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<sup>1</sup> William J. Drake exposes the lack of an exclusive multistakeholder definition in: *Multistakeholderism: External Limitations and Internal Limits*. MIND: Multistakeholder Internet Dialogue, Co:laboratory Discussion Paper Series No. 2, Internet Policymaking, 68-72, Berlin: Co:laboratory, 2011.

The Committee is composed of nine (9) representatives from the government, four (4) from the private sector, four (4) from the civil society, three (3) from the scientific and technological community and one (1) "representative of notorious knowledge on Internet issues." Representatives are elected for a three-year term and may be reelected. Elections take place through an electoral college composed of organizations representing each stakeholder group. In addition, in its decisions, CGI.br claims to seek participation of the average user and to value transparency and democracy in its procedures, providing participation grants for large magnitude events held by the Committee and access to the meeting's minutes, among other initiatives aiming more inclusion and participation.

In this essay, CGI.br is used as an example of the multistakeholder model and its relation to the engagement of Brazilian actors in IG by answering the following question: how does CGI.br utilize multistakeholderism to channel Internet-related stakeholders' participation in a way that ensures a legitimate space for all actors?

### III. Justification

Although governance models with civil society participation and international regulatory regimes with the States' interaction have already been largely studied by Brazilian Political Science scholars, multistakeholderism in the context of the Internet has scarcely been addressed by the country's academy. Brazil is extremely advanced in the Political Participation area. To mention two examples, the country has pioneered participatory budgeting initiatives and is acclaimed for its public health system integration with forums of social participation. Still, scholars have not yet consolidated a theoretical discussion on issues regarding Internet governance and participation models.

Nevertheless, Brazil has gained prominence in Internet discussions. Although overall Internet legislation is still modest, national attempts to construct regional norms are spreading. Brazil has mobilized efforts to approved in 2014 the Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet, a law built under a democratic and inclusive process, and is acclaimed for CGI.br, one of the earliest multistakeholder bodies dedicated to Internet issues.

Therefore, it is necessary to analyze how CGI.br works internally, especially considering its unique role as a deliberative arena and an Internet Governance actor. Moreover, a greater understanding of the representation dynamics within this body can bring new possibilities to the general debate on actors' participation in fundamentally heterogeneous environments, following the Brazilian tradition with social participation models.

### IV. Methodology

The research is an ongoing case study following a qualitative method. The analysis period begins with the 2003 Presidential Decree, which established CGI.br. The Committee's site, documents, and academic and news reports were analyzed. Parallel to documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted based on two types of questionnaires. The first was provided to elected representatives. The second was provided to people of influence in the Brazilian Internet environment. After collecting data from interviews, documents and news accounts, the information was systematized. Points of contact and divergence among respondents were analyzed in light of the evidence.

## V. Theoretical Background

Decisions tend to have multiple implications between actors and regions in the Internet ecosystem. New regulations arise and the abundance of geographically-scattered stakeholders creates a global multistakeholder ecosystem with diffused political authority.

A recent tool in world history, the Internet appears as a challenge to governments as it gathers many stakeholders working together toward the evolution of their environment. Technically, the maintenance of basic mechanisms for the Internet's operation is closely related to international capital private companies whose headquarters are based in developed countries. It is also related to multistakeholder institutions like the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) – a nonprofit organization located in the United States responsible for, among other functions, the distribution of Internet protocol (IP) numbers – and the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), a large open international community of network designers, operators and researchers concerned with the evolution of the Internet's architectural standards.

In the private capital arena, large corporations such as Google and Facebook create their own regulatory mechanisms without the existence of a unified legal rule for the Internet. Concurrently, the academy and technical bodies work in solving problems for the maintenance and network interoperability. Civil society, in turn, builds networks to pressure, affect and participate in the IG. All these various actors, considering also the influence of the States, act to ensure the functioning of the Internet ecosystem.

Based on the interaction between these various stakeholders, Internet governance can be defined in a simplified way as the administration of the Internet through a variety of stakeholders acting according to their own roles<sup>2</sup>. A more institutional setting was established in Tunis in 2005, at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), an event sponsored by the United Nations. WSIS defined Internet governance as the development and application by governments, the private sector and civil society, in their respective roles, of shared principles, norms, rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that shape the evolution and use of the Internet<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, this governance is extremely linked to multistakeholderism. More precisely, the multistakeholder model seeks to balance state power, traditional economic markets and civil society's and the technical community's interests.<sup>4</sup> The Tunis Agenda itself stated that the multistakeholder approach should be adopted at all levels of Internet governance whenever

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<sup>2</sup> See: CHENOU, Jean-Marie. *Classic Elite Theory, Global Democratic Governance and the Emergence of Global Elites. Is Internet governance a democratic process? Multistakeholderism and transnational elites*. IEPI – CRII Université de Lausanne. ECPR General Conference 2011 Section 35, Panel 4, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> Tunis Agenda 2005, paragraph 34.

<sup>4</sup> See: DENARDIS, Laura. *Internet Points of Control as Global Governance*. In Mark Raymond and Gordon Smith, eds., *Organized Chaos: Reimagining the Internet*. Centre for International Governance Innovation 2014, p. 13.

possible. The institutionalization and growth of multistakeholderism, therefore, is one of the phenomena that emerged with Internet governance<sup>5</sup>.

Even with the existence of consolidated debates in the academic field on the participation of civil society and the existence of Participative Institutions (IPs), it was within the Internet governance context that multistakeholderism began to be seen as a teleological goal and as an unusual, innovative and perhaps unique model (DeNardis; RAYMOND, 2013, p.1). Multistakeholderism is then seen as a solution to the legitimacy crisis of international and national institutions. It is a way to connect the ruled to the ruler and to turn decision-making into a more effective, transparent and legitimate processes. The model spread around supranational public speaking almost as a "lexical innovation" created by and for the Internet. Nevertheless, its concept remains open to multiple and different interpretations depending on the speaker.

The research follows Raymond and DeNardis multistakeholderism definition: two or more classes of actors engaged in a common enterprise concerning issues they regard as public in nature (Internet) and characterized by polyarchic authority relations constituted by procedural rules (electoral process and administrative norms)<sup>6</sup>.

It also examines CGI.br in the light of multistakeholderism's critics. Among them is the risk of facing the model as a value in itself rather than a possible way to better serve the public interest with transparency. Furthermore, the concept may serve as a distraction for political struggles regarding Internet decisions or even prevent the construction of accountable mechanisms.

In addition, the academy tends to focus on who can contribute in the Internet Governance discussions and not on who can actually influence Internet governance practice.<sup>7</sup> From this perspective, multistakeholderism can neutralize criticism on institutional actors deciding Internet issues. Therefore, while it may provide more space to civil society in the Internet governance political process, it does not guarantee the means for this stakeholder group to effectively influence decisions.

Moreover, it is possible that current multistakeholder arenas focus on the participation of stakeholders associated with predefined categories, neglecting the real interests defended by each representative leading them to participate. This means that affiliation or self-identification to a certain stakeholder group does not guarantee diversity of opinions, particularly among civil society, scholars and technical bodies, which have dispersed interests. Interests are scattered between organizations and even within one specific stakeholder group, which means, for instance, that an actor of Civil Society may sometimes defend a position quietly related to the private sector or that a representative of the private sector may defend a governmental

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<sup>5</sup> See: DRAKE, William. *Multistakeholderism: External Limitations and Internal Limits*. MIND: Multistakeholder Internet Dialog, Co:llaboratory Discussion Paper Series No. 1, Internet Policymaking, Berlin, Nairobi, p.68-72, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Laura DeNardis and Mark Raymond investigates multistakeholderism with IG focus in *Multistakeholderism: anatomy of an inchoate global institution*. International Theory. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> RAYMOND, Mark Raymond; DENARDIS, Laura. *Thinking Clearly about Multistakeholder Internet Governance*. GIGANET Paper, Bali, Indonesia, 2013, p.8.

position.organization<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, a multistakeholder environment should not only have participation of all stakeholders, but should also ensure that different views are effectively represented, in what Belli (2015) defines as a heterostakeholder environment. It is necessary to clearly understand how participation occurs within each multistakeholder environment and how it can be improved.

## VI. The Committee

CGI.br was created by an inter-ministerial decree of the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Communications in May 1995 during the first term of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC). CGI.br, since its creation, is responsible for the registration and administration of the domain names, activity before carried out by the State of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), Internet's birthplace in Brazil. Among other things, the Committee:

- Suggests rules and procedures related to Internet activities regulation;
- Recommends standards for technical and operational procedures;
- Establishes strategic directives related to the use and development of the Internet;
- Promotes studies and technical standards for network and services security;
- Collects, organizes and disseminates information on Internet services, including indicators and statistics;
- Establishes guidelines for the relation between government and society in the registration of Domain Names, the allocation of IP addresses (Internet Protocol) and the relevant administration of the country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) ".br";
- Attends national and international technical forums;
- Adopts administrative and operational procedures for the Internet management according to international standards accepted by global Internet bodies;
- Decides on any Internet service matters referred to by the Committee.

Some institutions were created to support activities assigned to CGI.br. The main one is the Brazilian Network Information Center (NIC.br) formally established in 2005 and usually referred to as "CGI.br's executive arm." NIC.br is a nonprofit civil organization that manages the Domain Name System (DNS) assignment, which had been relegated to FAPESP by CGI.br. Aside from managing the Committee's funds, this institution also coordinates the following agencies activities:

- Registro.br: responsible for the registration and maintenance of domain names that use .br and the distribution of IPv4 and IPv6 addresses and Autonomous System Numbers (ASN);
- CERT.br: center for security incident reports,, providing support in incidents response;

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<sup>8</sup> See: BELLI, Luca. *A heterostakeholder cooperation for sustainable Internet policy making*. Internet Policy Review, v.4, n.2, 2015.



- CEPTRO.br: responsible for projects related to network technologies and Internet operations aiming its development and continuity;
- CETIC.br: conducts research on Internet access and usage as input for public policies formulation and monitors the socio-economic impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT);
- CEWEB.br: disseminates and promotes the use of open Web technologies, fosters and promotes its development through research and new technologies experimentation;
- PTT.br: manages Internet Exchange Points (IXP), direct interconnection infrastructure between networks that improve Internet quality and makes networks stronger, with more resilience and with a geographic organization that reduces ASN's operating costs;
- SIMET: responsible for band quality measurements to support Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Autonomous Systems with information that enables constant improvements in Internet access providers;
- CGI.br is also responsible for hosting the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) office in Brazil.

NIC.br is composed of a General Assembly, which is formed by government representatives, elected counselors and former CGI.br's members, and responsible for the NIC.br's administration and decisions. An administrative council and an audit committee support the Center's activities. An Executive Board is established to manage NIC.br, ensuring that it complies with relevant laws, Internal Rules and decisions of the administrative council. Therefore, NIC.br provides background for CGI.br, supporting and implementing its decisions. The Center also hosts Working Groups that grant assistance regarding technical, administrative and operational decisions and recommendations made by the CGI.br.

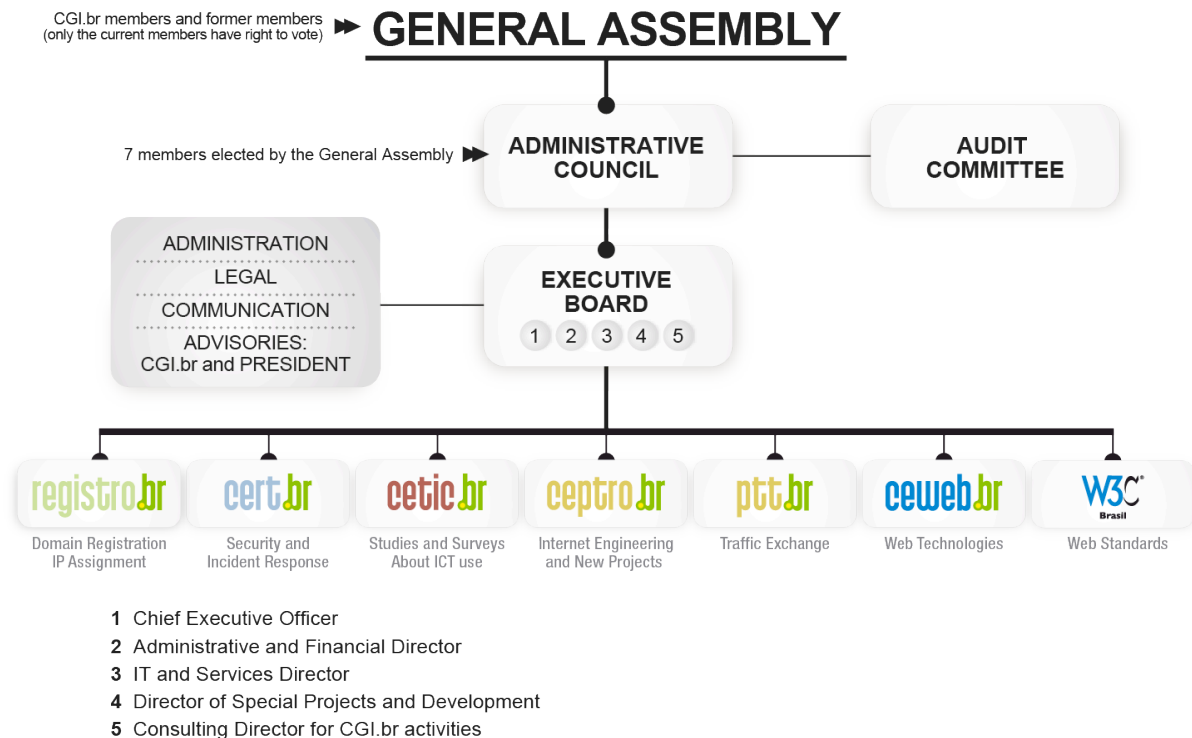


Figure 1. Source: NIC.br's webpage

The Committee's organizational structure, however, has not always been the same. Since its origin, representatives of various stakeholder groups composed CGI.br. Initially all representatives were appointed by the government and composed with a different numerical distribution. CGI.br was created in President FHC's government, a period of privatization in which the Internet was officially separated from the government, the Telebras system and the National Telecommunications Agency (ANATEL). At the same time, the economy began to stabilize in the country, the demand for home computers increased and the market opened. Moreover, democracy began to consolidate after the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, which boosted the popularity of participatory mechanisms like the Committee's multistakeholder model<sup>9</sup>.

Seven years later after CGI.br's creation, Luis Inácio "Lula" da Silva, elected in 2002, consolidated the Committee's current organization. President Lula, after reviewing with a team of experts the Internet governance ecosystem in the country, published the Presidential Decree No. 4829 on September 4, 2003, officially institutionalizing the Committee as a legal person

<sup>9</sup> Tomi Adachi provides an introduction to CGI.br's history in her PhD thesis: *Comitê Gestor da Internet no Brasil (CGI.br): uma evolução do sistema de informação nacional moldada socialmente*. 2011. University of São Paulo.

capable of managing the domain name registration fundraising and enabling the creation of NIC.br. Thus, the Decree reaffirmed CGI.br's original mission and proposed an institutional structure establishing new eligibility criteria for civil society's and academia's representatives, which would now pass through an election process. Later, the private sector also began electing their representatives. With this, the number of the Committee's counselors increased from 17 to the current number of 21: the government continued to appoint representatives of each Ministry involved, but other representatives were now chosen by an electoral process.

Since then, elections take place within the formation of an electoral college. Each entity interested in voting register in CGI.br identifying its stakeholder affiliation. Civil Society has a right to four seats, the Science and Technology Community to three, and the business sector to four (split between a. Internet service providers and Internet content providers, b. telecommunication infrastructure providers, c. computer, telecommunications and software industry members and d. private sector as an Internet user). When entities register to CGI.br's electoral process, the electoral commission analyzes the institution's documentation and veracity, approving its participation. Approved entities can appoint representatives and vote for those appointed. After the vote, representatives and their substitutes from each stakeholder group with the most votes are elected. Mandates last three years, after which reelection is allowed.

The government also appoints nine representatives and their substitutes from a. the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, b. the Ministry of Communications, c. the Ministry of Defense, d. the Ministry of Development, e. the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade, f. the Ministry of Planning, g. the Ministry of Budget and Management, h. from the National Telecommunications Agency (ANATEL), i. from the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development, j. from the National Council of Secretaries of Science, Technology and Innovation and k. from the Chief of Staff Office. The government also appoints a knowledgeable representative on Internet issues. This position is held by Demi Getschko, one of those responsible for the establishment of .br, a member of CGI.br since its inception and first Brazilian to join the Internet Hall of Fame.

## A. Why multistakeholderism?

It is important to highlight that the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee followed a multistakeholder model since its inception, which indicates that there existed a multi-participatory governance embryo in the country even before the creation of international bodies with similar political organization such as ICANN, created three years later. It is worth mentioning that the establishment of CGI.br's multistakeholderism was consensual and part of a natural process, and not an imposition by a group with a specific agenda for the government of the Internet.

Before the creation of a specific organization to deal with Internet issues, the Internet in the country was already ordered in a multistakeholder way. People from academia, the private sector and later from the government supported each other since the dawn of the Internet in Brazil. Markedly, this relationship was clear throughout the organization of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the Rio or Earth Summit.

In 1992, Brazil hosted the Earth Summit (ECO 92), a UN event that brought together representatives of one hundred and eight countries to decide measures for the reduction of environmental degradation. At the time, Civil Society (led by Carlos Afonso, NGOs articulator), the academic network that already ran the Internet in Brazil (led by FAPESP), the private sector

with its infrastructure basis and the Brazilian government came together to establish Internet connection for all spaces and participants at ECO 92. With that, Internet in Brazil gained an upgrade in infrastructure and network expansion in Rio de Janeiro. Moreover, the event opened dialogue between all stakeholders preparing the Brazilian multistakeholder path.<sup>10</sup>

Three years after the event, CGI.br was created based on the interaction of many people involved in the ECO 92 Internet connection process. The global Internet had 44 million users; in Brazil, the estimate was only 1.6 million. Today, Brazil has more than 90 million users and the overall number exceeds 3.1 billion. The Brazilian Internet Steering Committee was part of this development from the start, especially considering that many actors who participated in CGI.br's construction process remain on the Committee today.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, the Marco Civil established in its article 24 the essential use of multistakeholder, transparent, collaborative and democratic governance mechanisms regarding the Internet, fortifying CGI.br as a main actor with legal authority and strengthening multistakeholderism as the basic model in the country's Internet governance ecosystem.

## VII. Interview appointments

Seven interviews were conducted with individuals related to CGI.br. Among them are elected counselors from the civil society, the private sector and the technical and scientific community, besides from a scholar militant on Internet issues, which has no formal role in CGI.br and government representatives. For privacy purposes, names and personal characteristics will not be given.

The interviewees answered a questionnaire regarding CGI.br functioning and their relationship with the Committee. Specifically, the following considerations guided the interviews: the formation of CGI.br's Electoral College, the stakeholder distribution in this arena, the communication and accountability mechanisms between elected counselors and their electoral base and the overall functioning of the Committee. The answers brought important contributions to the proper understanding of the participation within CGI.br and are briefly presented as follows. .

When asked about the last electoral process and the Electoral College established, the counselors elected in 2013 gave similar responses. The representative of the private sector is in his third term. Therefore, he has an extensive network and a consolidated support base. He stated that the private sector Electoral College tends to be cohesive, excepting the seat reserved to the private sector as Internet user position because the number of companies in this category is large, which makes for fiercer elections.

Civil society's and scientific community's counselors also noted problematic and sensitive points regarding the Electoral College. Any nonprofit institution that registers in CGI.br may be entitled to vote at the Civil Society category, even if it is not tied to the Internet issues. This

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<sup>10</sup> Peter T. Knight introduces Internet history in Brazil in his book: *The Internet in Brazil: Origins, Strategy, Development, and Governance*. AuthorHouse, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Virgílio de Almeida, CGI.br's counselor and Secretary for Information Technology Policies in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, describes CGI.br's development in the article: *CGI.br's 20 years celebration*, available at: <http://www.cgi.br/publicacao/celebracao-dos-20-anos-do-cgi/>

creates a very large and dispersed electoral college. Internet militant entities get the same weight as other entities, which in turn sign up at CGI.br only for the elections and remain uninvolved with the Committee and with Internet themes after voting. Thus, besides the large number of approved entities for the election, there is a dispersion of interests within the Electoral College. Hence, there is no institutional guarantee that the elected will effectively represent the active civil society on Internet issues in Brazil.

The scientific community Electoral College had only sixteen registered institutions in 2013. The vast majority of these institutions are linked to technical issues and IT courses. From the perspective of the scholar interviewed, who has a degree in liberal arts, this technicality of the scientific community hinders access and representation in the areas of academy that do not relate directly with computing but that are inserted in the Internet governance debate. However, it is important to highlight that in the last election an academic representative without a technical background was elected. The counselor elected by this stakeholder group, however, said exactly the opposite. For him, the scientific community in CGI.br is not as technical as it could be. As an example, the interviewee claimed that among the four representatives of this group, only he is effectively involved in computer networks.

From the perspective of the interviewee, although this is not a problem for the current CGI.br's formation, it could become problematic without a formal requirement for a strictly technical staff in the Committee. Furthermore, the interviewee stated that the Brazilian presence in more technical bodies such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) is not as significant as it is in wider forums like ICANN.

When asked about forms of communication and accountability between counselors and their electoral base, the answers were consensual. All directors have an active presence in mailing lists from which to distribute CGI.br activities or in an occasional physical meeting. The civil society's counselor coordinates its activities in CGI.br through contact with organizations and groups involved with Internet issues. The private sector's counselor participates on boards of some IT associations. The Technical and Scientific Community's counselor publishes information in mailing lists and receives demands from centers and technical societies.

Yet, it is noteworthy that although most mailing lists are open, some stakeholder groups and individuals may find it difficult to receive feedback from counselors. Specifically, the scholar from social sciences said she was not part of the technical community counselor's communication network. Therefore, it is noteworthy that accountability within CGI.br depends more on the counselor will than on institutional obligations.

When asked about the decision-making process in the Committee, all interviewees praise the use of consensus for reaching decisions. As predicted, resolutions take longer to occur, but have a higher coercive force through an extensive process of discussion with influence of all stakeholders. Through consensus, the arguments are exhausted and agreement is conceived. One interviewee quotes as an example of how consensus can be time-consuming but beneficial, pointing to CGI.br's Decalogue<sup>12</sup>. The Decalogue is made of ten guiding principles for the governance and use of the Internet in Brazil. It was formulated after a year and a half consensus-based effort. After its consolidation, the Decalogue was crucial and effectively influenced Internet-use in the country and served as the basis for the Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet (Marco Civil).

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<sup>12</sup>The Decalogue is available in English at: <http://www.cgi.br/resolucoes-2009-003-en/> <access in September, 2015>.

However, it's important to highlight that the Civil Society counselor stated that more communication on the progress of discussions in CGI.br is important. For her, even if discussion on a certain topic is lengthy (such as the Committee's position on Internet.org in Brazil, for example), it is important to communicate the Committee's stage of discussion and the positions of each stakeholder group.

On the quantitative division of chairs for each stakeholder group, interviewees raised various points. There was consensus that the current number of 21 counselors is enough to ensure operability and speed in the meetings and decisions. Still, a point was raised with respect to the possibility of increasing the amount of Ministries represented in the Committee. For example, the Ministry of Justice (major interlocutor of the Brazilian Civil Rights Framework for the Internet) and the Ministry of Culture (involved with copyright and digital inclusion rights) are not represented. On the other hand, non-governmental stakeholders tend to believe that the government's presence is already sufficient. Thus, instead of expanding the government's chairs, it is suggested an exchange of Ministries represented.

When asked about participation in CGI.br and its relation to individuals with prior knowledge and expertise in IG, interviewees agreed on the importance of including the average user in the Committee's activities. CGI.br already promotes open activities and encourages users training in Internet issues. The counselors, recognizing the technical nature of Internet governance, stressed the importance the Committee gives to new generations training.

Finally, one of the most critical issues involving the participation of stakeholders in CGI.br concerns the lack of transparency for Committee meetings, as they are not broadcasted or opened for general participation. When asked about reasons for this, both the scholar and the civil society counselor stated they did not see reasons for closing the meetings. Instead, the meetings should allow for open participation, though a right to speak or vote is not necessary. However, both pointed to obstacles, including that the presence of outsiders would generate unnecessary pressure on some stakeholders when making certain decisions. The private sector representative affirmed the biggest obstacle to open meetings was their highly administrative nature. There would be little value, he argued, to opening an intrinsically administrative meeting to the public. Nevertheless, he pointed out that occasionally CGI.br promotes open and even itinerant meetings to discuss specific issues. He suggested that the meetings were less administrative, and more conducive to broadcast.

The Technical and Scientific Community representative claimed that meetings should remain closed. For him, a closed meeting did not indicate lack of transparency or accountability, but that closed meetings in his sector did not generate a feeling of exclusion. However, he said that this discussion was constantly resurfacing, which shows that some stakeholders do not accept the majority's decision to close meetings. Another counselor highlighted that the openness of the meetings would make the real decisions to be taken outside the formal CGI.br's meetings: in coffee breaks, phone calls or still closed reunions.

## A. Multistakeholderism in CGI.br: pros and cons

Through the analysis of the interviews conducted and the reading of texts related to CGI.br, it was revealed that the governance model adopted by the Committee is beneficial to the Brazilian Internet ecosystem. CGI.br has coordinated an excellent service both nationally and internationally. Still, there are points of disagreement that need to be addressed for further development of the Committee. The points raised during the interviews are listed below:

- The electoral process for the Board of Counselors is commendable for its transparency and involvement of all stakeholders. However, it is necessary to debate questions regarding the characteristics and activeness of civil society entities with a right to vote, as well as the ones from the private sector as Internet user and the establishment of a compulsorily vacant position for a representative who is truly involved with computer networks;
- Overall, counselors have wide communication channels with their electoral base, particularly the civil society group. Nevertheless, each counselor has its own dynamic and its own forms of communication, which distributes accountability and makes it unlikely many will receive feedback from CGI.br representatives. Moreover, there are no mandatory transparency tools for elected counselors. Thus, it is possible that a representative can stray and follow its own interests;
- Consensus is commendable in CGI.br decisions. The need for a collective decision-making process exhausts arguments and makes all compels stakeholders to follow final decisions;
- An expansion in the number of counselors is not ideal. However, it is possible to think of a reorganization of the Ministries represented in the Committee;
- CGI.br engages the average user to contemplate Internet issues. The existence of the Internet Forum in Brazil<sup>13</sup> (an annual event that provides grants for participants) is a good example of this effort. However, the country needs to expand digital inclusion in order to increase participation;
- The country's political involvement in Internet governance is extremely well-articulated and recognized internationally. However, Brazil needs to consolidate its technical bodies and R&D research to achieve the same level of political influence in the solution of Internet practical and technical problems;
- The CGI.br's internal division over whether meetings should or should not be open for general participation suggests that the Committee should keep administrative meetings restricted to counselors and to allow for a greater number of fully open meetings on specific themes for those who wish to participate in person or virtually. Thus, interested parties will have other means to engage and monitor CGI.br's dynamics rather than rely on the dissemination of the meeting's minutes;
- CGI.br continuously innovates its procedures. In early 2015, the Committee released the Internet Observatory in Brazil,<sup>14</sup> a permanent and systematic observation, analysis and documentation of public policies, legislation, practices and events concerning the Internet in Brazil from a multistakeholder perspective. The platform is a collaborative space for monitoring news and opinions on Internet issues and represents an approximation between the Committee and the Internet community. In addition, CGI.br promotes the Internet Governance School (EGI),<sup>15</sup> a short course to teach students about Internet issues.

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<sup>13</sup> Forum's site: <http://forumdaInternet.cgi.br/en/> <access in September, 2015>.

<sup>14</sup> Observatory's site: <http://observatoriodaInternet.br/> <access in September, 2015>.

<sup>15</sup> Internet Governance School's site: <http://egi.nic.br/> <access in September, 2015>.

## B. CGI.br and multistakeholderism critics

Considering multistakeholderism critics presented in section 5, it is important to highlight how CGI.br faces these governance model problems. The risk of facing the model as a value in itself rather than a possible way to better serve the public interest with transparency is real in the Committee. However, it is remarkable that CGI.br is increasingly working to create a more transparent and democratic environment, publishing its meeting's minutes and striving to be open to demands from all stakeholders. Moreover, Brazil formally legalized multistakeholderism with Marco Civil, creating a real path for transparent and democratic Internet Governance in the country including throughout CGI.br.

It is also noteworthy that multistakeholderism in Brazil does not mean exactly the same thing abroad. Multistakeholderism may be seen as a model highly linked to the interaction between stakeholders with interest in a specific business. In Brazil, however, the translation of the word multistakeholderism, *multissetorialismo* or multi-sectoralism, is linked more to the interaction between stakeholders in a shared environment – without the corporate denotation the term may have in other languages. This governance model is widely adopted in the country not only in Internet governance issues, but also in Community People's Councils, participatory budgeting initiatives and Environment Committees. Therefore, the Brazilian multistakeholderism as a multi-participative and open-for-all model does not avoid accountable mechanisms or serve as a distraction for political struggles regarding the Internet. It is indeed a space of interaction between all interested parties that is consolidated around different thematic areas in the country.

Therefore, CGI.br still struggles to guarantee the means for all stakeholders to effectively influence decisions. However, the Committee is in the right direction to enhance participation in Internet governance in Brazil.

## VIII. Conclusion

The Brazilian Steering Committee analysis exposes the multistakeholder governance model in practice. Though with a few flaws and omissions, it has made many advances around participation and stakeholders' inclusion. CGI.br brings institutional and policy innovations that provide greater participation of stakeholders in Internet decisions. This participation alone does not guarantee an effective influence of all stakeholders and transparency in Internet governance in Brazil. However, it opens a dialogue between all parties included.