SWING
SCHOOL ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE

20-24 April 2026
Bruges, Belgium

Front façade of the UNU-CRIS building (Bruges), venue of the SWING School 2026.

SWING – School on Internet Governance 2026 will take place in Bruges, Belgium, from **20 to 24 April 2026**. Hosted by the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS), SWING is designed for graduate students, early-career researchers, ICT professionals, policymakers, and anyone interested in the field. The program aims to strengthen participants' understanding of the actors, processes, and policy challenges, shaping the governance of the internet and digital technologies. Through a combination of expert-led lectures and interactive group work, participants collaboratively analyse key governance issues and develop policy recommendations to be presented during the program's final sessions.

SWING – School on Internet Governance is a member of the [IGF Dynamic Coalition on Schools on Internet Governance (DC-SIG)](#).

SWING 2026 Theme: Digital Sovereignty

The 2026 edition will focus on **Digital Sovereignty** — a timely and fast-evolving concept at the crossroads of Internet governance, geopolitics, economics, innovation, and fundamental rights. Broadly speaking, digital sovereignty concerns the **ability of states, regions, organisations, communities, and individuals to make autonomous choices in the digital sphere**: how data is generated, stored, accessed, and governed; how critical infrastructures are built, secured, and maintained; how strategic technologies are developed and regulated; and how dependencies on external actors are managed.

Across the week, participants will examine digital sovereignty both as a **policy objective** (resilience, security, competitiveness, strategic autonomy) and as a **normative challenge** (openness and interoperability of the Internet, human rights protections, inclusive governance, and international cooperation). Particular attention will be devoted to concrete domains where sovereignty claims are most visible — from cybersecurity and AI to semiconductors, undersea cables, and satellite infrastructures — and to the trade-offs that emerge between protection, innovation, and openness.

Lectures and seminars will be delivered by internationally renowned scholars and experts, combining academic depth with policy relevance and practical insight. The programme also includes interactive group work throughout the week, culminating in policy recommendations presented during the final sessions.

Core seminars and lectures

- **Introduction to Digital Sovereignty (seminar)**
  Jamal Shahin - VUB, UVA, UNU-CRIS; Julia Pohle - WZB; BSoG, CNRS France; Sophie Hoogenboom - UNU-CRIS, VUB; Chris Mondini - ICANN.

- **From Governance to Sovereignty (seminar)**
  Jamal Shahin - VUB, UVA, UNU-CRIS; Mauro Santaniello - University of Salerno, UNU-CRIS; Julia Pohle - WZB, BSoG, CNRS France.

- **EuroStack: European Digital Sovereignty (seminar)**
  Paul Timmers - KU Leuven, European University Cyprus; Niels ten Oever - University of Amsterdam.

- **Digital Sovereignty and Competitiveness**
  Orsolya Gulyas - Brussels School of Governance (BSoG).

- **The Impact of Digital Sovereignty on the Internet**
  Azadeh Akbari - Center for critical computational studies, Goethe University Frankfurt

- **Digital Sovereignty and Fundamental Rights**
  Marianne Franklin - University of Groningen.

- **Indigenous Data Sovereignty**
  Claudia Padovani - University of Padova.

- **Digital Sovereignty and Undersea Cables**
  Kavé Salamatian - Polytech Annecy-Chambéry.

- **Digital Sovereignty and Semiconductors**
  Linda Monsees - Institute of International Relations Prague.

- **Digital Sovereignty and Artificial Intelligence**
  Nicola Palladino - University of Salerno.

- **Digital Sovereignty and LEOs (Low Earth Orbit satellites)**
  Berna Akçalı Gür - Queen Mary University of London, UNU-CRIS.

- **Internet Governance: Conflicts and Cooperation**
  Jan Aart Scholte - Leiden University

- **The Geopolitics of Digital Sovereignty (seminar)**
  Kseniia Ermoshina - CNRS, France; Grace X. Yang - Freie Universität Berlin

  Lecturer(s) to be confirmed for the following sessions:

- **Digital Sovereignty and Cybersecurity**

Key dates

- **13 March 2026** — Applications deadline, including fee payment
- **20–24 April 2026** — SWING 2026 (Bruges, UNU-CRIS)

Registration

To register, applicants will be asked to submit:

1. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
2. **Completed application/registration form (template/model)**
3. **Copy of a valid ID document** (passport or national identity card)
4. **Proof of payment of the participation fee** (receipt/confirmation)

Please provide all required documents via email to shoogenboom@cris.unu.edu

Participation fee and what it covers

The participation fee is **800,00 €** and includes:

- **Registration costs**
- **Meals provided during the School programme**
- **Social event(s)**

The participation fee does **not** include:

- **Accommodation**
  Although students are required to provide for their own accommodation, SWING has made an agreement with a local hotel that is willing to provide a reduced fare for the students of the school. Details will be provided after a successful registration.
- **Dinners**

Participation fee payment

Registration is completed once the participation fee has been paid and the required documentation has been submitted. Applicants should include **proof of payment** (receipt/confirmation) with their registration materials. Detailed payment instructions — including the **fee amount, payment method, bank details/IBAN, payment reference, and deadlines** are communicated in the official downloadable registration form.

Scientific Committee

Co-directors: Mauro Santaniello (University of Salerno, UNU-CRIS) and Jamal Shahin (VUB, UVA, UNU-CRIS).

Scientific Advisory Board: Andrea Beccalli (ICANN), Dennis Broeders (Leiden University), Edoardo Celeste (Dublin City University), Philippe De Lombaerde (UNU-CRIS), Sophie Hoogenboom (UNU-CRIS, VUB), Robin Mansell (London School of Economics), Francesca Musiani (CNRS France), Riccardo Nanni (CNRS France), Nicola Palladino (University of Salerno) and Dennis Redeker (University of Bremen).

Organizing Committee: Sophie Hoogenboom (UNU-CRIS, VUB), Carlos Andres Fonseca Diaz (Ghent University, UNU-CRIS), Armando Antonio Ferrara (University of Salerno), Chiara Spiniello (University of Salerno), Stephanie Teeuwen (VUB).

Programme and [Speakers](#)

SWING 2026 – School on Internet Governance
Programme at a Glance

Time	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
10:00 - 11:30	**Opening ceremony** (Gemma Carolillo - Deputy Head of Next Generation Internet Unit at DG CONNECT | European Commission; Philippe De Lombaerde - Director of UNU-CRIS; Virgilio D'Antonio - Rector of the University of Salerno; Chris Mondini - ICANN)	**Introduction to Digital Sovereignty** (Jamal Shahin - VUB, UVA, UNU-CRIS; Julia Pohle - WZB; BSoG, CNRS France; Sophie Hoogenboom - UNU-CRIS, VUB; Chris Mondini - ICANN)	**DS and Cybersecurity**	**The Geopolitics of DS** (Ksenia Ermoshina - CNRS France; Grace X. Yang - Freie Universität Berlin)	**DS and AI** (Nicola Palladino - University of Salerno)
11:30 - 13:00	**From Governance to Sovereignty** (Jamal Shahin - VUB, UVA, UNU-CRIS; Mauro Santaniello - University of Salerno, UNU-CRIS; Julia Pohle - WZB; BSoG, CNRS France)	**The Impact of DS on the Internet** (Azadeh Akbari - Center for critical computational studies, Goethe University Frankfurt)	**DS and Competitiveness** (Orsolya Gulyas - BSoG)	**DS and LEOs** (Berna Akçalı Gür - Queen Mary University of London, UNU-CRIS)	**DS and Semiconductors** (Linda Monsees - Institute of International Relations Prague)
13:00 - 14:30	*Lunch*	*Lunch*	*Lunch*	*Lunch*	*Lunch*
14:30 - 16:00	**Internet Governance: Conflicts and Cooperation** (Jan Aart Scholte - Leiden University)	**EuroStack: European Digital Sovereignty** (Paul Timmers - KU Leuven, European University Cyprus; Niels ten Oever - University of Amsterdam)	**DS and Fundamental Rights** (Marianne Franklin - University of Groningen)	**DS and Undersea Cables** (Kavé Salamatian - Polytech Annecy-Chambéry)	**Groupwork 4: Presenting policy recommendations**
16:00 - 16:30	*Coffee Break*	*Coffee Break*	*Coffee Break*	*Coffee Break*	*Closing session*
16:30 - 18:00	**Groupwork 1: Mapping IG actors, issues and venues**	**Groupwork 2: Mapping definitions of Digital Sovereignty**	**Groupwork 3: Drafting policy recommendations**	**Indigenous Data Sovereignty** (Claudia Padovani - University of Padova)	*Social event*

For further information about the School and registration, please contact Sophie Hoogenboom at shoogenboom@cris.unu.edu