

**Open-Ended Working Group on the security of and in the use of
information and communications technologies 2021–2025 (OEWG)**

**Landscape of information and communications technologies capacity-building
programmes and initiatives within and outside the United Nations at the global and
regional levels**

Contribution by DiploFoundation

10 November 2023

DiploFoundation expresses its support for the work of the OEWG 2021-2025 and continuous efforts to ensure the participation of all interested stakeholders in the work of the OEWG, including this invitation from the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs to share the views on the landscape of information and communication technologies (ICTs) capacity building programmes and initiatives within and outside the United Nations at the global and regional levels.

As a nonprofit organisation, Diplo has provided capacity building to support small and developing countries to represent themselves and to meaningfully contribute to international discussions for more than 20 years. Diplo has provided neutral, unbiased capacity building in internet governance and cyber-related topics to over 200 countries and territories worldwide, as well as international and regional organisations and representatives of relevant stakeholder groups.

As mentioned in our previous contribution, Diplo strongly supports the mapping exercise to ensure a holistic approach to capacity building, appropriate capacity development methodologies, and the cross-pollination of knowledge and experience across thematic and organisational silos. It is vital that the OEWG avoid duplicating the role of any existing regional and global capacity-building mechanisms and programmes, but rather enhances their outreach to local partners and beneficiaries, and fosters better coordination of donors and implementers.

We at Diplo assist small and developing states, the diplomatic community, the private sector, civil society, and the tech community **to participate efficiently in global policy processes**

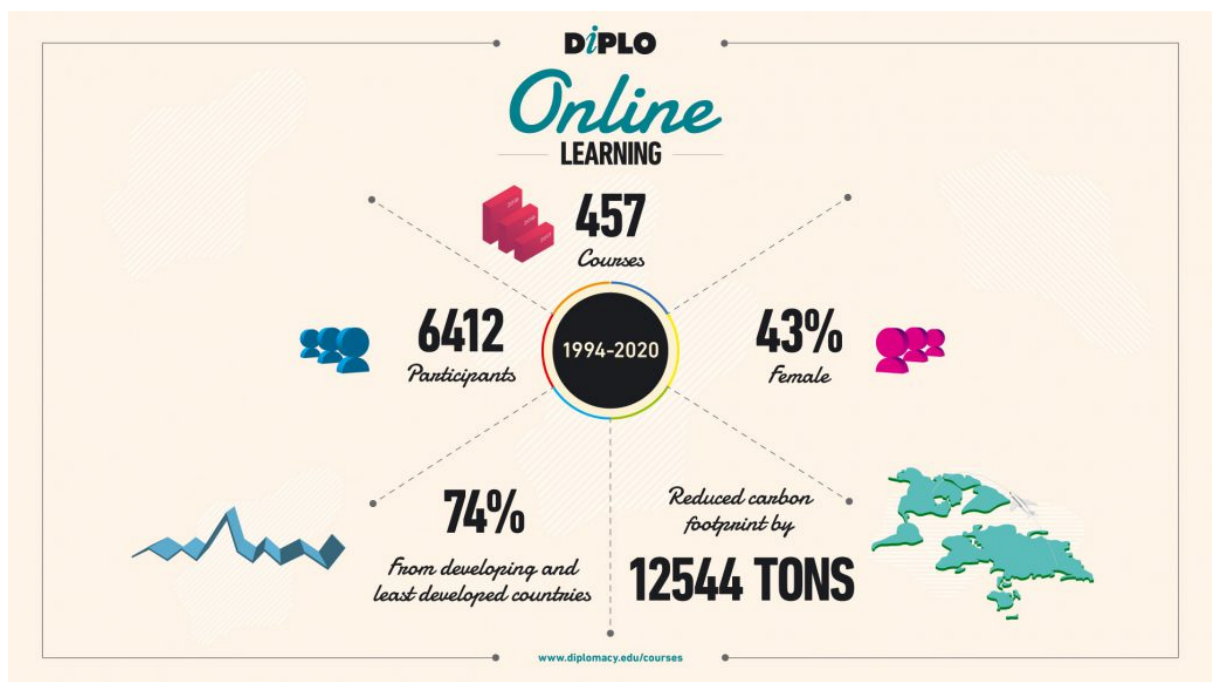
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and **shaping the overall evolution of cybersecurity, cyber diplomacy, internet governance and digital policy.**

For the last 20 years, Diplo has implemented this mission through several workstreams:

1. Certificate and accredited courses focused on cybersecurity, cyber diplomacy, internet governance and digital policy

Diplo provides a diverse range of [online courses focused on diplomacy and digital policy](#), customised for professionals in the domains of international relations (diplomats, civil servants, NGOs, and governmental officials), academics, journalists, students and more. In 2022, we expanded our [course catalogue](#), adding shorter courses that dive deeper into particular topics, and in total last year, we offered **28** certificate courses on topics including but not limited to bilateral diplomacy, cybersecurity, cybersecurity diplomacy, data governance in the digital economy, digital diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, internet technology and policy – challenges and solutions, and an introduction to internet governance.



As a result, over **7,000** diplomats and officials from **202** countries and territories have attended our courses since 1994 (Diplo's [alumni map](#)). Due to physical remoteness and limited human resources, **small island states** [find Diplo's online training](#) particularly useful. Diplo has become the unofficial diplomatic training academy of small island states. And many of our alumni have [returned](#) to their countries and made a real difference.

In addition to our certificate courses, Diplo conducts executive courses and tailored training sessions for diplomats and the international community. Some example include:



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- The [pilot course Digital Diplomacy in 2022](#), for more than **80 Namibian ambassadors**. The training was supported by Namibia's Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, partnered with Malta's Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade (MFET). The 10-day intensive training in digital diplomacy tackled a broad range of issues, from cybersecurity and human rights to geopolitics and emerging technologies
- [The course for the Rwandan diplomatic corps in October 2022](#), which included more than **50 participants, consisting of Rwandan diplomats and government officials**. The training, sponsored by Malta's MFET and supported by Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, looked at the impact of digitalisation on diplomacy and analysed the main trends in geopolitics, major negotiations, and the use of practical tools.
- **Training for Mexican diplomats in cooperation with the MFA's Instituto Matias Romero**. Since 2004, over **700** diplomats from Mexico have attended Diplo's online training courses, with **60** participants enrolled in 2022.
- **Training for African parliamentarians, in cooperation with the African Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance (APNIG)**. The training was delivered to **25** MPs as part of the PanAfrican Parliamentary Network on Internet Governance, and included sessions on digital infrastructure, cybersecurity and cybercrime, and the digital economy.
- **Cybersecurity diplomacy training for Women in Cyber fellows to support attendance at the OEWG meeting in 2022**. We also collaborated with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to deliver the Cybersecurity Diplomacy online course to **30** participants as part of the Women in International Security and Cyberspace (WIC) fellowship. The fellowship is a joint initiative of the governments of Australia, the UK, Canada, the Netherlands, and New Zealand.
- **Ten years of cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** in delivering the bi-annual 12-week [online diploma course in Humanitarian Diplomacy](#).
- **Cybersecurity diplomacy with the Organization of American States (OAS)**. Through Diplo's office in the USA, we initiated a new partnership with the OAS, contributing to their capacity-building efforts in digital policy for member states. After a successful run of the first course on Digital Policy and Diplomacy 2020, and following positive feedback from course participants, the course on cybersecurity diplomacy was offered in 2022 to a group of **20** participants from **13** OAS member states.
- **Training for Internet Society fellows**. In 2022, Diplo delivered training sessions to the Internet Society's vibrant network of youth champions – Early Career Fellows and IGF Youth Ambassadors – who especially learned how to engage in policy processes at their local or regional levels.
- **Development of knowledge modules with the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE)**. We worked with the GFCE on developing knowledge modules for capacity development for policymakers in cybersecurity. The knowledge modules – which can be followed as a self-paced course as well – cover (but are not limited to) key areas aligned with the GFCE Global Agenda for Cyber Capacity Building.

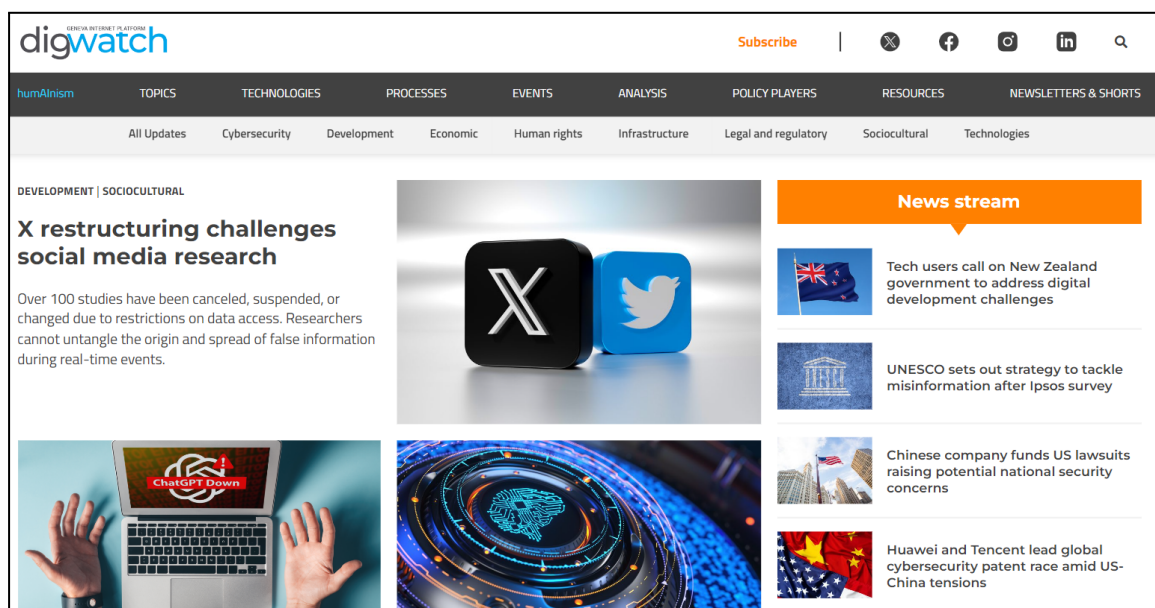
More about Diplo's courses and training projects can be found in the [2022 Diplo Annual Report](#).

2. Research projects, policy dialogues and studies focused on topics such as digital transformation, cybersecurity, and international cooperation

Our largest ongoing project is the [Geneva Internet Platform \(GIP\)](#), an online resource that engenders an inclusive dialogue for the advancement of public policy in the digital world. The GIP, supported by the Swiss authorities and operated by Diplo, serves as a neutral and inclusive space for policy discussions an:

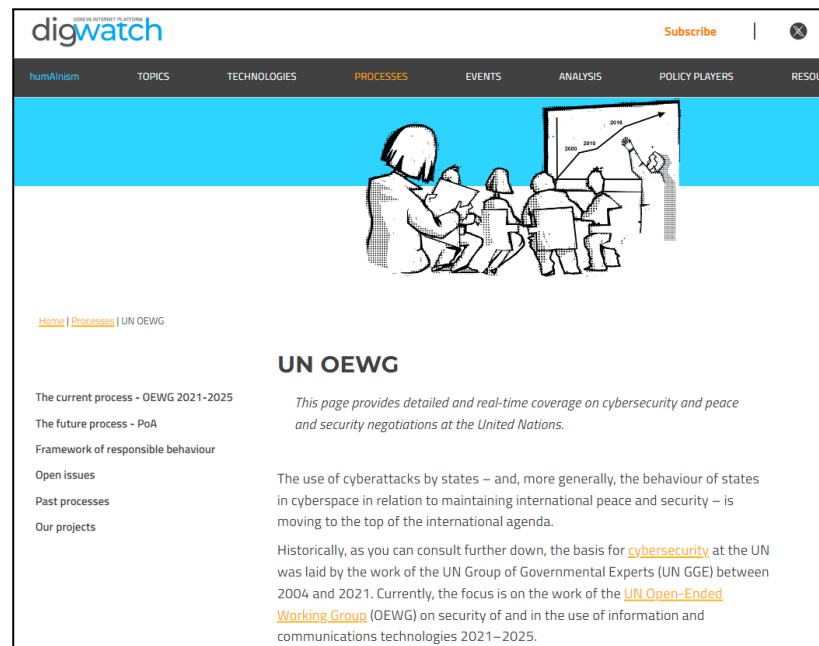
- **facilitates Geneva-based collaboration** among diverse communities, including diplomacy, academia, policy, technology, non-governmental entities, and business;
- **provides global digital policy monitoring and analysis**, conducts evidence-based research, and delivers timely analysis of complex developments in the field;
- **promotes capacity-building programmes that make digital policy more inclusive and effective**, focusing on strengthening the participation of small and developing countries in Geneva-based digital policy processes.

Diplo also operates the [Digital Watch Observatory](#), a research and analysis initiative that produces monthly briefings and newsletters on topics related to digital policy as part of the GIP.



The Digital Watch Observatory.

The [dedicated OEWG page](#) at the Digital Watch Observatory.



Diplo also offers the **Digital Watch Monthly newsletter** – a summary of primary digital policy trends, key developments per thematic area, meticulous analysis of current issues, and significant dialogues, including the updates from the UN OEWG sessions (e.g. [Digital Watch newsletter – Issue 78 – April 2023](#) with updates from the fourth substantive session).

In addition, Diplo is [integrating AI into the field of diplomacy](#), particularly looking at the impact of AI on reporting, negotiations, forecasting, and other diplomatic functions. With its AI-powered reporting app, **DiploAI**, Diplo offers a specialised, high-performance tool for diplomatic use cases. In 2023, DiploAI was successfully integrated in the analysis and reporting of a [UN Security Council \(UN SC\) debate](#), the [78th Session of the UN General Assembly \(UNGA 78\)](#), the [2023 UN Internet Governance Forum \(IGF\)](#) and the [2023 Global Cybersecurity Forum](#). **DiploAI reporting can be particularly beneficial for small and developing countries that do not have the human and institutional capacity to participate meaningfully in numerous UN processes and meetings.**

In 2020, Diplo launched the **Geneva Digital Atlas** – the [most comprehensive mapping](#) available of digital policy actors and the internet governance scene in Geneva. With detailed insights into 46 different Geneva-based actors, the atlas analyses digital policy processes and catalogues core digital policy instruments and featured events. The atlas was updated in 2022 and launched as Geneva Digital Atlas 2.0 in November 2022. Another update of the atlas is planned for Q4 of 2023, with a printed version planned for January 2024.

Separately, Diplo conducts tailored studies in cooperation with organisations to facilitate capacity development. The examples include, among many others:

- **Building African digital foreign policy and diplomacy.** Throughout 2022, we made it a priority to advance Africa's digital development needs. Funded by the Swiss FDFA, Diplo provided an overview of Africa's digital diplomacy in the study titled [Stronger digital voices from Africa: Building African digital foreign policy and diplomacy](#) (also available in [French](#)). The study offers a holistic examination of national, regional, and continental interests in the digital realm and the extent to which these are represented in global digital policy processes. We also investigated the impact of tech developers, businesses, local communities, and other experts on international digital policy.
- **Mapping the intersection between digital developments and the environment –** a [joint study](#) with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung USA. The resulting report evaluates current regulations and channels of cooperation among Germany, the USA, and the EU, focusing on greenhouse gas emissions, rare earths, and e-waste.
- **Stepping up the engagement of ARIN stakeholders in standardisation processes –** a [report](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)) based on a project financed by the ARIN Community Grant Program to promote greater awareness of the importance of international digital standards across the ARIN region, emphasising developing countries.

3. Projects in cooperation with partners to develop capacities

Diplo cooperates with diverse partners to strengthen the capacities of small and developing countries, as well as relevant stakeholder groups (civil society, the private sector, and others) to facilitate their participation in global digital policy and development processes.

Some examples of such projects include:

- **Geneva Dialogue on Responsible Behavior in Cyberspace** – an [international process](#) established in 2018 by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and implemented by Diplo with support of the Republic and State of Geneva, C4DT, Swisscom and UBS. In 2023, the Geneva Dialogue addresses the implementation of agreed cyber norms and CBMs by relevant stakeholders (such as the private sector, civil society, academia, and the technical community) and, through regular dialogue with such actors, develops the **Geneva Manual** – a comprehensive guide on the implementation of cyber norms by non-state actors. The inaugural edition of the manual focused on norms related to supply chain security and the responsible reporting of ICT vulnerabilities, will be published on **7 December 2023**.

The Geneva Dialogue facilitates capacity development by assisting non-state stakeholders in contributing to the implementation of voluntary norms by providing specific guidance in the form of the Geneva Manual; and by strengthening the awareness of such stakeholders in existing international cyber processes, including the OEWG, implementation practices and their respective roles, and their capacities for mutual dialogue and cooperation on securing cyberspace.



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- **Cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC): Developing capacities of small and developing countries for achieving Agenda 2030.** Our project work strongly focused on Agenda 2030, reinforced by integrating new SDG-related modules into courses and encouraging students to tackle related issues in their work and studies.
- **Strengthening civil society's participation in digital policy processes.** Through cooperation with the Ford Foundation, Diplo assists civil society actors to participate meaningfully in policy shaping and impactful decision-making, while prioritising gender issues both as a topic and to support gender inclusion among these participants from small and developing countries.

We would be happy to provide any further information to proactively support the mapping exercise. We once again would like to express our support to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs in this initiative.