

Key Issues on Digitalisation - G20 Sherpas

Shaping an Interconnected World

G7/G20 Civil Society Task Force on Digitalisation

Summary

Digitalisation represents an unprecedented opportunity to improve social and economic prosperity. However, while 80% of the population in developed countries have broadband access through their smart-phones, more than half of the global population -3.9 billion people- still do not have access to the Internet. At the same time, digital disruption has had many negative effects, including job loss, mass surveillance, political delegitimization, and digital discrimination. The countries taking part in the G20 representing as they do 80% of the global GDP and the 64% of the world's population have a primary responsibility in overcoming these issues. The relevance given to digitalisation by the 2017 G20 German Presidency, following up on the Hangzhou outcomes, provides a favorable context to address these challenges. As a part of a multi-stakeholder contribution to that effort the *G7/G20 Civil Society Task Force on Digitalisation* has identified the following recommendations for adoption by the G20 members:

- 1) Build digital resilience. No trust, no trade: foster privacy and encryption by default,
- 2) Improve sustainability. Enable universal and affordable Internet access and use,
- 3) Assume responsibility. Establish a means for compensation for digital disruptions.

1. Building Resilience in the Digital Environment

Building resilience means developing a digital environment that individuals and organizations can trust. To build trustworthiness, privacy needs to be protected, and the safety of the digital environment needs to be assured. With this objective, the G20 members should:

- Foster a policy making approach that favors strong security and encourages **encryption by default** for the digital communication and protection of data, adopting the OECD Guidelines for Cryptography Policy. In addition, information security policies should make available measurement and analysis to enable an informed assessment about the **safety of the digital environment**, taking as reference the OECD Recommendations on Digital Security Risk Management, and the OECD Recommendations on the Protection of Critical Information Infrastructures.
- Recognise the nature of **privacy as a fundamental right** and strengthen privacy enforcement and data protection for governments, corporations and individuals towards ensuring the safety of personal data, adopting the OECD Privacy Guidelines, the Civil Society Madrid Declaration, the provisions of Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations

Resolution on the Right to Privacy in the Digital Age, the reports of the Special Rapporteur for Privacy of the Human Rights Council, and the positions on this issue of the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe.

2. Improving the Sustainability of Digitalisation

Improving sustainability means fostering a deployment of digitalisation which is compatible with the dynamics of the affected ecosystems, where human rights and the democratic rule of law sets the standards for the governance of human societies. With this objective, the G20 members should:

- Foster investments on digitalisation to **ensure universal and affordable Internet** access and use in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda, prioritising those, and including provisions to evaluate their impact on the ecosystem and on human rights. This assessment should include a focus on the mining and manufacturing regions involved in the industrial production of electronic devices, and on the effects of digitalisation on privacy and freedom of speech worldwide. Built-in obsolescence should be excluded from public procurement, in favor of technologies with longer life cycles, and improved energy efficiency.
- Adopt a **sustainable multi-stakeholder approach** that includes support for under-resourced voices so as to ensure participation parity for all stakeholders, and compliance to the democratic rule of law, improving the models of the bodies currently setting the standards and legal frameworks that are driving digitalisation, and taking as reference the NETmundial Internet Governance Principles, and the OECD Council Internet Policy-Making Principles.

3. Assuming the Responsibility of Digital Externalities

Assuming responsibility means addressing the potential harmful effects of digitalisation. Individuals and organizations should be protected from eventual digital failures, and the economic impact of digital disruption should be compensated for to ensure inclusiveness. With this objective, G20 members should:

- Develop an accountability model that identifies all the actors involved in the provision of digital services and products, identifying their technical and legal obligations, and establishing principles of compensations to the various actors in the case of failure, taking as reference the OECD Recommendations on Consumer Protection in E-commerce, and on Electronic Authentication.
- Develop an economic model where the profits of digitalisation contribute to support social protection systems capable of compensating for the displacement of individual purchasing and savings capacity, so as to ensure the coverage of basic needs and the acquisition of skills for job transition and to harness the new technologies and modes of production.

About the G7/G20 Civil Society Digitalisation Task Force

The *G7/G20 Civil Society Digitalisation Task Force* was established in 2017 to provide a channel for civil society participants involved in digitalisation to engage in the G7/ G20 process¹. Recognizing the role of the OECD Committee on the Digital Economy Policy (CDEP) as the main provider of digitalisation policy in the G7/G20 context, the task force works as part of Civil Society Advisory Council of that committee (the OECD CSISAC).

The CSISAC is *the voice of civil society* at the OECD CDEP. The CSISAC facilitates the exchange of information between the OECD and civil society participants, leading to better-informed and more widely accepted policy frameworks. The formal recognition of this Advisory Committee by the OECD in 2008 was the result of an effort initiated in the 1990s to promote *participation parity* in global policy-making.

Today, the CSISAC is the main venue to channel the participation of civil society in the OECD work on the digital economy, joining the efforts of more than 200 organizations, activists and scholars worldwide. You can learn more about the CSISAC on our website², or by writing directly to the CSISAC liaison at <liaison@csisac.org>

¹<http://www.civil-20.org/>

²<http://csisac.org/>