UNESCO's Comprehensive Study on Internet Related Issues

Submitted by :

Name: Carr

Gender: Male

Category of Stakeholder: A. civil society and NGOs including individual users

Country: Italy

Region: Europe and North America

1. **What can be done to reinforce the right to seek and receive information in the online environment?**

This question is worded too broadly. The key challenge is how to ensure children and young people can access age appropriate information and not be exposed to material which is either age inappropriate or is harmful.

2. **What mechanisms can develop policies and common standards for open-licensed educational resources and scientific repositories, and for the long-term preservation of digital heritage?**

3. **How can greater progress be made as regards inclusive strategies for women and girls as well as marginalized and disabled people?**

Increasing access to the internet and associated digital technologies is key to solving this major challenge. It is partly an economic issue i.e. if providing access is left solely to the operation of traditional forms of market forces there must be grave doubt about whether a wide range of marginalized, oppressed or poor groups of people will gain access within any sort of acceptable timescale. A widening digital divide will entrench, reinforce and widen existing patterns of disadvantage.

4. **How can accessibility be facilitated through increases in locally produced and relevant content in different languages?**

This is absolutely critical but, again, if this is left solely to the operation of market forces it may only happen after considerable delay and at the cost of widening the digital divide.

5. **What can be done to institutionalize Media and Information Literacy (MIL) effectively in national educational systems?**

6. **What are the current and emerging challenges relevant to freedom of expression online?**

Unjustified use of filtering technologies.

7. **How can legislation in a diverse range of fields which impacts on the Internet respect freedom of expression in line with international standards?**

We already have clear laws and international standards in relation to this matter. The unresolved challenges are political in nature rather than technical or regulatory.

8. **Is there a need for specific protections for freedom of expression for the Internet?**

See above. The internet is not a "thing apart". It exists within societies not above them.

9. **To what extent do laws protect digitally interfaced journalism and journalistic sources?**

This varies hugely from country to country.

10. **What are the optimum ways to deal with online hate speech? How can Media and Information Literacy empower users to understand and exercise freedom of expression on the Internet?**

Media literacy is key to many of the challenges facing societies in relation to the online world. However, media literacy cannot solve every challenge.

We ought not to be indifferent to the way in which the internet can be used actively to promote racial hatred, terrorism-related activities and hope that media literacy will accomplish everything of importance, because it cannot.

11. **What are the optimum systems for independent self-regulation by journalistic actors and intermediaries in cyberspace?**

This question it too broadly worded. It implies that there could be a single world standard which would work in every jurisdiction.

12. **What principles should ensure respect for the right to privacy?**

13. **What is the relationship between privacy, anonymity and encryption?**

14. **What is the importance of transparency around limitations of privacy?**

Transparency is of fundamental importance.

15. **What kinds of arrangements can help to safeguard the exercise of privacy in relation to other rights?**

16. **How can openness and transparency of data be reconciled with privacy?**

Nobody has a right to obstruct or delay a legitimate law enforcement enquiry. However it is vital that law enforcement work to clear and publicly stated rules that are properly supervised by well informed, adequately resourced independent agencies and courts/judges with a good understanding of the issues.

17. **What may be the impact of issues relating to big data on respect for privacy?**

18. **How can security of personal data be enhanced?**

19. **How can Media and Information Literacy be developed to assist individuals to protect their privacy?**

20. **How can ethical principles based on international human rights advance accessibility, openness, and multi-stakeholder participation on the Internet?**

21. **What conceptual frameworks or processes of inquiry could serve to analyse, assess, and thereby inform the choices that confront stakeholders in the new social uses and applications of information and knowledge?**

22. **How does ethical consideration relate to gender dimensions of the Internet?**

23. **How can ethics, - i.e. the simultaneous affirmation of human rights, peace, equity, and justice - inform law and regulation about the Internet?**

24. **What international, regional and national frameworks, normative guidelines and accountability mechanisms exist of relevance to one or more fields of the study?**

25. **How do cross-jurisdictional issues operate with regard to freedom of expression and privacy?**

26. **What are the intersections between the fields of study: for example, between access and freedom of expression; ethics and privacy; privacy and freedom of expression; and between all four elements?**

27. **What pertinent information materials exist that cut across or which are relevant to the four fields of the study?**

28. **What might be the options for role of UNESCO within the wider UN system in regard to the distinct issues of online Access to information and knowledge, Freedom of Expression, Privacy and Ethical dimensions of the information society?**

29. **What might be options for the role of UNESCO in relation to stakeholders outside the UN system?**

30. **For each study field, what specific options might UNESCO Member States consider?**