

# The Fourth European Multidisciplinary Conference on Global Internet Governance Actors, Regulations, Transactions and Strategies (GIG-ARTS 2020)

## Online Information Governance – More Expression, Less Freedom?

### Compendium of Selected Submissions

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## Note about this Compendium

Like all other activities in 2020, GIG-ARTS was seriously impacted by the Covid19. The conference was initially scheduled to be held on 7-8 May 2020 in Vienna. When the first lockdown decisions were made in Europe, around mid-March, we first decided to postpone the conference dates to 14-15 September.

At that time, we were already close to the end of the submissions review and selection process, and we certainly didn't want to cancel the event, especially considering the success of the 2020 call for abstracts and the very promising programme that it would lead to. We didn't want either to hold an online conference, as it is pointless for GIG-ARTS: this conference is about meeting, exchanging and sharing in a friendly atmosphere, not simply about presenting one's work and having it discussed.

Considering the conference rescheduling, we expected that some authors of selected submissions might not anymore make it to Vienna in September. We have thus enlarged the selection process, so as to establish a second list of 13 submissions selected in reserve, in addition to the first list of 20 submissions.

Given the developments of the sanitary situation all over the world since then, and the consequences in terms of travel restrictions and other limitations imposed in various countries, we eventually had to cancel the 2020 edition of the GIG-ARTS conference.

We have however decided to compensate the cancellation of GIG-ARTS 2020 with some measures to give authors who submitted their work to GIG-ARTS 2020 the credit they deserve, and to acknowledge the work of the conference scientific committee to review and select submissions. One of these measures is the publication of this Compendium of Selected Submissions. It includes the 33 selected submissions in both the first and the second ('reserve') list. They are thematically organized in 4 sections, and listed by alphabetical order of authors in each section. This Compendium is also a way to provide the public with an overview of current research topics in the GIG-ARTS conference field. To know more about other measures and about the conference, please check the conference website.

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## 2020 Theme Rationale and Main Topics

It is now 30 years since the invention of the World Wide Web, and over fifteen years since the development of the interactive Web or also known as Web2.0. Online information and communication have never seemed easier and more accessible to everyone, thanks to the mediation of social networks, search engines, and other kinds of platforms and technologies.

With such capabilities “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”, freedom of speech and freedom of the press should have grown to such an extent that some of the utopian visions of full participatory democracy would have appeared to be within our reach. At the very least, some of the long-standing informational imbalances concerning information flow globally, diversity of content and authors, and the accessibility of accurate information would have been taken as a given framework against which societies would have been called to solve problems and to look after citizens’ well-being.

Paradoxically, the levels of freedom and freedom of expression, as captured in global measuring instruments by a variety of institutions and organisations, do not show the expected or desired advancement. Rather there is evidence that freedom in societies and freedom of the press deteriorate.

Ambitious goals of freedom to express one’s own identity and opinion at the global public sphere on an equal basis and free from fear of retaliation or misuse evaporate for many, such as those subjected to hate speech, those persecuted by autocratic authorities and the great majority of citizens whose personal data become de facto ownership of private companies.

Misinformation, spread not only by politically extreme groups but also by “normal”, mainstream parties in the (desperate or calculated) attempt to influence voters, can undermine the quality and freedom of global debate. Information conflict thus becomes even more an object of state rivalry and diplomacy, but also the tool for the erosion of citizenship as the utmost form of participation in the commons. These phenomena are coupled with the fact that even values once considered unquestionable, such as the value of independent journalism, the value of human rights such as privacy and dignity, are being challenged.

The technological capabilities allowed the world over to express and share information and opinions, to connect and form alliances. However, they have also enabled the spread of misinformation, have been undermining the human right to privacy on digital communication channels, subjected vulnerable groups to more vulnerability, and provided for economic models putting at stake the fundamental pillars of democracy. Within this context, policies governing the fate of users’ data, citizens’ freedoms and the integrity of content have fallen short of helping pave the path to the desired communication environment. Regulatory responses capturing communication and information have oscillated between forms of a ‘knee-jerk’ reaction to resist any attempt to provide for the normative standards of content and a tendency to securitise communication as a matter of national security.

Importantly, critics argue that even where governance has allowed for more democratic processes in raising concerns and suggesting solutions, the gaps in connecting the dots are glaring. If governance refers to the role of ideas and principles, the role of actors and

the processes of negotiation and solution, it is urgent to return, on the one hand, to the basic and fundamental rights questions and take stock of the achievements of hitherto frameworks. On the other hand, it seems crucial to interrogate what futures exactly are current policy frameworks shaping, especially in relation to a politics of care for young citizens and hence the future generations?

After having addressed global internet governance as a diplomacy issue at its first edition held in Paris in 2017, how to overcome inequalities in internet governance at the second edition held in Cardiff in 2018, and the role of Europe in the global governance of the internet at its third edition held in Salerno in 2019, this year's GIG-ARTS conference turns its attention to the governance of online information, to address the relation of citizens to the quality of content online as an often neglected area of regulation and governance of the internet. In that respect, the conference continues the conversation on internet governance turning its attention from institutions and structural factors to the role of content and misinformation as an object of governance, and to internet users as forces of change. GIG-ARTS is inviting you to this conversation to help shape the debate of what kinds of futures might be desirable and envisioned in the process of internet governance, who and which actors might be most suitable to help shape such governance goals and under which conditions might these be achieved. Hence, in addition to general internet governance issues and topics, submissions are particularly welcome on the following possible areas of investigation:

- The governance of fundamental freedoms online between global platforms, conflicts of jurisdictions and extraterritorial legislation
- The role of European and global institutions in shaping the conditions of free expression online
- Responsibility and liability of platforms and other intermediaries in content regulation
- Restrictive regulation and the securitization of content
- Privacy, misinformation, democracy: challenges to internet governance
- Structural role of individual targeting, behavioural advertising and other economic models of online platforms on the reshaping of fundamental freedoms and democracy
- From nudging to manipulation: consequences on autonomy and human dignity
- Successive copyright reforms and their impact on freedom of expression, freedom of the press and democracy
- Changes in and challenges to journalism practice through intentional misinformation
- Governance from below: how practices and principles by civil society aim to shape the conditions of technology for the advancement of democracies and human well-being
- Youth and access to information; news and misinformation in the online world; the purpose of thinking towards the future

## **Section 1**

### **Assessing, Gauging and Benchmarking Internet Freedom**

- 1.1** Between the civil society and the corporation: Construction of the meaning of freedom of speech at the Internet Governance Forum. Artem Antonyuk (St. Petersburg University, Russia)
- 1.2** Does Facebook get it always wrong? The decisions of Italian courts between hate speech and political pluralism. Federica Casarosa (European University Institute, Italy)
- 1.3** Metrics of Freedom: Russian technologists' measures of online liberties as a rallying point for the "Free RuNet" movement. Ksenia Ermoshina (CIS CNRS, France / Citizen Lab, Canada), Francesca Musiani (CIS CNRS, France)
- 1.4** Defining and Measuring Internet Freedom: A Critical Mapping of the Main International Initiatives. Diego Giannone, Adriano Cozzolino (Department of Political Sciences "Jean Monnet", University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli", Italy)
- 1.5** The State of Online Governance – An Industry wide Analysis of Internet Company Information Enforcement and Moderation. Christopher Hooton (George Washington University, Institute of Public Policy, USA)
- 1.6** Legitimatory Balancing Acts of online content regulation – comparing online communication control across regime types. Marianne Kneuer and Wolf Schünemann (Hildesheim University, Germany)
- 1.7** Investigating Public Perceptions of Online Censorship in China. Jiachen Liang (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong)
- 1.8** "Your rights have been removed...". An assessment of platforms' content governance policies with digital constitutionalism standards. Nicola Palladino (University of Salerno, Italy)
- 1.9** Domain Name Denial in Russia: How the Government Leverages the Governance of the Domain Name System of the Russian. Ludmila Sivetc (University of Turku, Finland)
- 1.10** Lessons for a new governance framework for platform responsibility? A review of reform proposals since 2007. Carsten Ullrich (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg)
- 1.11** The social media law that wasn't: Introducing failure into the study of Russian internet governance. Mariëlle Wijermars (Maastricht University, Netherlands)

### **Contribution 1.1**

**Author(s):** Artem Antonyuk (St. Petersburg University, Russia)

**Title:** Between the civil society and the corporation: Construction of the meaning of freedom of speech at the Internet Governance Forum

**Keywords:** internet governance, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, framing, semantic network analysis

**Abstract:**

Freedom of speech on the internet is the topic of heated debates and controversies, with discussions involving representatives of governments, private companies, and civil society. In particular, multiple perspectives on freedom of speech are expressed within the internet governance domain where different stakeholders engage in discussions of internet-related topics. However, there is little research on the meanings of freedom of speech used in internet governance and on the possible changes in the meanings over time. According to the literature on framing (Snow et al., 1986) and institutionalism (Oberg et al., 2017; Schmidt, 2008), the meanings used in a domain involving different actors reflect and are influenced by wider schemes of interpretation, i.e. frames. For example, in the domain of politics, freedom of speech can be related to national security issues and to technological innovations as governments and IT companies actively promote different frames that support their interests. At the same time, frames may be contested, as actors seek to promote their understanding in the struggle for power and influence. As a result, framing efforts produce different context-specific meanings of key terms that reflect power relations in a domain.

In this paper, I study how the contextual meanings of freedom of speech are constructed at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), a multistakeholder UN-mandated event for public policy debates on internet-related topics (Epstein, 2013). Drawing on the pragmatic and structuralist conceptions of meaning (Mead, 1934; Saussure, 1959), I regard meaning creation as embodied in usage of words in combination with other words (Etzrodt, 2008). To study creation of meanings at IGF, I employ semantic network analysis that maps connections between words as they are jointly used with other words in real life speech (Doerfel & Barnett, 1999; Nerghes et al., 2015). In resulting semantic networks, connected words are seen as instantiating particular contextual meanings. The data consists of transcripts of discussions at dynamic coalitions of the Forum that took place from 2010 to 2018, available online. The data is used to semi-automatically construct semantic networks of discussions at the coalitions, mapping contextual meanings produced by different stakeholders. Then, I analyze the resulting networks to uncover the contextual meanings of key words related to the topic of freedom of speech and interpret these meanings using original textual expressions in the transcripts.

The analysis shows that, first, the notion of freedom of speech is constructed primarily within human rights and technical frames. Second, analysis of semantic networks over the years reveals that the human rights framing of freedom of speech became less salient around 2013, while the technological framing became more salient. As a result, some key notions such as censorship were contrasted with or even replaced by supposedly neutral terms such as content removal. Third, the notion of user rights used in network neutrality debates functioned as a mediating idea that was framed within human rights and technical frames and could be used to appeal to different stakeholders. I discuss these findings in the context of recent scholarship and interviews with experts.

## **Contribution 1.2**

**Author(s):** Federica Casarosa (European University Institute, Italy)

**Title:** Does Facebook get it always wrong? The decisions of Italian courts between hate speech and political pluralism

**Keywords:** hate speech, social media, jurisprudence, Italy, political pluralism

### **Abstract:**

Hate speech is not a new phenomenon. Digital communication may be qualified only as a new arena for its dissemination, as the features of social media pave the way to a wider reach of harmful content. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the availability of hate speech in the form of xenophobic, nationalist, Islamophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic content in online communication. Thus, the dissemination of hate speech online is perceived as a social emergency that may lead to individual, political, and social consequences.

Hate speech is generally defined as speech “designed to promote hatred on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, or national origin” or other specific group characteristics. Although several international treaties and agreements do include hate speech regulation, at the European level, such an agreed upon framework is still lacking, and the single point of reference available is the Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combatting certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. At the same time social media do acknowledge the problem of hate speech on their platforms: in many cases “Community Guidelines” or “Terms and conditions” prohibit incitement to violence and hateful conduct. But again, no uniformity of concepts emerged, as all platform have their own qualification of hate speech, leading to discrepancies not only between contractual obligations applicable to users of the different social media platforms, but also between applicable laws (EU and national) and such contractual obligations.

These discrepancies emerged clearly in two different cases addressed by Italian lower courts in 2019, where judges were confronted with two claims against the decisions taken by Facebook against the social network accounts respectively of an association and of the president of the same association. The Facebook conduct was based on the fact that the association at stake referred to Fascism and its rhetoric, thus it was deemed to incite hatred. Although in principle the conduct of Facebook may seem reasonable, the decisions of Italian courts instead show that a deeper analysis of the different features entailed by freedom of expression online should be taken into account: in particular, which limitations to freedom of expression may be acceptable also in the light of political pluralism.

The contribution will analyse the decisions of Italian courts according to the European and national jurisprudence on hate speech and then address if and how freedom of expression should be (re)framed within social media.

### **Contribution 1.3**

**Author(s):** Ksenia Ermoshina (CIS CNRS, France / Citizen Lab, Canada), Francesca Musiani (CIS CNRS, France)

**Title:** Metrics of Freedom: Russian technologists' measures of online liberties as a rallying point for the "Free RuNet" movement

**Keywords:** Internet freedom, censorship, surveillance, STS, pragmatist sociology, Russia, metrics, classifications, network measurements, collective action, expert mobilizations

**Abstract:**

Since the early 2010s, the Russian Internet (RuNet) is experiencing a progressive turn towards "governance by infrastructure" (DeNardis & Musiani, 2016) with an obligation for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to reconfigure their networks by installing expensive and complex technical equipment to enable filtering, surveillance and storage of users' traffic (Ermoshina & Musiani, 2017). In the context of the new "Sovereign Internet" doctrine, the formerly decentralized ecosystem of ISPs is experiencing a trend towards centralization, with small providers disappearing due to harsh regulation. This centralization is actively criticized by technologists who defend a certain vision of a "Free RuNet", decentralized and without censorship. In order to defend this technical and political ideal, they deploy new instruments of expert mobilization.

Among the instruments used by this community is the "Index of Freedom of the RuNet", a metrics system developed by the Society for Protection of the Internet. This Index "calculates" the effects of legal, technical and political events (e.g., adoption of a new law) on the functioning of Internet in Russia. Another way to monitor the "health" of the RuNet is the "Connectivity Index", based on measures of speed and quality of connections between Russian and foreign servers. These indexes produce a "shared meaning" and enable communication between different actors that constitute the "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Bowker & Star, 1999) of the defenders of "Internet Freedom". Indexes, presented as graphs and tables, are actively mobilized by technologists in their communication with media, regulators and international colleagues in order to make "visible" the "crisis" of the RuNet.

This study, at the intersection of STS and pragmatist sociology, analyzes these tools of classification and measurement. What does it mean to "measure" Internet Freedom? How do we translate freedom into measurable parameters? The paper is based on an interdisciplinary fieldwork conducted for the past two years within a research project on the critique of digital coercion in Russia. We have conducted an analysis of the relevant indexes and metrics, collected interviews with technologists and legal experts involved in production of these indexes, as well as conducted web-ethnography of selected forums and chats within the community. We observed international events where such indexes were presented and commented upon, in order to analyze their effect on media and Internet regulation, as well as on the international "Internet freedom" community.

Bowker, G. and Star, S. L. (1999). *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

DeNardis, L. and Musiani, F., 2016. Governance by infrastructure. In *The turn to infrastructure in Internet governance* (pp. 3-21). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Ermoshina, K. and Musiani, F., 2017. Migrating servers, elusive users: Reconfigurations of the Russian Internet in the post-Snowden era. *Media & Communication* 5(1) pp42-53

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press



#### **Contribution 1.4**

**Author(s):** Diego Giannone, Adriano Cozzolino (Department of Political Sciences "Jean Monnet", University of Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli", Italy)

**Title:** Defining and Measuring Internet Freedom: A Critical Mapping of the Main International Initiatives

**Keywords:** Measurement of internet freedom, Political function of indicators, Critical mapping of international initiatives, Internet and democratic rights

**Abstract:**

The rapid diffusion of the internet and the social media is dramatically changing the way citizens and their elected representatives communicate in their reciprocal efforts to inform and influence. The internet and the social media are also important in shaping the public opinion and constructing media and political agenda. Lastly, they constitute both an opportunity and a challenge to representative democracy, through their questioning of traditional democratic procedures and their redefinition of some fundamental rights. The right to privacy, to security, to equal access, and to freedom of expression are just some cases in point.

As the internet constitutes the new connective tissue of democracy, we argue that a preliminary step for analysing the transformations of democracy is to understand how internet freedom is conceptualised and measured. In fact, the way internet freedom is defined and measured is crucial to understanding what kind of democracy we should expect in terms of rights, procedures, relationship between state and market, role of public institutions and private actors, kind of regulation and control. Based on a growing recent literature emphasizing the political and governmental function of indicators (Davis et al., 2012; Broome and Quirk, 2015; Cooley and Snyder, 2015; Merry et al., 2015; Rottenburg et al., 2015; Giannone, 2019), we do address measurement not just as a methodological issue, but as a “political space” (Urueña, 2015). It means that issues related to the ideological background and political characteristics of the evaluators, as well as the construction of the instruments, the selection of the indicators, the diffusion and use of the results, should be taken into account.

In this paper we propose a preliminary exploration of the main international initiatives in the measurement of internet freedom with the aim to construct a critical mapping of evaluators, instruments, indicators, and users. These issues will be addressed through an innovative approach aimed at “governmentalizing Gramsci” and “Marxianizing Foucault” (Sum and Jessop, 2013), that is able to interact hegemony and governmentality, class power and classification power, knowledge and governance effects in the measurement of Internet freedom.

Among the main questions are the following: how do the instruments conceive of the role of the state in controlling and regulating the internet? Is the nature of the political regime (democratic, autocratic, hybrid) taken into account? How do private actors are considered? What is the role of internet private intermediaries and how do they affect the understanding of democracy? Who is to be in charge of regulating the internet (state, internet private intermediaries, social media providers, users?) and what kind of regulation do the instruments promote? What understanding of internet freedom is promoted by the measuring instruments (individual/collective, economic/political/social)?

In line with our theoretical assumptions, we expect that results will confirm an understanding of internet freedom framed mainly in economic and individual terms, with a negative role assigned to the state in the regulation and control of the net.

### **Contribution 1.5**

**Author(s):** Christopher Hooton (George Washington University, Institute of Public Policy, USA)

**Title:** The State of Online Governance – An Industry wide Analysis of Internet Company Information Enforcement and Moderation

**Keywords:** content moderation, privacy, content enforcement, online information governance

**Abstract:**

Policymaker interest is growing about how internet companies manage their platforms and communities. There is particular interest in how they manage online content and protect users, which is borne out of numerous regulatory debates on how to best govern the internet. An appreciable understanding of the current state of online content moderation – in the form of quantifiable metrics and analysis – is unfortunately missing from the discussion. The proposed paper seeks to address the information gap between clear regulatory concerns regarding online information governance and the current practices of internet companies. To do this, the author will compile and analyze aggregated internet company ‘transparency reports’ for 2018-2019 as a starting point for a critical discussion on the current state of private sector online governance.

The author will first compile transparency reports for 15 major international internet firms and catalogue the available data and metrics reported by each company related to their online information governance actions (e.g. copyright takedown notices). The author will then develop a standardized taxonomy for the types of actions taken across the different firms (e.g. court orders versus community standards violations). Finally, the author will aggregate data from all of the companies to develop the first, to the extent of the author’s knowledge, dataset on online information governance actions from the world’s largest internet companies.

The critical discussion will focus on three key areas of investigation based on the data. First, the author will use the standardized taxonomy of governance actions to examine the current key areas of responsibility/liability of platforms. By understanding where and how large internet platforms currently enforce information governance, the author hopes to extract important details that can better inform future enforcement regulation. Second, the author will dive specifically into governance actions related to privacy enforcement and copyright enforcement, given their prominence in current regulatory discussions. Third, the author will discuss what an ideal, long-term online information governance system might look like based on existing private sector actions and public sector regulatory concerns.

There are two goals to the report. First, the author plans to make public the dataset compiled in the analysis to help support future, more sophisticated analysis of online information governance actions by the internet industry. Second, the author hopes the report can provide some clear and nuanced lessons on how stakeholders can improve online information governance that are based on data and analysis. In particular, the author hopes the data and information can provide clearer insights into where additional public sector efforts to improve information governance should be focused.

### **Contribution 1.6**

**Author(s):** Marianne Kneuer and Wolf Schünemann (Hildesheim University, Germany)

**Title:** Legitimatory Balancing Acts of online content regulation – comparing online communication control across regime types

**Keywords:** online content regulation, regime type, legitimatory politics, discursive strategies

**Abstract:**

Since the inception of the Internet as a mass medium, online censorship has been regarded as the exclusive domain of autocratic governance. In contrast, in line with their “bias against control” (McQuail) in media regulation, liberal democracies have shied away from extensive measures of online content regulation beyond the rather well-defined borders set by criminal law. However, there is growing empirical evidence that also democracies follow the global trend towards a stricter regulation of online content. In terms of theory, political regime difference has become questionable as the sole explanation for measures of online control. Against this backdrop, the paper develops an alternative explanation based on legitimatory politics. Which role do discursive strategies play for the policy development in the field? How do they co-determine legislation, institution-building and sanctioning practices as essential elements of regulatory regimes?

Legitimatory politics is a central challenge for governments coping with the alleged threats of the digital. This is obvious when observing the dilemmatic choices that liberal democracies across the world are currently facing. On the one hand, growing concerns about public discourse manipulation through disinformation, hate speech and cyberattacks, have weakened their principled abstention from regulatory measures of online communication control. On the other hand, the very same measures that are meant to preserve and protect the democratic process might endanger it even more fundamentally by restricting freedom of political speech and communication. However, we argue that what is obvious for democracies, namely that it is difficult to gain legitimation for online communication control does also hold true for autocracies. Based on comparative research on legitimatory politics, we identify a common challenge for both types of regimes in their need to address and accommodate conflicting interests of societal actors and gain legitimation within the respective political setting.

As in the field of internet governance, there is a lack of comparative studies across regime types, the paper seeks to add to this emerging field. Its main theoretical contribution is that instead of reducing the explanation of variation of regulatory practices to the type of regime or readily assuming convergence across regime types, we introduce legitimatory politics as intervening factor. In addition to the theoretical framework, we provide an exemplary analysis of governmental discourses for two comparative cases, France and Venezuela, by which we identify ideal type legitimatory strategies (e.g. securitization, ideational-identitarian strategies, democracy protection) and relate these to the actual measures and practices of online control. For our empirical analysis, we rely on data from EIU Democracy Index, Freedom on the Net as well as test samples of documents of governmental communication.

**Contribution 1.7**

**Author(s):** Jiachen Liang (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong)

**Title:** Investigating Public Perceptions of Online Censorship in China

**Keywords:** Censorship, Information Credibility, Evaluation of Government Effectiveness

**Abstract:**

Many authoritarian regimes vigorously regulate the Internet in order to prevent people from accessing information that is deemed unfavorable to the regime. Extant studies primarily focus on the kind of information that is more likely to be censored. Seldom do they pay attention to the actual effects of censorship on the citizens. This study asks two questions: (1) does censorship awareness affect people's trust in the credibility of censored information? and (2) does censorship awareness affect people's attitudes toward the government?

Using an online survey experiment conducted in China, we find that censorship awareness raises doubts in people's perception of information credibility, and may polarize such perception in different directions depending on which censorship entity that people believe implements the censorship. In addition, censorship awareness significantly decreases people's willingness to seek assistance from the government when needs arise, meaning that censorship may decrease people's evaluation of government effectiveness. The findings provide implications for studies of censorship and contributed to the understanding of information politics in non-democracies.

### **Contribution 1.8**

**Author(s):** Nicola Palladino (University of Salerno, Italy)

**Title:** "Your rights have been removed...". An assessment of platforms' content governance policies with digital constitutionalism standards

**Keywords:** Digital Constitutionalism, Content Governance, Social Media Networks

**Abstract:**

As Bower and Zittrain have recently noted, the approach toward content governance has shifted from a "right to speech" era, aiming at safeguarding free flow of information and intermediaries from external coercion, to a "public health" era concerned with the negative externalities produced by platforms and social networks, in particular the corrosive social and political effects of misinformation. Further, the two authors glimpse the rise of a "Process" era, focused on the development of legitimate mechanisms to achieve workable and effective compromise among competing claims. This paper aims at contributing to this debate analysing social media platforms' content governance under a digital constitutionalism perspective. Digital constitutionalism explores how norms, rules and procedures rise from the frictions among different actors in order to constrain both private operators and public authorities and safeguarding peoples and communities. In so doing it figures as alternative to both the liberal approach of the "right to speech" era and the securitarian approach that very often characterizes state interventions in the "public health" era. In particular, this paper investigates to what extent and in which way platforms are embedding digital constitutionalism standards within their rules, procedures and design, and question if societal external pressure is a sufficient condition to lead private actors to develop self-constraining norms finding a balance among competing claims. For this purpose, digital constitutionalism standards developed for content governance have been first mapped through a quali-quantitative content analysis of documents released by academic, political and social initiatives addressing the content governance issue within discussion on Internet rights. Then, the paper assesses the compliance by some of the major social media networks, namely Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, with such digital constitutionalism standards. Three distinct dimensions have been investigated analysing platforms' documentation related to content governance, including but not limited to Community Standards and Content Moderation policies. First, a substantive dimension related to the alignment of platforms' content moderation rules with digital constitutionalism values (What value have been adopted? To which one have been given priority?). Second, a process dimension, taking into account platforms' content governance rules-making and decision-making (In which way have been stakeholders involved? How are decision on general rules and specific cases made? With which guarantees for users?). Third, an implementation dimension concerned on the effectiveness of the established arrangements (How are rules enforced? What changes in platforms' governance and technical design have been introduced?). Preliminary findings indicate that, despite platforms during the last years have devoted considerable efforts to improve their content moderation policies, nevertheless they are still unsatisfactory. Private self-regulation faces difficulties in dealing with digital constitutionalism standards, largely due to the inconsistency between technical and governance platforms' designs conceived to fulfill business purposes and the changes required to ensure transparency and accountability. Further, regulatory state interventions seem spur the use of automated decisions endangering individual rights. The analysis suggests that more robust and legitimate governance processes are needed, including delegated governance to external forum or an international framework based on human right law.

### **Contribution 1.9**

**Author(s):** Liudmila Sivetc (University of Turku, Finland)

**Title:** Domain Name Denial in Russia: How the Government Leverages the Governance of the Domain Name System of the Russian

**Keywords:** governance of online information, Russian Internet, free expression, domain name system, domain name denial

**Abstract:**

This paper aims at shedding some light on the conditions of online free expression in Russia. The paper focuses on how the Russian government leverages the power of the local domain name registry---the Coordination Center for top-level domains RU and PΦ---to regulate online content through rules on domain name registration. The paper investigates the case of Daily Stormer. This website, originated from the USA and accused of publishing pro-Nazi propaganda, was blocked in Russia in August 2017 by suspending the registration of domain name [dailystormer.ru](http://dailystormer.ru). The Russian registry denied the domain name following the request by the Russian government. The paper seeks to ask, as the main research question, through what mechanisms did the Russian government achieved this blocking and what implications could this power bring for online free expression? The paper asks the following sub-questions. Who are stakeholders of the Coordination Center for top-level domains RU and PΦ? What stake does the Russian government possess in the registry? What rules do regulate domain name denial? What rule does empower the Russian government to initiate the domain name blocking procedure? How is this procedure implemented? What treats may this procedure bring to online free expression?

The paper relies on the Internet infrastructure-centric approach developed in the Internet governance literature (Klein, DeNardis, Balkin). The approach emphasizes the vulnerability of online content to indirect regulation by national governments as the result of inserting in the Internet infrastructure, for instance, the national Domain Name System, locks to filter out unwanted content.

The paper finds out the following. In 2015, the Russian government became a stakeholder in the registry, which allows the government to decide on the rules of domain name registration. These rules enable state investigative agencies and the courts to ask the registry to suspend the registration of a domain name. In 2016, the rule was updated by empowering an executive government agency to trigger this blocking procedure. In 2017, the agency put the power into effect and triggered the blocking of Daily Stormer. By that time, the Russian government had already possessed the power to block online content. This power---website blocking---was introduced in 2012 and developed into quite an extensive legislation. The law allows the Russian government to block content for Russian users by blacklisting websites and ordering Internet service providers to deny access to them. The effect of this control may be, to some extent, questioned by the fact that in practice, although illegal, blocking can be circumvented through VPN channels. In comparison with website blocking, the new control practice revealed in this paper---domain name blocking---presents a more serious danger for online free expression. From a legal perspective, domain name blocking does not rely on a clear legal framework, but rather on non-transparent partnership arrangement between the registry and the government. From a technological perspective, domain name blocking prevents not only Russians but also Internet users from any part of the world to access a website. This barrier cannot be circumvented through VPN channels.

### **Contribution 1.10**

**Author(s):** Carsten Ullrich (University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg)

**Title:** Lessons for a new governance framework for platform responsibility? A review of reform proposals since 2007

**Keywords:** internet governance, content regulation, online intermediary liability, fundamental rights

**Abstract:**

Over the last 15 years digital platforms have risen to indispensable and omnipresent intermediaries for any user of the internet. Despite all the great advantages of pervasive and instant access to information, the content management practices of today's digital platforms are giving rise to serious threats to established democratic values and fundamental rights.

In the face of these challenges, the legal framework that regulates liabilities for content has remained remarkably stable, both in the US and the EU. In 2019 the new EU Commission announced to change this. It vowed to “upgrade our liability and safety rules for digital platforms, services and products, and complete our Digital Single Market.” The overhaul of the E-Commerce Directive (ECD) will touch a key piece of internet regulation.

Suggestions for changes to the current intermediary liability frameworks, both in the EU and the US, have been around since the emergence of the new Web 2.0 interactive platforms.

This paper proposes to take stock of the by now impressive amount of proposals. Over 15, mostly academic, proposals for regulating content liabilities or responsibilities of online platforms will be analysed and evaluated. The analysis will follow the thematic scope of this year's GIG ARTS conference.

First, the choice of regulatory or governance model of each proposal will be reviewed. It has by now become clear that there are competing views on whether purely self- or autoregulated solutions, co-regulation or direct state intervention are best for addressing the new challenges of online content regulation. Secondly, the role each proposal accords to existing or new stakeholders in the internet governance process will be discussed. For example, how are users/civil society, regulators or industry meant to participate in content regulation and what are the institutional set-ups? Thirdly, the scope of the proposals will be analyzed. Some reform suggestions focus on certain types of content, others target specific categories of intermediaries and yet others are horizontal and all embracing. Finally, the paper aims to look at the position of technology and code in each of these reform suggestions.

The variety of the attempts to reform today's platform liability rules confirm one thing. There is no silver bullet solution for regulating content liabilities in this diverse, fast changing and impactful field. Compared to the light-touch, general provisions of the current ECD, new governance solutions may require a much more detailed and deeper immersion into the operational and technological practices of content management. By comparing and analysing recent, and not so recent, reform suggestions this paper attempts to identify some common traits and conditions that may play a role in shaping a future responsibility and liability framework for intermediaries in content regulation.

### **Contribution 1.11**

**Author(s):** Mariëlle Wijermars (Maastricht University, Netherlands)

**Title:** The social media law that wasn't: Introducing failure into the study of Russian internet governance

**Keywords:** Russia, Internet governance, Social media, Internet freedom

**Abstract:**

The Russian State Duma is commonly perceived as a 'rubber stamp' parliament with little to no political power (cf. Noble 2018). This assumption is also reflected in the study of Russian lawmaking in the Internet domain, where analyses tend to take one of two forms: the first are studies on legislative proposals, assessing their potential impact (thus assuming they will be passed, and with limited amendments); the second are studies that analyse laws that have been adopted, critically assessing their terms. Both types are tied to the novelty of the (proposed) legislation and approach their subject from within the framework of increasing restrictions of Internet freedom, as is indicated by international rankings. While these studies are both valid and necessary, the singular focus on these two moments in the legislative process means that our understanding of how Russian Internet governance is developed and how its implementation impacts Russian society is incomplete. For example, medium-term studies on the implementation of laws concerning the Internet are scarce (for an exception, see Soldatov 2019), as are studies of the amendment process.

This paper formulates an intervention into the study of Russian Internet governance by shifting attention to failure. What factors determine whether a draft law in the Internet domain fails or succeeds in getting adopted? What is the role of, e.g., media and public debate (e.g. moral panic) in shaping this process? The theoretical argument of the paper builds upon the case study of a potentially high-impact proposal to regulate social media that has thus far failed to pass. The proposal was first introduced in July 2017 amid highly publicised concerns about the potential danger of social media being used for promoting suicide among minors (the so-called "blue whale" hype). After receiving serious criticism, it was revised and reintroduced on 3 April 2018. While the Duma passed the revised bill in its first reading on 12 April 2018, it has yet to move to the second reading. The paper examines which factors may explain this failure, and considers what these findings say about the development and characteristics of Russian Internet governance. It argues that current scholarship insufficiently acknowledges the non-linear aspects of Russian lawmaking (in which laws can fail to be properly implemented or rapidly lose their relevance, or the same end can be reached via multiple means at the same time) as well as the significance of public opinion in shaping Internet policy within an authoritarian context.

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## **Section 2** **(Dis)information and Social Media**

- 2.1** The regulation of political communication and election campaigns today: the use of social media and the new challenges for democracy in Europe. Maria Romana Allegri, Emma Garzonio, Paola Marsocci (Sapienza University of Rome - Department of Communication and Social Research, Italy)
- 2.2** Online Incivility Spectrum for Discussions on High Profile Criminal Cases. Carolina Are (City, University of London, United Kingdom)
- 2.3** “Death penalty”, “wandering ghost”, and “reincarnation”: Body metaphors and Chinese internet users’ experiences of “account bombing”. Hui Fang (Jinan University, China), Shangwei Wu (Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands)
- 2.4** Trust in times of Polarisation and Social Media: the challenge of building an audience for digital news. Stefan Gadringer (University of Salzburg, Austria)
- 2.5** Does the Algorithm Lead to Information Cocoon? An Empirical Analysis Based on Media Diet Diversity and Information Source Trust. Mengmeng Guo (Sichuan University, China), Keren Fang (Beijing Normal University, China)
- 2.6** The Information Sanctuary? Dealing with Conspiracy Theories, Strategic Actors and Platforms in a Technologically Infused Media. Jaron Harambam (Institute for Media Studies - KU Leuven, Belgium)
- 2.7** The evolution and logic of China's campaign-style internet governance. Yan Li (Guangzhou University, China)
- 2.8** Blogs and Social Media as Stand-Ins for the State in Crisis-hit Greece: From Antagonism to Replication. Michael Nevradakis (Deree - The American College of Greece, Greece)
- 2.9** Transformation in Cultural Industries: In Search for Data and Diversity. Michèle Rioux, Guy-Philippe Wells, Jean-Robert Bisailon, Martin Tetu (Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada)

## **Contribution 2.1**

**Author(s):** Maria Romana Allegri, Emma Garzonio, Paola Marsocci (Sapienza University of Rome - Department of Communication and Social Research, Italy)

**Title:** The regulation of political communication and election campaigns today: the use of social media and the new challenges for democracy in Europe

**Keywords:** Social media, Political propaganda, Election campaigns, Misinformation

### **Abstract:**

In the last twenty years platforms have been playing an increasingly relevant role in the digital economy: they have been taking over social and cultural practices, establishing themselves as Internet intermediaries for content storage, production and distribution (Gillespie, 2010). Connectivity (Van Dijck, 2013) driving these processes constitutes a profitable resource, both in political and purely economic terms. Data analytics and algorithmic implementation are opening new, unprecedented challenges for research. The pervasiveness of social media has also re-shaped the relationship between democracy and social rights; hence the need to create an effective system of protection for digital identity and citizenship (Rodot., 2014).

Although the concept of “platforms” still remains quite undefined from a legal point of view, both under the Italian and the EU law, the EU has proved to be aware of the importance of platforms for the development of the digital single market, since they facilitate the relations among stakeholders, ease the access to the global market, increase consumer choice, offer the potential to enhance citizens' participation in society and democracy (COM(2016) 288 on online platforms and digital single market; EP Resolution of 31.05.2017). However, platforms also play a prominent role in the spreading of illegal content and misinformation (COM(2017) 555 on tackling illegal content online). To this respect, the EU has focused heavily on platforms' self-regulation, although this approach may seem not particularly effective: a framework of legally-binding EU rules would definitely be more useful to reduce the level of arbitrariness and heterogeneity of the measures undertaken by platforms so far.

Starting from these premises, this paper will deal with the impact of platforms on political propaganda, which is challenging the principles of democratic constitutionalism, both in terms of the effective guarantee of political rights and of the restrictions to the freedom of expression. Issues related to platforms' responsibilities in processing personal data, consequences of algorithmic procedures and profiling activities falling upon political communication and dissemination of information altering the public debate during election campaigns (e.g. fake news, robotrolling, flaming, hate speech) will be at the core of our research.

The paper will be divided into three sections. In the first one Emma Garzonio, through a comparative study of the various lines of research on communication studies and web politics, will put into evidence the connections between the inner features of social platforms, their impact on the quality of information and the contemporary political communication style. The second and third sections will use the typical tools and methods of legal research. In particular, Maria Romana Allegri will focus on the ineffectiveness of the mere reliance on platforms' self-regulation with the scope of contrasting misinformation in political/electoral contexts, whereas Paola Marsocci will deal with the use of digital platforms by public authorities: in fact, political leadership at national and sub-national levels appears to be unable to keep political and institutional communication separate.

## **Contribution 2.2**

**Author(s):** Carolina Are (City, University of London, United Kingdom)

**Title:** Online Incivility Spectrum for Discussions on High Profile Criminal Cases

**Keywords:** online abuse, criminal cases, online incivility spectrum, online incivility, hate speech online harassment, trolling, human rights, madeleine mccann

### **Abstract:**

This paper wishes to expand the concept of regulating online abuse on high profile criminal cases further by answering the question: When does online behaviour in conversations surrounding high profile criminal cases become harmful and is, therefore, in need of regulation? This way, it hopes to make a contribution to preventing excessive censorship while preserving a healthy online debate. Although it has chosen the Madeleine McCann case as a case study, this paper takes no position on the disappearance or on potential culprits, but only focused on #McCann, the hashtag used on Twitter to discuss all matters related to the disappearance, due to the wealth of content it provides for analysis.

Despite the novelty of the topic, a body of literature has tried to explain and explore the realm of online abuse, trolling, flaming, cyber bullying and cyber harassment in the past few years. However, this wealth of content has also resulted in the confusion of trolling, the practice of behaving disruptively online, with the practice of verbally abusing and threatening others on the internet.

As part of a wider PhD project, this paper has collected a representative sample of tweets on the Madeleine McCann case to analyse the conversation through digital ethnography, to create a spectrum of online incivility, going from the merely annoying to the harmful. This paper analysed 500 recent tweets sent by 192 accounts between July 12 and 16 2018, all within the #McCann conversation. The choice of the number of tweets to analyse was informed by the analysis of other pieces of research looking at Twitter data. For instance, Kreis' #refugeesnotwelcome analysis only focused on 200 tweets, while Twitter analysis related to online abuse and to #McCann has already been conducted by Synnott, Coulias and Ioannou (2017), who analysed 400 tweets from 37 accounts, therefore this paper will try to at least match these numbers or, ideally, reached 500 tweets posted by at least 50 accounts to provide a representative snapshots of the conversations taking place.

### **Contribution 2.3**

**Author(s):** Hui Fang (Jinan University, China), Shangwei Wu (Erasmus University Rotterdam, Netherlands)

**Title:** “Death penalty”, “wandering ghost”, and “reincarnation”: Body metaphors and Chinese internet users’ experiences of “account bombing”

**Keywords:** account bombing, Chinese internet, internet governance, internet regulations, body metaphors, online censorship

**Abstract:**

Since 2018, narratives about a specific measure of internet censorship have emerged on the Chinese internet; netizens call this “account bombing”炸 (号). It refers to the phenomenon that some social media accounts are blocked permanently by internet regulators without the users knowing the reasons for this or receiving any warnings in advance. Unlike the case of “digital suicide” where users actively disconnect themselves from social media (Karppi, 2011), account bombing as a type of internet surveillance can be devastating for users, especially when the social media platform (e.g. WeChat) is significantly intertwined with users’ daily lives. Compared to other measures of internet regulations in China, such as shutting down a whole website or deleting particular content posted by individual users, account bombing is a relatively new technique of internet governance, reflecting the tightening trend in China’s internet policies. The implication of account bombing for Chinese internet users remains to be researched.

Aimed at understanding how Chinese internet users make sense of account bombing experiences and react to internet regulations, this study examines users’ narratives about this practice, especially the metaphors they employ. It contains a critical metaphor analysis (Charteris-Black, 2004) of preexisting online narratives and semi-structured interviews with individual users who had experienced account bombing. Preliminary findings suggest that the users often use the metaphors related to the body, such as “death penalty”死 (刑), “wandering ghost” (游魂), “reincarnation” (□世), and a person’s “will” (□嘱). We thus examine the functions of these body metaphors in two dimensions: the cognitive and the affective. Regarding the cognitive dimension, body metaphors are embedded in and invoked by the internet users’ reinforced knowledge of the constrained role of the internet in the Chinese public life, users’ precarious ownerships of their personal data, users’ problematic dependence on large social media platforms, and the unpredictability of China’s internet censorship. Most of all, body metaphors are used to reveal the irreversibility of account bombing and the uneven power relations on the Chinese internet which are heavily skewed toward regulators. As for the affective dimension, body metaphors convey the internet users’ strong negative emotions, including amazement, anger, anxiety, frustration, helplessness, sadness, etc. They also establish the relevance of this seemingly individual, sporadic experience to a broader audience, evoking sympathy both affectively and politically. Overall, body metaphors consolidate the sense users have made out of account bombing and make it relatable and easier to circulate online. They open a new way to understanding the implications of China’s internet policies.

## **Contribution 2.4**

**Author(s):** Stefan Gadringer (University of Salzburg, Austria)

**Title:** Trust in times of Polarisation and Social Media: the challenge of building an audience for digital news

**Keywords:** digital news, trust, digital news report, Austria, digital news consumption, polarisation

### **Abstract:**

The World Wide Web has been a massive booster for the expansion of information and communication services. This is especially valid for information about recent affairs and issues where a huge number of available digital resources meet with an increasing interest in news. The recent growth in digital news consumption has sparked a renewed interest in the relationship between trust and patterns of news use. We know that trust in the news is in decline in many (but not all) countries. We can also see that this has occurred in parallel with falling trust in many other institutions, also coinciding with declines in traditional print and broadcast news use, and sharp drops in advertising revenues. These decades-old trends have been compounded by more recent concerns over so-called “fake news”, and associated attempts by politicians and other powerful people to use this term to discredit the mainstream media. Despite this, we currently know relatively little about how the dynamics of trust in news operate beneath the top-level figures and headline trends.

This paper uses data from the Reuters Institute Digital News Report to focus on how trust in different types of news outlets varies. This variation is explained by a diachronic perspective and using the four surveys conducted in Austria for the years 2016-2019. The Austrian context is complemented with key findings from the global survey. The Digital News Report data is based on an online survey of around 75,000 respondents across 38 countries. Importantly, the 2018 and 2019 surveys complemented questions about overall trust in the news with questions that explored levels of trust people have in individual news outlets. Thus, this paper is able to examine whether different types of news outlet are more or less trusted, and how this relates to their use. It also explores how other sociodemographic factors shape trust in individual news outlets, and how this combines to create an overall perception of the news environment.

More specifically, this paper is structured around answering the following research questions: (i) Is trust a necessarily condition for building and maintaining a large audience? (ii) What are the conditions for success for those news outlets that score low on trust but nonetheless have a large audience? (iii) How does the relationship between trust and news media literacy vary for different news outlets? (iv) How is polarisation and partisanship of news outlets evolving and affecting trust in mainstream news media?

This paper uses the Austrian surveys as a national case study in combination with international trends in digital news. Some specifications of the Austrian news market (e.g. the highest usage of printed newspapers of all countries compared) provide valuable explanations on the relationship between different news distribution channels, digital outlets and consumption patterns in combination with trust.

## **Contribution 2.5**

**Author(s):** Mengmeng Guo (Sichuan University, China), Keren Fang (Beijing Normal University, China)

**Title:** Does the Algorithm Lead to Information Cocoon? An Empirical Analysis Based on Media Diet Diversity and Information Source Trust

**Keywords:** Information Cocoon, Algorithm, Media Diet

### **Abstract:**

At present, algorithm recommendation has become an important means for information distribution. There has always been a dispute over "algorithm leads to information cocoons", although the harm of Information Cocoons is a consensus in academic circles. However, the "Information Cocoon" described by Cass R. Sunstein is more like a semi-prophetic metaphor, instead of a systematic discussion nor an accurate research framework.

The dispute affects the observation and cognition of Information Cocoon and is not conducive to the objective understanding of the relationship between the algorithm and Information Cocoon. A couple of questions need to be answered to end the dispute. For example, what are the conditions for the existence of Information Cocoon? Does the algorithm necessarily lead to Information Cocoon? To answer these questions, this research analyzes the recognized characteristics of Information Cocoon, and proposes two hypotheses that the algorithm may lead to Information Cocoon: first, the using frequency of algorithmic media will reduce the diversity of users' media diet; second, the using frequency of algorithmic media will negatively affect people's trust in non-algorithmic information sources such as traditional media (newspapers, radio, television), social media (Weibo, QQ, WeChat) and online forums (Baidu Post bar, Douban website).

This study takes the users of Toutiao, China's largest algorithmic news recommendation platform, as the research object, and conducts a sample survey in 45 cities across the country, yield 926 valid samples. Meanwhile, we use the hierarchical regression analysis method to take six demographic characteristics of gender, age, income level, education level, marriage situation, and city-level as control variables, and the using frequency as core independent variables.

The results indicate that using frequency does not affect the diversity of users' media diet. At the same time, using frequency also has a significantly positive impact on the degree of trust in TV and online forums. The results show that algorithmic media does not lead to Information Cocoon, but provides users with diversified values through the integration with non-algorithmic media. Besides, this research found that married people, the elderly, and users with low educational levels scored lower on the diversity of media diet, and users with low educational levels and income levels had low trust in the official media. Compared to the harm of technology, the information gap caused by these social differences needs more vigilant.

The results of this paper show that in the era of artificial intelligence leading information distribution, technology companies have not easily transferred the power of "gatekeeper" to the algorithm, but have been continuously injecting humanistic and rational values into the algorithm by strengthening manual review, optimizing recommendation system, and introducing professional content production teams. Moreover, according to the effect of population characteristics on independent variables, this paper proposes an optimization scheme to the algorithm model for Chinese users.

## **Contribution 2.6**

**Author(s):** Jaron Harambam (Institute for Media Studies - KU Leuven, Belgium)

**Title:** The Information Sanctuary? Dealing with Conspiracy Theories, Strategic Actors and Platforms in a Technologically Infused Media

**Keywords:** conspiracy theories, post-truth, content moderation, fact-checking epistemic democracy, ethnography, science and technology studies, internet governance, platform (self)regulation

### **Abstract:**

Early internet utopians envisioned an emancipatory world where traditional information gatekeepers would lose their hegemonic powers, and knowledge would finally be democratized. In recent years it has become clear that the contemporary information landscape looks more like a complex warzone where various strategic actors fight for the minds and hearts of people with partisan information, troll factories and invisible technological weapons such as bot(net)s and curating algorithms. A prominent concern in these “post-truth” discussions is the virality of various forms of contentious contents (e.g. fake news, conspiracy theories, mis- and disinformation) and is held responsible for political turnarounds in the US (Trump) and UK (Brexit), increasing societal polarization and more general assaults on democracy and its institutions. As my ethnographic fieldwork in the Dutch conspiracy milieu starting in 2011 made clear, the internet proved for many people the information sanctuary where they could learn about facets of life that, in their eyes, have been hidden or obscured before, but what is now open for everybody to see. Not unlike those early internet utopians, they praised the epistemic liberation offered by the free circulation of ideas on the internet, and saw their work and websites as contributing to broader democratic ideals. Today, the internet seems increasingly structured and manipulated by various strategic actors and platform infrastructures alike. What does this mean for the circulation, topics and popularity of conspiracy theories? Spurred by the enormous quantity of information online, search engines and social media platforms provide people with so called “relevant” yet rather nontransparent selections, and become as such new powerful gatekeepers of information. Strategic actors game the workings of these systems and exploit them to their own political and corporate agenda. Instead of freely searching and finding information to our liking, as my respondents emphasized, people are now easily manipulated into seeing various forms of information they may have not wanted to see, neither are they aware (nor can they be) of why and how they have received such selections. Unlike legacy media corporations, these new tech corporations have no professional norms (of transparency or objectivity) or legal frameworks to which they can be held accountable for the information they make (in)visible. In this paper, I document and analyze this historical shift based on my empirical conspiracy theory research of the early 2010’s and on my current ethnographic study of how conspiracy theorists use media to inform themselves about the world. From that perspective, I critically review current efforts to deal with contentious contents online which boil down to educating or empowering people, content moderation (fact-checkers) and platform (self) regulation, which all have potentials but serious limitations. Building from research and experiments with epistemic democracy in the field of science and technology studies, I propose to have “deliberative citizen knowledge platforms” assess information online and conclude as such with more democratic and constructivist alternatives to keep the internet a free space where quality information thrives, people are in control over the information they get to see, and public discourse is facilitated.

## **Contribution 2.7**

**Author(s):** Yan Li (Guangzhou University, China)

**Title:** The evolution and logic of China's campaign-style internet governance

**Keywords:** China's Internet governance, campaign-style governance, regular governance

### **Abstract:**

In current, China's Internet governance can be divided into two ways: regular governance and campaign-style governance. regular governance means that state organs at all levels and their subordinate departments manage the Internet in accordance with the law. Campaign-style governance refers that the Party and government departments crack down on some serious problems of the Internet, leading by a competent department with other departments coordinating, centralizing enforcement resources to conduct a large-scale administrative inspection and penalty in a relatively short period of time. Campaign-style governance is the rule of man in essence.

As a unique and organic part of China's internet governance, campaign-style governance has experienced continuous changes for the past 25 years. This study explores the evolution, characteristics and internal logic of China's internet campaign-style governance. More than 100 representative cases of campaign-style governance since 2000 are identified as samples, policy documents and reports from mainstream media related to these cases are collected to content analysis. The four stages and their characteristics are distinguished by content analysis. Then the case study method is used to explain the logic how these characteristics of different stages are formed and evolved.

The research finds that, (1) the legislation and enforcement in the field of Chinese Internet are implemented with the help of the campaign-style governance. Legislation and enforcement are supposed to be an important manifestation of the rule of law, but in reality they are oddly combined with the rule of man. (2) The campaign-style governance of Chinese Internet law and the development of the Internet are embedded in each other. From the infrastructure of economy and e-government, the Internet has developed its media and social attributes, until it has integrated the whole society into the network society. Along with this, the campaign-style enactment of Internet law has changed from the initial reliance on the national violence machine to the current emphasis on a self-censorship atmosphere among online platforms and netizens. (3) The legislation and enforcement of Chinese Internet law have extended from the control of material internet bar to the governance of virtual cyber ethos and speech, showing the governance became deep, subtle and rigorous .

This study focuses on the campaign-style internet governance in China, which will deepen the understanding of internet governance. First of all, it pays attention to the distinction and connection between the general (regular governance) and the special (campaign-style governance), thus revealing the role of campaign-style governance at a more detailed level. Secondly, this study makes a clearer understanding of the prominent problems and threats posed by the internet to social order and the state power at different governance stages, and also how the government responds. More importantly, it can observe the maintenance and adjustment of the national campaign-style governance, which can provide enlightenments for further understanding of the changes of power relations of authoritarian regime under the ICT environment.



## **Contribution 2.8**

**Author(s):** Michael Nevradakis (Deree - The American College of Greece, Greece)

**Title:** Blogs and Social Media as Stand-Ins for the State in Crisis-hit Greece: From Antagonism to Replication

**Keywords:** Social media, Blogs, Greece, Social movements, Advocacy, E-government, Protests, E-governance, Public sphere, Civil society, Alternative media, Internet governance

### **Abstract:**

Despite relatively low internet penetration rates by European Union standards, Greeks increasingly began to turn to the internet—and particularly to blogs and social media—as alternative sources of news and information and as alternative spaces of mobilization, in the years immediately preceding the onset of the country's economic crisis. Online movements such as the “G700,” representing the so-called “700 euro generation” of highly educated and largely underpaid or underemployed youth in Greece, were able to impact an otherwise tightly-controlled public discourse in Greece, dominated by a media landscape highly characteristic of Hallin & Mancini's (2004) “Polarized Pluralist” or “Mediterranean” model and the system of “diaploki”—or interplay between the political system, media owners, and business interests. During this same period, a new phenomenon also arose in Greece: “news blogs”—largely anonymous but said to be operated by professional journalists—which became popular “alternative” sources of news and information and a means for ordinary citizens to vent their frustrations with the Greek political system and day-to-day quality-of-life issues. The anonymous—and often sensational—nature of these “news blogs” resulted in numerous threats on the part of consecutive governments to crack down on online speech and outlaw anonymity. While these threats never fully materialized, the years of the economic crisis which followed saw numerous incidents where incidents involving critical online speech on the part of journalists, bloggers, and prominent social media personalities were targeted by the authorities. However, as the economic crisis in Greece deepened and became increasingly protracted, online speech itself metamorphosized: anonymous “news blogs” largely gave way to online news portals, some of which featured similar content and a similar design to popular “news blogs,” while single-issue advocacy blogs such as the “G700” were supplanted by online civil society initiatives which often replicated, or attempted to stand in for, e-government functions. Other initiatives adopted a clear advocacy function and were closely aligned to social movements and protests. This paper aims to address the following questions: what were the various stages of development of online tools (such as blogs and social media) as sources of alternative news and information and alternative means of governance, immediately preceding and during the Greek economic crisis? How did government authorities in Greece respond to these initiatives and use them as an impetus to regulate online speech, and were these efforts successful? Finally, to what extent were these online initiatives—particularly those representing an e-governance or civil society function—able to demonstrate longevity and maintain their independence from the incumbent political and media system? This paper is based upon longitudinal research conducted in Greece between 2012 and 2017, including over 120 interviews, survey questionnaires conducted across three sample populations, and five organizational case studies. The findings of this paper will present the various stages in the development of blogs and social media as a political tool in Greece, how the state responded to these initiatives and the effectiveness of these responses, while arguing that most of these online efforts proved to be ephemeral in nature.

### **Contribution 2.9**

**Author(s):** Michèle Rioux, Guy-Philippe Wells, Jean-Robert Bisailon, Martin Tetu (Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada)

**Title:** Transformation in Cultural Industries: In Search for Data and Diversity

**Keywords:** Diversity, culture, platforms, Internet, e commerce, data, statistics

**Abstract:**

To successfully adapt cultural policies to the industrial transformations in the music business in order to find a better balance and coexistence between the global cultural offer and the local offer, it is necessary to understand the nature of these transformations on a local level. There is an urgent need to develop new approaches and create new indicators to measure the impact of transnational cultural content delivery platforms on the economy of culture at national/local level.

The challenge here is twofold. First, it is increasingly difficult to draw a clear picture of the factors that influence the discovery, access and consumption of diverse local cultural content on digital platforms. The direct link established by digital platforms and music lovers causes a concentration of information at the hands of these platforms who now hold the keys to understanding local and national preferences and uses.

Second, the delineation of official statistics by territory and by sector responds to traditional methods of measuring cultural products that do not apply well in the new digital environment. Still, in the era of Big Data, it is needed to improve our understanding of how digital algorithms work and to measure their prescriptive effects on the presence, visibility and recommendation of different types of products or cultural content on catalogues of new cultural platforms.

We will introduce our conceptual framework as well as our methodology developed since 2017 and discuss the main results in terms of the political economy of discoverability barriers.

### Section 3

#### Multilevel Internet Governance: Actors, Processes and Values

- 3.1 The monocratisation of internet policy. Presidents, governmental agencies, and digital networks. Francesco Amoretti (University of Salerno, Italy), Fortunato Musella (University of Naples Federico II, Italy), Mauro Santaniello (University of Salerno, Italy)
- 3.2 Anticipating Decentralization Through Protocological Control: International Organizations and the Standardization of Blockchain Technology. Malcolm Campbell-Verduyn (University of Groningen, Netherlands), Moritz Huetten (Darmstadt Business School, Germany)
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### **Contribution 3.1**

**Author(s):** Francesco Amoretti (University of Salerno, Italy), Fortunato Musella (University of Naples Federico II, Italy), Mauro Santaniello (University of Salerno, Italy)

**Title:** The monocratisation of internet policy. Presidents, governmental agencies, and digital networks

**Keywords:** internet policy, monocratic government, platform regulation, web taxation, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence

**Abstract:**

The rise of the monocratic government is one of the most relevant political phenomena in the contemporary world. Until recent times dominated by a single leader was a typical trait of authoritarian regimes, where the concentration of power reduced political pluralism political leaders have gained centrality on the democratic scene, as a consequence of both a more direct, sometimes plebiscitary, rela with citizens, and a more direct control of the executive administration. The paper seeks to investigate the process of monocratisatio the domain of digital policy-making. Since this domain is mostly made of constitutive policies that establish new rules, institutions, a practices, it is expected to provide an effective case study for the analysis of monocratic governments in the making.

The paper sets up an analytical framework aimed at understanding the process of monocratisation on a general level, and at identifying variables and indicators of this political transformation in the digital policy field. Then, indicators are used in order to analyse a set of documents (including laws, orders, speeches, guidelines, working papers, drafts, and proposals) produced during the last ten years in the UK, the UE and the Russian Federation on four issues of digital policy-making: platform regulation, web taxation, cybersecurity, a artificial intelligence. Since monocratisation, as a political process, concerns both public policy and public discourse, the analysis will institution building as well as on the discursive construction of policy issues.

Preliminary findings seem to support the hypothesis about a growing relevance of governments' leaders also in those policy domains concerning digital networks. More in details, the process of monocratisation appears to be substantiated into digital policy through, on the one hand, the institutionalisation of new decision-making entities and practices under the direct control of executive branches of government and, on the other hand, a direct engagement of presidents on digital-related policy issues at the international and domestic levels.

Results are interpreted and discussed in order to provide a contribution to the study of the reorganization of state powers within democratic regimes and to outline a research agenda for future investigations.

### **Contribution 3.2**

**Author(s):** Malcolm Campbell-Verduyn (University of Groningen, Netherlands), Moritz Huetten (Darmstadt Business School, Germany)

**Title:** Anticipating Decentralization Through Protocological Control: International Organizations and the Standardization of Blockchain Technology

**Keywords:** anticipation, blockchain, centralization, international organizations, finance, global governance, legitimacy, protocols

**Abstract:**

How do international organizations (IOs) shape patterns of governance across a growing array of Internet-based digital activities that seek to promote the distribution rather than centralization of authority? Drawing on primary documents and participatory observation, this paper examines how the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), anticipate future decentralization by influencing the present exercise of what media theorist Alexander Galloway called ‘protocological control’. We trace how, through anticipatory governance practices, these two Paris-based IOs empower specialized groups of market actors in setting the key standards of acceptability for applications of emergent technologies. The case of blockchain or ‘distributed ledger technologies’, we argue, illustrates how official homages to decentralization tend to mask the more subtle, yet effective, manners through which the FATF and OECD maintain and extend technocratic forms of governance. Such practices, we conclude, risk undermining the very objectives of these organizations in extending their efforts to promote liberal economies and, particularly, to obviate illicit financial flows across fast evolving digital spheres.

### **Contribution 3.3**

**Author(s):** Orsolya Gulyas, Trisha Meyer (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium)

**Title:** From independence to interdependence? Conceptualizations of power in multistakeholder internet governance

**Keywords:** multistakeholder governance, power relations, democracy, equality, plurality, interdependence, discourse analysis

**Abstract:**

This submission addresses the general internet governance topic of multistakeholderism, aiming to offer insight into underlying assumptions and inherent issues regarding democratic, participative internet governance. By studying the discourse around multistakeholderism over the past 20 years, we aim to uncover the (im)possibilities of horizontal power relations in the way democratic and equal participation is manifested in the language use about governing the internet.

The paper draws on the political philosophy of Hannah Arendt and her conceptualization of politics, power and plurality to examine the relatively new phenomenon of multistakeholder governance. Arendt's notion of plurality - the fact that we are all equal as humans, but we are not the same – as well as her understanding of (political) power as emerging when people act together, rather than dominating or ruling over others, are both highly relevant to multistakeholder settings.

The multistakeholder approach is most prominent in the policy field of global internet governance, where it has developed to involve all relevant stakeholder groups (governments, private sector, technology community, civil society, academia) on an equal footing in public policy making. It has however often been criticized for the apparent lack of meaningful participation, involvement and representation of various communities in policy processes, calling into question its ethos of democracy, equality and inclusion. This study posits that despite the continued emphasis of global policy communities on the importance of multistakeholder approaches in internet governance, the frustration with the process is due to underlying assumptions on the meaning of politics, which crowd out the possibility of horizontal power relations being productive.

The study will analyze two decades of high-level, global policy documents dealing with internet governance, from 1998 (NTIA White Paper on Management of Internet Names and Addresses) to 2019 (The Age of Digital Interdependence by the UN High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation). It takes a critical look at the discourse on and around multistakeholder governance, focusing on how it is framed and justified. It aims to critically examine the terms that are most frequently used to describe it, such as 'participation', 'cooperation', or 'balancing interests', and to detect changes in the discourse over time.

The paper shows how conceptualizations of power in multistakeholder governance settings are often underlied by thinking about power as domination, a force to act, rather than as a result and outcome of acting together. While a recent shift in this thinking can be observed, especially with the new-found emphasis on 'interdependence', there are implications for conceptualizing horizontal power relations in politics, which would be necessary for a democratic, multistakeholder governance of the internet, grounded in Arendt's notion of plurality and her understanding of political power as acting together.

### **Contribution 3.4**

**Author(s):** Alison Harcourt (University of Exeter, United Kingdom)

**Title:** Digital rights activism in global Internet governance fora

**Keywords:** digital rights, internet governance, transnational activism

**Abstract:**

Although the literature on transnational actors and private sector global governance is extensive, little attention has been paid to participation within standard developing organisations (SDOs). To address this gap, the paper examines the role of digital rights activism in global Internet standard setting. It speaks to the literature on global governance and transnational activism with a case study on digital rights management by demonstrating how activist tactics fail in unstructured environments where there is no state involvement. Our analysis demonstrates that, contrary to common assumptions, digital rights activism is losing ground in Internet governance. Recent years have seen a high degree of spill-over of domains formally defined at the level of the state to SDOs via a process of intense interest mobilisation. The shift in the political architecture away from international treaty based agreements to technical standard agreements in fora such as the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) renders key developments in the Internet's architecture immune to campaigning tactics by digital activist groups. This occurs when formerly highly politicised issues are reframed in technical terms and decision-making is removed from the level of the state or bilateral treaty agreement to technical fora where civil society representation is low.

### **Contribution 3.5**

**Author(s):** Hortense Jongen and Jan Aart Scholte (University of Gothenburg, Sweden)

**Title:** Discourse and Legitimacy in Global Internet Governance: Evidence from ICANN

**Keywords:** Discourse, ICANN, Legitimacy, Legitimation

#### **Abstract:**

Key actors in global Internet governance face increasing demands to address concerns about democracy, human rights, inclusivity and freedom of the Internet. As their authority in the Internet ecosphere cannot be taken for granted, many of them seek to legitimate their rule in the eyes of different audiences and stakeholders. One way in which they aim to do so is by promoting specific legitimation discourses, for example, in relation to security, democracy and justice. Although we can see that these discursive practices are widespread in the sphere of Internet governance, we know little about the extent to which key audiences pick up on these cues. Do they notice them? If they do so, do they appreciate or reject them? How far have they internalized or perhaps even appropriated these narratives? And do these legitimation discourses have any impact on the perceived legitimacy of the governing organizations?

To fill this gap in knowledge, this paper pursues four aims: (1) To discover how far participants in global Internet governance pick up and embrace legitimating discursive practices; (2) To establish how far they have internalized and appropriated these discourses in their own narratives about Internet governance; (3) To examine variation in how different audiences (e.g. stakeholder groups and social categories) respond to these discursive practices; (4) To explore the relationship between audiences' awareness of these legitimation practices and their legitimacy perceptions toward the organization sending these messages.

Empirically, the paper focuses on the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Tasked with the governance of several core technical functions of the Internet infrastructure, ICANN has consistently promoted narratives of security, democracy, inclusivity, and justice to justify its authority in this area.

Theoretically, the paper follows a sociological understanding of legitimacy. This means that we look at how far ICANN's intended followers perceive ICANN to be legitimate, rather than assess the organization's legitimacy against external, normative standards. In addition, the paper engages with an extensive body of literature on practices of (discursive) legitimation in global governance.

Evidence comes from 467 mixed-methods survey interviews with the ICANN Board, staff, and community. Conducted in 2018-2019, the study is based on quantitative and qualitative data. Our quantitative data consist of closed-ended survey questions asking respondents how often they hear certain key legitimation phrases raised in ICANN and whether they approve that these topics are being discussed. These phrases are: 'security, stability and resiliency,' 'market competition and efficiency,' 'free and open Internet,' 'accountability,' 'multistakeholder participation,' 'global public interest,' 'human rights,' 'diversity,' and 'bottom-up policymaking.' In addition, we collected quantitative data on respondents' confidence in ICANN as a proxy indicator of legitimacy. We use statistical methods to study the relationship between the two. The qualitative data consist of participants' responses to several open-ended questions about legitimacy in ICANN. We are specifically interested in how far respondents reproduce these legitimating narratives when talking about ICANN's legitimacy. The results of this paper contribute to a better understanding of discursive legitimation practices in global Internet governance.



### **Contribution 3.6**

**Author(s):** Ludovica Paseri (University of Turin, School of Law, Italy)

**Title:** Data Protection, Misinformation, and Democracy: Challenges of Scholarly Communication

**Keywords:** Scholarly Communication, Information Revolution, Data Protection, Democracy, Misinformation, Open Science

**Abstract:**

The technological revolution, making information widely accessible, has invested every field of communication: research and universities have also been overwhelmed by a new way of communicating, disseminating and finding information, thanks to technologies that only a few years ago did not exist. The great opportunities that can derive from a new form of scholarly communication resulting from the information revolution can turn into insurmountable challenges for society and democracy if not addressed effectively. Scholarly communication and science in web 2.0 era necessarily involve the big platforms, identifying a problem of delegation to the private sector in the management of research data and publications.

In this scenario, one wonders about the following questions: What future can current national, but above all European, policies on scholarly communication have? How can we avoid delegating the management of data and research results to the private sector?

If science shares with democracy the norm of universalism, namely the objective character of the study carried out, based on previously confirmed knowledge, disconnected from the subjective perspective of the individual scientist, the theoretical framework of this paper starts from a general analysis of the challenges that scholarly communication has to face today (ownership of scientific data and results, misinformation, etc.), to focus specifically on the issue of data protection for scientific research.

The paper aims to produce a normative legal research: adopting a traditional legal methodology, it proposes the analysis of European policies on scholarly communication and science, with specific reference to Open Science, as well as an examination of the opinions and papers produced by European institutions on the protection of personal data in scientific research.

The aim of this paper is to provide an assessment of the current European policies on Scholarly Communication and Open Science, focusing specifically on the protection of personal data, and to propose a reflection on the role of individual researchers, or the Academy in general, on one hand, and of political institutions on the other hand, in the field of scholarly communication, in relation to the role played by large private platforms in the world of science and research.

### **Contribution 3.7**

**Author(s):** Evangelia Psychogiopoulou (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, Greece), Federica Casarosa (Centre for Judicial Cooperation, Robert Schuman for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Italy)

**Title:** Judicial dialogue in social media cases: Do national judges engage with peers and the European courts?

**Keywords:** judicial dialogue, social media, national courts, ECtHR, CJEU, freedom of expression, privacy

**Abstract:**

In a world of proliferating legal systems enjoying a judicial branch for the settlement of disputes, the concept of ‘judicial dialogue’ has been central to debates about judges’ interaction and interdependency. Judicial dialogue generally denotes engagement with the case law of other courts. From the different taxonomies to be found in the literature, vertical judicial dialogue refers to jurisprudential interaction between courts within the context of a hierarchical system, whereas horizontal judicial dialogue takes place between courts that operate at the same level.

Existing literature has not paid significant attention to the interaction of national courts in Europe. At the same time, the study of the interaction of national courts and the CJEU has mainly focused on the so-called ‘preliminary reference procedure’. The recent entry into force of Protocol 16 to the ECHR has created a similar channel for judicial dialogue between national courts and the ECtHR.

Besides such ‘formal’ mechanisms of judicial dialogue with the CJEU and the ECtHR, judicial dialogue with the European courts can take place through references to their rulings. Such references can be used to acknowledge the decisions of the European courts, show compliance but also disapprove their judicial stance. This is also the case as regards judicial dialogue between national courts, and between national courts and foreign courts. Case law references can be used to corroborate the reasoning of the deciding judge or criticize judicial approaches to specific legal issues by others.

The aim of this article is to examine national court decisions on social media in a selected set of EU Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia and Slovakia), with a clear focus on judicial dialogue. Social media amount to an area of law where questions regarding the application of traditional legal norms abound, due to the limited social media-specific intervention of national and European legislators. The difficulties encountered by national judges given that the legal framework may long precede the development of social media often require an effort of adaptation in rule interpretation that could be inspired by the decisions of other courts.

On the basis of such considerations, do national judges engage with the jurisprudence of national, foreign and European courts when called upon to decide social media disputes? What is the breadth of judicial interaction in social media cases and what is the contribution of judicial dialogue to solving the dispute at hand? Also, what is the recurrence of judicial dialogue in social media cases that raise fundamental rights issues, for instance free speech or privacy, and what are the main features of the interaction that takes place in such cases between different courts - national, foreign and European? The analysis builds on both quantitative and qualitative analysis and draws on research that was carried out in the framework of the Horizon 2020 COMPACT project.

**Contribution 3.8****Author(s):** Nili Steinfeld (Ariel University, Israel)**Title:** Parental mediation, monitoring and limitation of teens internet activities: External governance and encouraging self-governance in preparing children for life on the web**Keywords:** teens, adolescents, parental limitation, parental mediation, external governance, self-governance, interviews, survey, online risks**Abstract:**

The Internet provides many benefits to young users. Teens use the Internet to develop and maintain relationships (Tzavela et al., 2015), examine and define their identities (Israelashvili & Bukobza, 2012), ask embarrassing questions (Valkenburg & Peter, 2009), and strengthen social skills (Oeldorf-Hirsch & Sundar, 2015). The Internet plays a major role in shaping youths' identities, self-autonomy and relationships outside their families, find and develop unique interests, identify and differentiate themselves from others (Borca et al., 2015). Alongside these and other benefits, there are also risks in teens use of the Internet. Exposure to inappropriate content: abusive, sexual or violent (Boyd & Hargittai, 2013; Ktoridou, Eteokleous, & Zahariadou, 2012), privacy harms (Marwick & Boyd, 2014), misuse of personal information which can result in identity theft, physical and sexual assault (Gadekar & Pant, 2015; Notten & Nikken, 2016; Shin & Lwin, 2017), such risks may critically influence young people's lives. Parents adopt different forms of mediation to promote safe surfing among teens. Parental limitation concentrates around external governance of a child's online activities, by e.g. setting up limits for surf time, which websites to visit, permitted and forbidden activities. Such limitations or monitoring may be assisted by software. Parental mediation focuses on e.g. encouraging shared, parent-child activities, or managing open discussions about online risks and benefits. Mediation and shared online activities would potentially enable children and teens to be able to self-govern their online activities and navigate through the risks and benefits more successfully, especially as they become older. A mixed-method study included an online survey of 357 adolescents and additional 53 semi-structured interviews with adolescents, parents and teachers. Correlations between types of parental mediation, child age, child awareness and concerns of online risks, child online activities and risky behavior were analyzed. The study found that parents employ combinations of mediation, limitation and monitoring methods. While some describe a well-organized and predefined set of rules and norms, others describe how irregular external events triggered most of their conversations and rule-setting decisions. All sorts of parental mediation decrease as the child gets older and age negatively correlated with mediation of any sort. A positive correlation exists between parental limitation and concerns regarding various internet risks. A similar correlation exists between parental mediation and adolescents' concerns, however, in a regression model the relationship between mediation and concerns becomes non-significant and only sex (Girls), periphery, and parental limitation are significant factors predicting concerns. Another set of regression models show that parental limitation predicts less SNS activities, less searching and downloading activities, and less gaming activities among adolescents, while parental mediation predicts more of each of these sets of online activities. Importantly, parental mediation did not predict increase nor decrease of risky behavior or negative experiences online (e.g. consuming sexual content, bullying or being bullied). Parental limitation weakly and positively correlates with being a bullied, and negatively correlates with consuming sexual content. A discussion on the types of parental mediation and the types of internet governance each method promotes and enables among adolescents is discussed.

**Contribution 3.9****Author(s):** Meropi Tzanetakis (University of Vienna, Austria)**Title:** Governance from below: the case of digital drug markets**Keywords:** digital drug markets, modes of governance, coordination, ICT, digital ethnography**Abstract:**

The use of information and communication technologies have challenged top-down regulatory endeavours to control drugs. This development peaked when cryptomarkets emerged less than a decade ago. These encrypted platforms for the distribution of illicit drugs systematically allow its users to bypass government regulation (Martin 2014, Tzanetakis 2019a). The process of digitalisation facilitates the geographical expansion of drug markets and overcomes local limitations regarding accessibility of illegal drugs, sellers and customers (Tzanetakis 2019b). Thus, online drug markets pose challenges for policy makers, public health bodies, drug counselling, judiciary and law enforcement. At the same time, cryptomarkets are characterised as having important implications regarding the reduction of harm for drug users by making available higher-quality drugs with a lower risk of contamination, less violent encounters compared to offline drug acquisition and enabling peer-to-peer information sharing (Bancroft 2017, Barrett et al. 2016, Martin 2018).

This paper argues that the emergence and proliferation of digital drug markets allows for a window of opportunity to include bottom-up modes of governance rather than to proceed with prohibitionist drug policy regulation. In contrast to the governance of illicit offline markets, governance from below is both relevant and underexplored in the literature. Governance from below has been discussed in terms of how market actors solve coordination problems and use reputation to increase sales (Bakken et al. 2017, Przepiorka et al. 2017, Tzanetakis 2018). As such, online drug markets do not operate in a regulatory vacuum. Specific processes, shared norms and understandings create order in digital drug markets.

This paper aims to identify ways in which digital drug markets govern themselves through informal coordination practices. Drawing on Hofmann's et al. (2016) conceptual framework of governance as reflexive coordination, this paper examines governance by market actors as an evolving negotiation process (Katzenbach 2018). Based on a multi-sited digital ethnography, governance from below is characterised by four dimensions: (I) the normative dimension helps to elaborate how shared values and informal norms are established within the online community; (II) The discursive dimension focuses on shared beliefs such as libertarian ideas that are deeply embedded within actors and market structures; (III) The regulative dimension addresses how market administrators enforce terms of service; (IV) The technological dimension considers affordances and rules applied through the infrastructures of the virtual platforms.

Findings suggest that relatively stable forms of ordering characterise digital drug markets despite a lack of central control and formal regulation. The governance from below approach looks at everyday practices of coordination as a way of examining ordering processes from the bottom-up rather than from formal regulatory institutions. The four dimensions help illuminate the way in which actors and processes contribute to the ordering of digital drug markets by constantly negotiating shared norms, assumptions and expectations. Governance from below is a promising approach for including governance by digital drug markets to the discussion of governance of digital drug markets. Finally, the paper discusses some potential implications for the discussion of internet governance.

## **Section 4**

### **Privacy, Trust and Surveillance**

- 4.1** Security, privacy and the cloud: a geopolitical impasse. Jockum Hildén (University of Helsinki, Finland)
- 4.2** Farewell "Global Village"? Political (mass-)communication, digital identification and information asymmetries in the age of surveillance capitalism. Strauß (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Technology Assessment (ITA), Austria)
- 4.3** Digital Rights and Digital Fights: Investigating Privacy in Interpretations and Practices in Central Asia. Malika Toqmadi (PaperLab, Kazakhstan), Natalia Zakharchenko (NEDC, Kyrgyzstan)
- 4.4** Peace and Security: Personal Information Protection from the Perspective of China's General National Security Concept. Ju Zou, Quanwei Yu (Nanjing Normal University, China)

#### **Contribution 4.1**

**Author(s):** Jockum Hildén (University of Helsinki, Finland)

**Title:** Security, privacy and the cloud: a geopolitical impasse

**Keywords:** Cloud computing, CLOUD Act, Extraterritorial jurisdiction, Electronic evidence, Surveillance, Confidentiality of communications, Privacy

**Abstract:**

According to Cisco, one of the world's largest networking equipment providers, 94 percent of all workloads will be processed in the cloud by 2021. From the perspective of surveillance, this means that data which was previously accessible only through installing spyware on local devices can be accessed remotely.

This potential is not lost on lawmakers, where initiatives ranging from the Cloud Act in the U.S. and the e-evidence package in the EU propose that law enforcement should be granted access to cloud service providers' data even if the data are stored outside the jurisdiction of the state issuing the order. Given that the cloud market is highly centralized and dominated by U.S. based companies, such regulation has a profound impact on the data security cloud service vendors can guarantee.

These regulations are in stark contrast with the protective measures required in European privacy and data protection law. In Sweden, this has led to a complete deadlock, where public authorities cannot readily move their operations to the cloud and use the services of U.S. companies out of fear that sensitive personal data of Swedish citizens could be transferred to U.S. law enforcement without Swedish judicial review. Such transfers are presently illegal, resulting in a regulatory impasse between two systems: the desire for extraterritorial jurisdiction in criminal matters and European public authorities' extensive privacy and security requirements. Drawing on Rule's (1974) framework of 'surveillance capacity' and socio-legal analysis, the present paper explores this conflict and its potential solutions, devising how possible scenarios might impact the confidentiality of communications and personal data.

Rule, J. B. (1974). *Private Lives and Public Surveillance: Social Control in the Computer Age*. New York: Schocken Books.

#### **Contribution 4.2**

**Author(s):** Stefan Strauß (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Technology Assessment (ITA), Austria)

**Title:** Farewell "Global Village"? Political (mass-)communication, digital identification and information asymmetries in the age of surveillance capitalism

**Keywords:** social media politics, digital identification, persuasion marketing  
Microtargeting, surveillance, privacy

**Abstract:**

In the dawn of the Web, Marshal McLuhan's (1962) metaphor of the "Global Village" was often used to highlight optimistic visions of an open, flourishing digital society. However, several decades later, filter bubbles, polarizing social media content, misinformation, data breaches and extensive privacy intrusions now rather refer to the dystopia of a digital "blackbox society" (Pasquale 2015) that seriously challenges fundamental rights and democracy. The toolbox of surveillance capitalism (Zuboff 2019) has been growing with various technological means and approaches to monitor and track individuals with behavioral advertising, dark ads, microtargeting and other forms of persuasion marketing. Various economic and political actors make use of these tools to stir up debates, promote products as well as political campaigns. Attempts to influence political discourse during US-elections or the Brexit are evident and there is a global increase of misinformation up to computational propaganda observable (cf. Lewis/Hilder 2018; Cadwalladr 2017/2018; HOC 2019; Bradshaw/Howard 2019).

This contribution explores these developments and seeks answers to the following research questions: how does political (mass-)communication have been altering with the dynamics of social media platforms? How does surveillance capitalism, its tools and mechanisms affect political discourse and will-formation? What governance and regulatory approaches are possible to ease the situation? Particular focus will be set on digital marketing instruments like microtargeting used for political campaigning and widely unregulated identification practices.

As will be shown, they play a crucial role in the problem of growing information asymmetries at the cost of fundamental rights, particularly privacy and autonomy (Strauß 2019). The analysis is informed by concepts and theories of communication studies as well as surveillance and privacy studies. The data scandal around Cambridge Analytica/Facebook (including its connections to Brexit) serves as empirical case study to explore how the dynamics of digital platforms amplified persuasion marketing and attempts to influence in political discourses. The main aim here is not to recapitulate this scandal but to reveal and discuss the practices that enabled this kind of information misuse.

The contribution shows how these practices function and exploit online information about individual identities to create comprehensive identity profiles serving various economic and political objectives. Based on that, the paper argues for a broader debate on the ethical limits of digital identification practices and political marketing and discusses options for better governance and regulation thereof. The request for more accountability of social media and other digital platforms is obvious. However, there is also a yet underestimated responsibility among actors in the marketing and "classical" media sector to ease this situation and revitalize the internet as core technology for a society that upholds and defends freedom and democracy.

### **Contribution 4.3**

**Author(s):** Malika Toqmadi (PaperLab, Kazakhstan), Natalia Zakharchenko (NEDC, Kyrgyzstan)

**Title:** Digital Rights and Digital Fights: Investigating Privacy in Interpretations and Practices in Central Asia

**Keywords:** Privacy, Central Asia, Digital authoritarianism, Participation

**Abstract:**

Penetration and diffusion of the Internet and digital technologies aroused policy and scholarly discussions over the potential impact that those technologies can have in the context of authoritarian regimes. The hopes for the ability of new media to transform the oppressive regimes and lead to democratization have faded as both authoritarian and democratic states have demonstrated ubiquity and pervasiveness of surveillance, reconfiguring the concept of privacy.

What is privacy? What stands behind its universality? The current paper attempts to explore how the concept of privacy is interpreted and utilized by the state and citizens, zooming in on case-studies of two countries in Central Asia: Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. We argue that in the context of the post-Soviet Central Asia, the concept of privacy might have never had the same interpretation as in the Western tradition. Among the many contributing factors are path-dependency on the Soviet mass surveillance practices as well as the legacy of kinship-driven cultures. Thus, the swift digitalization against the backdrop of authoritarian heritage is lagging behind comprehension of the value of privacy by the society.

The paper suggests a comparative framework to the issue by examining two countries with different political, economic and digital development profiles, but shared cultural, historical and social settings. Building up on focus groups discussions and interviews with state and civil society actors, the analysis reveals the politics and interpretations of privacy in two countries: Kazakhstan continues its highly authoritarian practices in the digital governance, consolidating and securitizing the sphere, while more liberal Kyrgyzstan engages in privacy bargaining with multiple stakeholders involved.



#### **Contribution 4.4**

**Author(s):** Ju Zou, Quanwei Yu (Nanjing Normal University, China)

**Title:** Peace and Security: Personal Information Protection from the Perspective of China's General National Security Concept

**Keywords:** Personal Information Protection, National Security, General Security Concept, China

**Abstract:**

In today's world, two personal information protection models, the United States and the European Union, are the most typical and influential. Both of them take the pursuit of individual peace and the maintenance of private rights as the core value orientation, emphasizing the separation of private domain and public domain.

In China, the individual and the collective are never in binary opposition. Through comparative analysis and questionnaire survey, it is found that since ancient times, the concept of personal information protection in China has been inclined to focus on the collective and practical interests. In today's Chinese political and cultural environment, China's personal information protection concept continues the traditional value orientation, and also has been securitized, treated in the national security process. In April 2014, Xi Jinping put forward a clear request for building an overall national security concept, setting the tone for China's personal information protection work.

Under the guidance of the overall concept of national security, China's personal information protection work has distinctive characteristics of "China's characteristics". In terms of legislation, the national security law and the network security law are in the highest rank, and the rights of personal information are restricted under the security principle. This paper will analyze the specific situations related to the collection and utilization of personal information, such as the real name system of network, the provisions of data localization, crime investigation and public security prevention and control, and discuss how China deals with the relationship between personal information protection and national security.