RIGF RUSSIAN INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

MEETING REPORT

RUSSIAN INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM 2026

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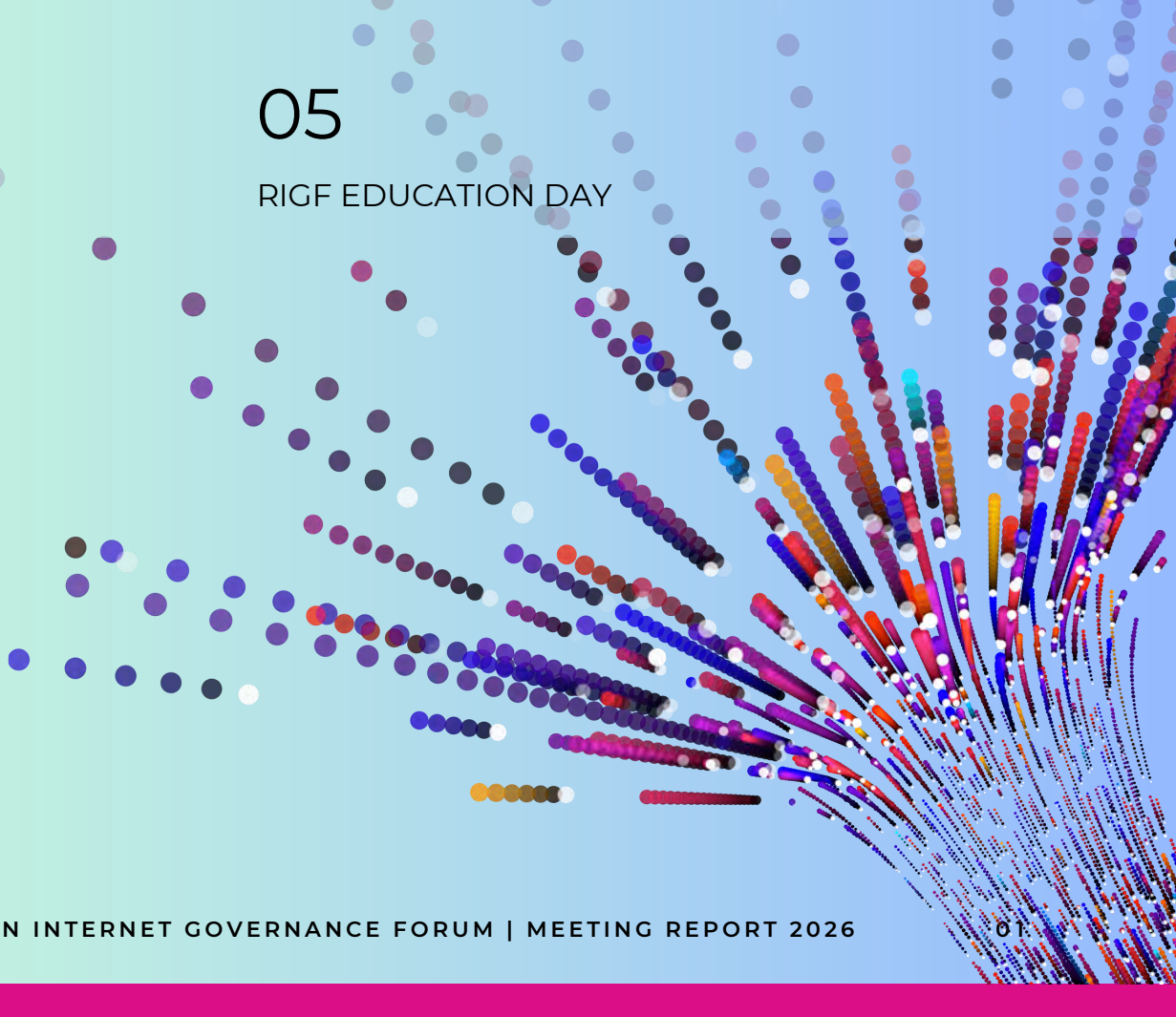


ABOUT RIGF

The 16th Russian Internet Governance Forum was held on April 7-8, 2026

Russian Internet Governance Forum is an event where all professional views can be brought to attention and discussed. The aim is to find a consensus between government agencies, telecommunications industry, businesses and society, leading to successful results in Russia and worldwide. With many ideas expressed during previous events turning into hands- on projects for Russian and international organizations, this year's Forum became a starting point for many collaborations for all RIGF attendees.

The Forum was held in a hybrid format: over the course of two days, more than **600 participants** attended the venue in person, while the number of **online participants exceeded 5,000**. Over the two days, the Forum hosted **9 sessions**, featuring presentations by **67 experts**.

ORGANIZERS

COORDINATION CENTER
FOR TLD RU/РФ

Coordination Center for TLD .RU/.РФ is the national registry (administrator) of the .RU and .РФ domains.

The organization functions as the national registry with the authority to create domain name registration regulations for .RU and .РФ, accredit registrars, and explore potential initiatives linked to the advancement of Russian top-level domains.

CG ITC CENTER FOR GLOBAL IT-COOPERATION

ANO «Center for Global IT-Cooperation» was established in 2020 to promote the role of the Russian expert community in the international cooperation in the field of IT and digital technologies, including promotion of new approaches to multistakeholder Internet governance.

The Center works with a pool of Russian and international experts to develop new approaches, conduct research and implement projects in the field of global IT cooperation, popularize scientific and technological cooperation, develop the international legal framework for the multistakeholder Internet governance. The Center engages all interested experts in Russia and abroad in the topical scientific and expert conferences, round tables, webinars and, including Youth Russian Internet Governance Forum (Youth RIGF).

SUPPORTED BY

минцифры

Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation

PARTNERS

The Technical Center of Internet is an accredited Russian IT-company, which main spheres of expertise are domain name industry, cybersecurity, data processing and software development. TCI serves as a technical back-end for the Russian national domain zone, it provides technical support for the registries and domain registration system of the ccTLDs .RU, .РФ, .SU and New gTLDs .ДЕТИ and .TATAR and ensures continuous operation of the domain addressing of the Russian Internet segment.

RIPN is a non-profit organization that pioneered the Russian segment of the Internet and the domain industry in the Russian Federation. For many years RIPN has been building and maintaining networks for scientific and educational institutions across Russia, as well as an infrastructure for international scientific cooperation.

Rucenter is Russia's largest corporate domain name registrar. The company was established in 2000 on the basis of the Russian Institute for Public Networks and stood at the origins of the Russian segment of the Internet, and is one of the backbone organizations of the Russian economy in the field of information technology.

AGENDA

April 7

Opening of the Forum

The 16th Russian Internet Governance Forum will convene once again, reaffirming its role as a leading national platform for inclusive dialogue on key issues shaping the digital environment and the evolution of Internet governance. The Opening Session, a central element of the Forum's programme, will bring together representatives of government, industry, and the expert community. In their remarks, speakers will set the stage for the discussions ahead by outlining strategic priorities for the development of the Internet ecosystem, addressing emerging challenges, and highlighting opportunities for enhanced international digital cooperation.

Section 1. Plenary Session. WSIS+20: A Quarter Century of Building the Information Society. From Words to Action?

The session will focus on reviewing efforts over the past 20 years to carry out the decisions of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20) and the global dialogue on the digital agenda. Participants will discuss the principles on which international cooperation in the field of digital development is based today, where the key lines of disagreement lie, and whether there is still potential for meaningful dialogue in a rapidly changing international context. Special attention will be paid to whether new agreements at the highest level can become the basis for a more coherent approach to digital governance, considering that sometimes views of the participants in the global conversation can become extremely polarized.

Section 2. Foresight Session. AI as a Catalyst for Disruption: What It's Changing Today and How It Will Reshape Governance, the Economy, and Society by 2035

Artificial intelligence is already transforming decision-making processes, communications, content production, and digital services, shaping structural shifts in governance and economics. In this section, we will talk about the transition to adaptive regulatory models and a new architecture of responsibility between the state, platforms and developers. A separate focus is on the possible wave of 2027-2035 associated with the development of autonomous agents, AI ecosystems and agentic AI. Participants will also consider key constraints and stress points: access to computing resources and energy, staffing shortages, issues of trust, standardization and auditing, as well as the cross-border movement of models and data.

AGENDA

April 7

Section 3. Preservation of cultural code and linguistic diversity in the global digital environment

The cultural code is the key to understanding the culture of different nations and their unique features. It is transmitted through language, traditions, history and art, ensuring the continuity of cultural identity. Language plays a key role in this process as a carrier of meanings and a tool for shaping the worldview. In the context of digital transformation, the preservation of the cultural code is becoming a strategic task. Participants in this section will discuss how to ensure the presence of national languages and cultural codes in the online space, digital technologies which can become a tool for protecting linguistic diversity, transferring traditional knowledge and creating a sustainable cultural environment in the global network.

Section 4. Digital Transformation of Russian Healthcare: New Roles, Data-Driven Insights, and the Future of Medicine

The digital ecosystem has become an integral part of Russian medicine. The Public services portal and regional services have dramatically changed the patient's first contact with the system: 87% of doctor's appointments are booked online today. Telemedicine and AI-based solutions are experiencing rapid growth: in four years, the number of telemedicine users has grown 7.5 times and exceeded 3 million people. People are increasingly eager to use affordable and technologically advanced medical solutions, which corresponds to a global trend: in 2025, the number of people using digital health tools around the world reached 1.4 billion. The rapid integration of artificial intelligence creates new opportunities while also raising fundamental issues that require an in-depth discussion by the professional community.

Section 5. The Future of Child Online Safety: New Approaches to Risk Assessment and Prediction

Digital risks for children are evolving faster than the tools designed to counter these risks: there are phishing and data leaks today, and tomorrow we will face AI manipulation, digital identity theft and new forms of hidden harm. The government, business and the non–profit sector have already accumulated substantial practical experience in dealing with these threats, from parental control mechanisms and educational initiatives to a system-wide assessment of the digital environment and the development of indicators of online childhood safety. The discussion will focus on the transition from reactive measures to strategic forecasting: identifying the harbingers of future threats and forming a proactive model for protecting children in the digital environment. Special attention will be paid to the psychological aspects of safety, the analysis of typical risks and practical recommendations for parents. Participants will also discuss the universal nature of many digital risks and the potential of national practices as a basis for international dialogue and the development of common approaches and standards for the protection of children online.

AGENDA

April 8

Section 6. Sovereign Clouds: Evolving from a Marketing Term to a Contractual Necessity

In the era of digitalization, data sovereignty is becoming a key challenge for states and businesses. Initially, the term Sovereign Cloud was a marketing slogan used by cloud service providers, emphasizing data localization and compliance with national regulations. However, the evolution of geopolitical risks, including sanctions and cyber threats, has transformed it into a mandatory provision in contracts. The session participants will discuss how the sovereign cloud is moving from declarations to practical standards that ensure data control without dependence on foreign vendors. Special attention will be paid to sovereignty as a service model, in which infrastructure management is reserved for hyperscalers, creating political vulnerability for countries without their own technical capabilities. The discussion focuses on European, Russian and Asian practices, the integration of sovereign clouds into government strategies and the risks of cloud ecosystems in the face of increasing protectionism.

Virtuti Interneti award presentation and traditional lecture by the laureate

In 2010, the Coordination Center for Top Level National Domains established a special award, Virtuti Interneti (Service to the Internet) unique in the Runet. It is awarded to representatives of the worldwide web community, business, sciences and the government who have made a significant contribution to the development of the Runet and the global Internet. Candidates are shortlisted by the Programs Committee of the Russian Internet Governance Forum (RIGF), and the awards ceremony and subsequent lecture by the winner have become a tradition for the RIGF program.

Section 7. How Nations Are Regulating Generative AI: The Evolution of International Approaches

Generative neural networks are rapidly moving from the experimental stage to everyday practice and are becoming a significant factor in technological development. They increase labor productivity, reduce costs, accelerate management processes, and form new digital services and business models, helping companies improve their competitiveness and having a noticeable impact on the development of national economies. International practice contains a wide range of regulatory solutions, from minimal intervention to complex models covering the entire service lifecycle. In the absence of unified global approaches and limited case law, experts have been focusing their conversation on searching for a balanced regulatory format.

AGENDA

April 8

Section 8. Russian Business — The New Architecture of Digital Promotion

In recent years, the digital market in Russia has undergone a structural transformation. Business promotion has long moved beyond a simple mix of advertising tools. Today, it operates as an integrated ecosystem that brings together platforms, marketplaces, retail and fintech services, purchase data, and algorithmic recommendations.
This session will explore:

- How to build a cohesive business promotion architecture in the current landscape
- The impact of AI and automation on the customer journey
- Attribution modeling: identifying which channels drive demand and which lead to conversion
- Strategies for measuring advertising effectiveness in an era of data fragmentation
- Key structural shifts and technological innovations likely to shape the market in 2026

Section 9. Recoding Diplomacy: How the Internet is Reshaping the Language of Global Communication

In the shifting geopolitical landscape, the development of internet technologies compels us to seriously rethink traditional notions of the parameters and tools of social interaction, impacting virtually all aspects of life, including international relations. Currently, digital communication tools are influencing not only the speed, style, and content of international dialogue but are also transforming diplomatic language itself, offering new opportunities for building a positive national image and advancing state interests. Intercultural communication, perhaps for the first time, is acquiring a truly global character.

Closing ceremony

Closing ceremony, wrap-up, Presentation of the Results of the RIGF 2026 Youth Special Course, presentation of the articles submitted for RIGF 2026.

VIRTUTI INTERNETI AWARD

At the RIGF 2026 forum, the Virtuti Interneti award — established by the Coordination Center in 2010 to recognise outstanding contributions to the Internet field — was conferred. This year's laureate is **Karen Kazaryan**, a Russian analyst and expert in Internet technologies and the digital economy.

Since 2022, Mr. Kazaryan has held the position of Director of Analytics at the Autonomous Non-Profit Organisation "Digital Economy" (ANO Digital Economy) and serves as Director General of the Institute for Internet Research. Under his leadership, the "White Paper on the Digital Economy" — a joint initiative of the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Russian Federation — is produced annually. In 2025, he led the development of a model for assessing the IT industry, commissioned by Deputy Prime Minister **Dmitry Grigorenko**. This model enables regular monitoring of the IT sector's performance and the effectiveness of government support measures, drawing on verified tax records.

Virtuti Interneti is awarded to representatives of the internet community, businesspeople, scientists and officials who have made a significant contribution to the development of the Runet and the global internet. In previous years, it went to **Steve Crocker**, inventor of the RFC Internet policy format, a founder of the technical community of global internet builders; **Wolfgang Kleinwachter**, honorary professor of internet policy and regulation at the Department of Media and Information Studies at Aarhus University; **Jovan Kurbalija**, author of the Internet Governance book; **Alexei Platonov**, one of the founders of Runet, former director of RosNIIROS and director of MSK-IX; and **Elena Voronina**, director of the Indata Network Technology Development Fund, among many others.

OPENING

OPENING OF THE FORUM

On April 7, the 16th Russian Internet Governance Forum (RIGF 2026) opened in Moscow. The two-day event (April 7–8) features nine sessions, over 60 speakers, the Virtuti Interneti award ceremony, and the presentation of the expert collection The Internet Today and Tomorrow – 2026. The forum is held in a hybrid format, with over 700 participants from 18 countries registered.

Welcoming the audience, **Andrey Vorobyev**, Director of the Coordination Center for TLD .RU/.РФ, noted that RIGF traditionally takes place on the anniversary of the .RU domain, which last fall surpassed 6 million domain names.

"This year, the Coordination Center for TLD .RU/.РФ marks its 25th anniversary. For a quarter of a century, the Center has ensured the stable, secure, and uninterrupted operation of Russia's domain infrastructure. The forum's sixteen-year history demonstrates that it remains a leading platform for everyone involved in shaping the digital development agenda."

Tatyana Matveyeva (Presidential Directorate for ICT and Communications Infrastructure) stated that Russia is among the three countries that have achieved comprehensive digital sovereignty, with a sovereign digital ecosystem now established within the Runet. **Sergey Boyarsky** (State Duma Committee on Information Policy) noted the importance of ensuring secure spaces within the transnational internet, particularly citing recent legislative efforts to combat online fraud. **Alexander Shoitov** (Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation) outlined systemic measures to counter cyberattacks and fraud, including the first and second packages of "anti-fraud" legislation. **Chengetai Masango** (UN IGF Secretariat) underscored the significance of the forum's focus on the future of the internet and prospects for international cooperation.

Andrey Kuzmichev (Runity Group) highlighted that updating registration data is becoming a key priority under new identification requirements, calling for greater user awareness. **Alexey Rogdev** (Technical Center of Internet) observed that the Russian internet is evolving into a mature institution with clear rules and predictable logic, aiming to strengthen stability, security, and transparency for all participants.

PLENARY SESION

WSIS+20: A QUARTER CENTURY IN BUILDING THE INFORMATION SOCIETY – FROM WORDS TO ACTION?

The forum continued with a plenary session, *WSIS+20: A Quarter Century in Building the Information Society – From Words to Action?* Its participants discussed the principles of international cooperation in digital development, practical approaches to digital collaboration, tools for countering disinformation and harmful content, the need to regulate deepfake technologies, key areas of disagreement, and the prospects for sustaining meaningful dialogue in the context of a shifting global agenda. The session was moderated by **Maria Bolshakova.**

Artur Lyukmanov of the Russian Foreign Ministry spoke about the development of the Global Digital Compact and the adjustments it underwent during its preparation. He emphasized that a key expectation for global corporations today is to act with respect toward other countries and companies, taking their interests into account.

Alexey Borodin of the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications noted that the world is increasingly experiencing internet fragmentation, as many countries have concluded that it is difficult to guarantee the safety of their citizens within a fully cross-border network, making nationally oriented regulation necessary. He also emphasized the importance of developing common regulatory approaches through dialogue with neighboring countries.

Alexander Shoitov highlighted the urgent need to regulate deepfake technologies, particularly in cases where they pose risks. He noted that deepfakes are increasingly used by fraudsters and extremist groups, as well as for the spread of disinformation, making regulatory measures essential. According to him, labeling different types of content could be an effective way to address the issue, while modern detection technologies are already capable of identifying up to 90% of deepfakes.

Alexey Goreslavsky of the Internet Development Institute emphasized that the internet is not, and cannot be, a sterile environment – no matter the effort, it will always contain a wide range of content.

Dmitry Gulyaev of the Russian Association for Electronic Communications and Gitanjali Sah of the International Telecommunication Union also took part in the session.

FORESIGHT SESSION

AI AS A CATALYST FOR DISRUPTION: WHAT IT'S CHANGING TODAY AND HOW IT WILL RESHAPE GOVERNANCE, THE ECONOMY, AND SOCIETY BY 2035

The RIGF 2026 programme continued with a foresight session titled "AI as a Trigger for Disrupting Conventional Processes," which examined how artificial intelligence is already transforming governance, the economy, and societal processes — and how these changes are likely to unfold up to 2035.

The session was moderated by **Konstantin Vishnevskiy** (HSE University, Centre for Strategic Analytics and Big Data). Experts discussed how AI is reshaping business processes, decision-making, institutions, and social interactions — and whether this represents a new opportunity or a threat. They also shared practical experiences in integrating AI technologies into their companies' operations and the challenges encountered along the way.

"Within the governance framework, key opportunities include data-driven decision-making, shorter management cycles, and greater precision in process control. Among the risks are increased dependence on data quality, a shifting balance between humans and AI, and heightened security requirements for managerial decisions," noted Konstantin Vishnevskiy.

The discussion featured: **Vyacheslav Bersenev** (NEUROLAB Centre for Technology Transfer and Innovation), **Veronika Kolodko** (Rambler&Co), **Evgeny Osadchuk** (Skolkovo), **Kirill Sidorov** (TASS), and **Mikhail Skvirsky** (Sberbank).

The experts agreed that when using AI, it is crucial to maintain critical thinking, cultivate creativity, exercise deliberate judgment in decision-making, have a clear understanding of the purposes for which AI is employed, and regard AI primarily as a tool rather than as a replacement for human agency.

SESSION 3

PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL CODE AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN THE GLOBAL DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Experts discussed how to preserve the cultural code and linguistic diversity of the peoples of Russia in the digital environment: which initiatives are being promoted on international platforms, how the findings of state language monitoring are translated into concrete support measures, how major technology companies are developing machine translation and AI tools for minority languages, what challenges researchers face when creating digital resources for national languages, and what opportunities are opening up with the expansion of Cyrillic characters in the .РФ domain.

The session featured contributions from: **Sergey Chumarev** (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia), **Farid Nahli** (International Telecommunication Union), **Timur Tsybikov** (Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs of Russia), **Alexander Bolkhovityanov** (Yandex), **Sergey Markov** (Sberbank), **Igor Pozdeev** (Udmurt Institute of History, Language and Literature), and **Maria Kolesnikova** (Coordination Center for TLDs .RU/.РФ).

Summarising the discussion, session moderator **Andrey Vorobyev** noted that Russia is one of the few countries where the task of digitally preserving linguistic diversity is being addressed at a systemic level, yielding tangible results. At the same time, a number of serious challenges remain — ranging from the absence of certain characters in Unicode to a shortage of datasets and specialised personnel. Overcoming these challenges will require the active engagement of language speakers, volunteers, and regional communities.

SESSION 4

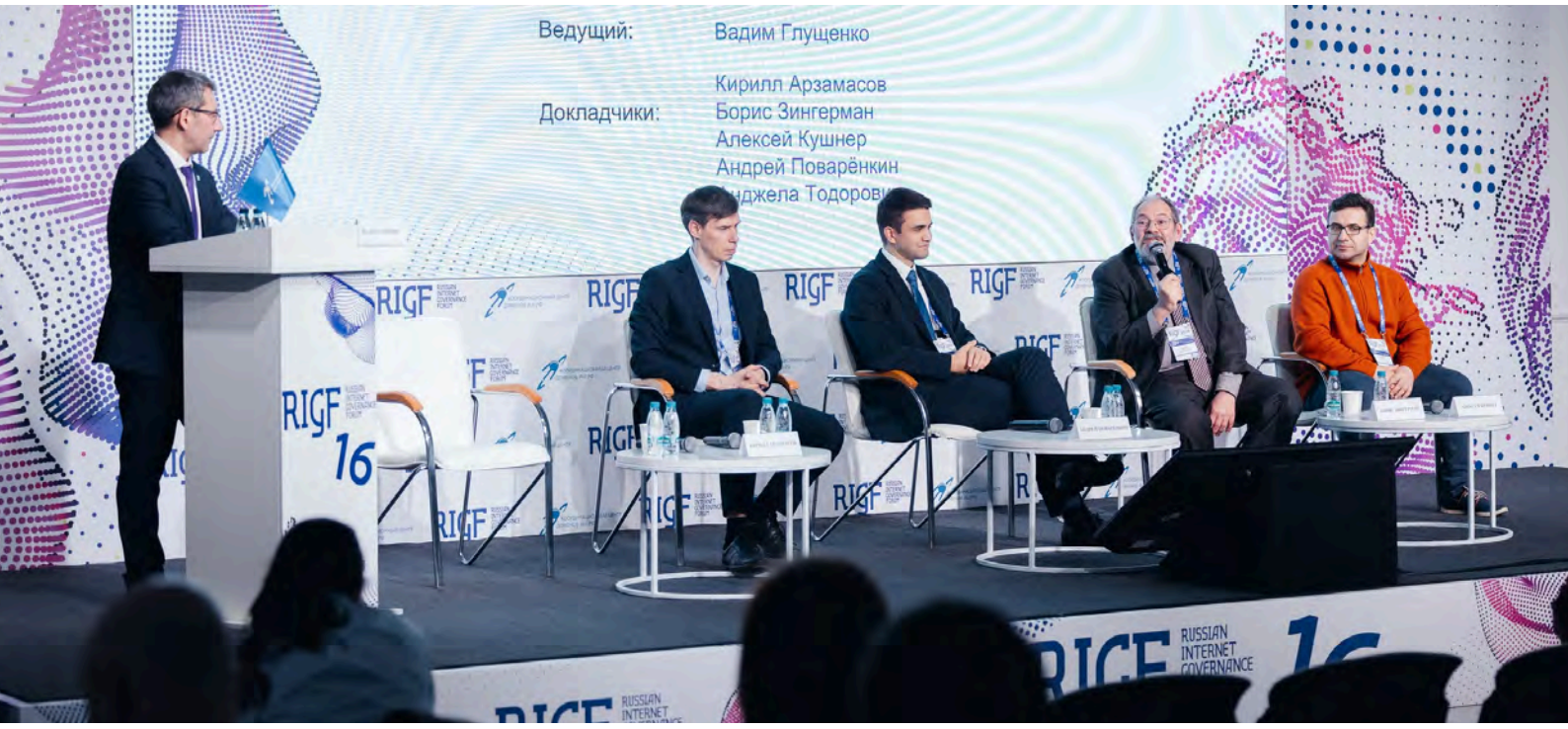
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF RUSSIAN HEALTHCARE: NEW ROLES, DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS, AND THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE

The discussion featured **Kirill Arzamasov**, Head of Research at the Science and Practice Center for Diagnostics and Telemedicine (Moscow Health Department); **Boris Zingerman**, CEO of the National Database of Medical Knowledge association; **Alexey Kushner**, Head of Product Development at NtechLab; **Andrei Povarenkin**, Development Director at Third Opinion; and **Angela Todorovic**, Founder of Hatta AI. **Vadim Glushchenko**, Director of the Center for Global IT Cooperation, moderated the session.
Opening the discussion, Vadim Glushchenko noted that healthcare is a key area that affects every one of us.

"Today in Russia, approximately 87 percent of patients schedule doctor appointments online, while advanced practices like AI and telemedicine are seeing explosive growth. Over four years, this figure has grown 7.5-fold to reach 3 million," he said.

Experts discussed how digital technologies help patients access convenient, high-tech medical services, as well as the ways they are transforming medical practice. They also examined how well implementation is working, the risks of AI errors in clinical settings, and issues around regulation and security of medical data flows.

The participants noted that technologies have already been integrated into clinical processes and are changing the very logic of medicine. Moreover, the key benefit lies not in any single tool, but in the integration of various solutions – without that, even precise algorithms are ineffective. Special attention was paid to data: the effectiveness of AI depends directly on its quality, accessibility, and connectivity between systems, which remains a major limitation.



SESSION 5

THE FUTURE OF CHILDREN'S DIGITAL SAFETY: NEW APPROACHES TO RISK FORECASTING

Experts discussed the key challenges and prospects for children's digital safety, including: how cyber threats are evolving and why protection tools lag behind their development; what factors drive youth involvement in illegal activities; how to shift from reactive measures to a proactive model; how to advance cybercrime prevention; and what indicators could help assess digital safety levels and identify harmful influences.

As noted by the moderator, **Elizaveta Belyakova** (Alliance for the Protection of Children in the Digital Environment), online risks to children are changing rapidly:

> *"Until recently, the primary concern was recruitment; today, it is dropout schemes, phishing, and the spread of AI-driven products that have a detrimental effect on children."*

The discussion featured contributions from: **Olga Bochkova** (Olga Bochkova Safety Academy), **Ilya Gogua** (ROCIT), **Sergey Kalinin** (Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Cybersecurity Directorate), **Dmitry Kishilov** (MegaFon), **Sergey Maklakov** (ANO Dialog Regions), **Anton Rastashchenov** (Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs), **Alexander Tolmachev** (State Duma of the Russian Federation), and **Natalia Yumatova** (Avito).

SESSION 6

SOVEREIGN CLOUDS: EVOLUTION FROM A MARKETING TERM TO A CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENT

Experts discussed how the concept of digital sovereignty has taken shape and what factors have driven its evolution; what is meant by a "sovereign cloud" and what standards such clouds should meet; how to ensure data security and accessibility; which data localisation models different countries employ; and how policy influences the cloud technology market.

Particular attention was paid to the practical experience of providers in migrating clients to sovereign clouds and to the shift of Russian businesses toward a "sovereignty as a service" model.

The session was moderated by **Alexey Rogdev**, Director General of the Technical Center of Internet (TCI). The section featured contributions from: **Yuri Kolotayev** (St. Petersburg State University), **Ilya Korolev** (Beeline Cloud), **Alexander Obukhov** (Turbo Cloud), **Denis Prokhorchik** (Reg.cloud), **Anton Salov** (RCCPA Organising Committee).

SESSION 7

HOW COUNTRIES REGULATE GENERATIVE AI: THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

During the session, experts examined foreign approaches to regulating generative AI, the impact of regulation on competition and market access for new entrants, as well as potential requirements, priorities, and legal conditions for the development of AI in Russia.

As noted by the session moderator, **Karen Kazaryan** (ANO Digital Economy), a law “On the Foundations of Artificial Intelligence Regulation” has been under active discussion in Russia in recent months, making it the most debated draft law in several years.

The discussion featured contributions from: **Anastasia Kabaeva** (TeDo), **Anna Malinovskaya** (Rostelecom), **Evgeny Osadchuk** (Skolkovo), **Damir Salikhov** (Yandex), and **Marat Takhavev** (Big Data Association).

Participants stressed the importance of analysing international experience in order to develop a balanced regulatory model in Russia.

SESSION 8

RUSSIAN BUSINESS: A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR DIGITAL PROMOTION

Experts discussed the transformation of business models amid the transition to Internet 3.0, key tools for improving online sales performance, and current approaches to audience engagement. Particular attention was paid to the synergy between content and advertising, the development of influencer marketing, and technological innovations that are likely to shape the sector in 2026.

Session moderator **Olga Vrublevskaya** (RTA) noted that by 2026, digital promotion has been moving from siloed channels toward an integrated ecosystem, creating new opportunities and reshaping the architecture of promotion.

The discussion featured contributions from: **Ekaterina Askerova** (Magnit ADS), **Elena Zhuchkova** (Kassir.ru), **Nikita Lebedev** (VKontakte), **Mikhail Gorkunov** (Avito Advertising), and **Ivan Shumilov** (ABV).

SESSION 9

RECODING DIPLOMACY: HOW THE INTERNET IS CHANGING THE LANGUAGE OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS

The working programme of RIGF 2026 concluded with a session titled “Recoding Diplomacy: How the Internet Is Changing the Language of Global Communications.”

As noted by the moderator, **Igor Svidov** (Integral Research Institute), the development of Internet technologies is bringing significant changes to daily life and compelling a fundamental rethinking of traditional notions regarding the parameters and tools of social interaction. In his words, tectonic shifts are occurring in the technosphere and the digital environment, affecting virtually all aspects of life, including international relations.

Experts discussed how international communications are being transformed and what competencies are required for effective engagement; how platform algorithms can distort the meaning of messages and how to respond to this; as well as new opportunities for public diplomacy in the digital environment, including the role of video games in strengthening national image and advancing national interests.

The discussion featured contributions from: **Tatiana Benois** (National Artificial Intelligence Foundation), **Aleksandra Vanichkina** (Moscow State Linguistic University), **Mikhail Kurakin** (International Affairs journal), **Ernest Chernukhin** (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia), **Yaroslav Meshalkin** (Centre for Gaming and Esports Communications), **Kristina Muravyova** (TV BRICS, RUDN University), and **Semed Semedov** (Institute of Public Administration, RANEPA).

SUMMING UP THE FORUM

At the closing ceremony, the outcomes of the forum were summarised as follows:

- **Vadim Glushchenk**o (Centre for Global IT Cooperation) highlighted the key themes of this year's forum;
- **Elena Zinovyeva** (MGIMO University) spoke about how the global Internet governance agenda has changed over the past year, what new challenges have emerged, and what this means for the global dialogue;
- **Anastasia Savelieva** (Curator of the Summer School on Internet Governance) and **Arevik Martirosyan** (Curator of the RIGF Special Course) summarised the outcomes of the sixth special course and, together with course alumnae, presented youth theses on Internet governance;
- **Roman Shamraev** (Centre for Global IT Cooperation) and Nikolay Pichugin (MIB School) presented a new collection of articles entitled "The Internet Today and Tomorrow," featuring works by eight members of the Youth Council of the Coordination Center.

Concluding the event, **Andrey Vorobyev**, Director of the Coordination Center, noted that while the forum was coming to a close, the dialogue was not.

"We remain in touch and will begin preparations for the next forum immediately after RIGF concludes. So — see you at RIGF 2027!" he added.

RIGF 2026 YOUTH SPECIAL COURSE

At the RIGF 2026 closing ceremony, the results of the **sixth Special Course for Youth** were summarized, and the abstracts by its participants were presented.
During the course, the participants attended six expert lectures and took part in three interactive workshops, where they developed abstracts reflecting young people's perspectives on current issues in internet governance.

Both the short and full versions of the youth abstracts are available on the forum's website, along with recordings of the webinars held as part of this year's Special Course for Youth.

Recordings of the webinars held as part of this year's Special Course for Youth are also freely accessible.

For reference, this year's Special Course received **183 applications from participants across 7 countries**. In addition to Russia, applications came from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, China, and the Republic of Malawi. The majority of applicants were under the age of 22, followed by those aged 23 to 27. In terms of educational background, the largest groups included master's degree holders, young professionals, researchers, and bachelor students. Women comprised the majority of applicants, accounting for more than 56% of the total.

Following the test assignment, 89 participants were admitted to the Special Course, of whom 60 advanced to the final stage. As in previous years, the group represented a wide range of professional backgrounds, including lawyers, political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, educators, journalists, economists, designers, and, of course, ICT professionals engaged in the development, administration, and security of information technologies.

TRADITIONAL RIGF EDUCATION DAY

On the Educational Day of RIGF 2026, **Anton Gorelkin**, First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Information Policy, Information Technologies and Communications and Chairman of the Board of ROCIT, delivered a lecture for students of the Higher School of Economics (HSE University).

He spoke about the transformation of the Runet — from a segment of the global network to the formation of an independent digital infrastructure. This process is driven both by external challenges and by the ongoing development of the national legal framework, including the adoption of the Sovereign Internet Law, legislation on the "landing" of IT giants, personal data protection, and related regulations.

Anton Gorelkin paid particular attention to the development of technological competition. In his view, in several fields — including AI and robotics — Russia currently lags behind global leaders, remaining at the stage of prototyping and searching for effective solutions.

"The key task today is not to replicate the models of others, but to find our own niche for intensive growth, where accessible and mass-market technologies will form the basis of competitiveness," he added.

The lecture was co-organised by the Department of Digital Technology and Biolaw at HSE University.

COORDINATION CENTER
FOR TLD .RU/.РФ

RIGF RUSSIAN INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM

RIGF is hosted by Coordination Center for TLD .RU/.РФ

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