



CHAIRMANSHIP OF ESTONIA
Council of Europe
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PRÉSIDENCE DE L'ESTONIE
Conseil de l'Europe



INTERNET FREEDOM

A CONSTANT FACTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SECURITY IN EUROPE

9 September 2016, Strasbourg, Agora Room G03

Description

In the last years Internet freedom has emerged as an important priority in foreign policy agendas of several European and non-European states. It has been widely promoted in inter-governmental and multi-stakeholder discussion and collaboration fora such as the Freedom Online Coalition and the Internet Governance Forum. Civil society has over a long period of time put forward demands to ensure an equal protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms online and offline.

Yet, reports on Internet access cuts, censorship or other restrictions to freedom of expression, massive violations of privacy relating to surveillance programmes of intelligence services continue to take a significant part of public debate. The security crises that Europe and the international community are facing often translate in a false dilemma/choice between security and freedom in public policy and state action.

The Council of Europe has taken up the challenge of shaping a common understanding of and approach to Internet freedom in its member States. The recently adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Internet freedom sets out a notion of Internet freedom that is not arbitrary but instead rooted in the European Convention on Human Rights and other relevant standards of the Council of Europe. It is recommended that member States periodically evaluate the levels of Internet freedom using the indicators included in the Recommendation.

It is since the early days of the Internet that the OSCE has taken up related issues on its agenda. In 2004, at the Sofia Ministerial Council, the OSCE participating States declared that the freedoms of opinion and expression, which include the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, are vital to democracy and are strengthened by the Internet. They pledged to "take action to ensure that the Internet remains an open and public forum for freedom of opinion and expression, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to foster access to the Internet both in homes and in schools".

In addition to the numerous interventions by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to safeguard freedom of expression online, the Representative recently published an OSCE Guidebook on Media freedom on the Internet, which will be presented and discussed

at the conference. For the German Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2016, Internet freedom as part of freedom of the media is a clear priority within the Human Dimension

Internet freedom as part of the Freedom of the media is a priority for the German chairmanship of the OSCE in 2016.

The conference seeks to promote the Recommendation and to examine best practices and examples regarding its implementation by member States. Experience of non-governmental organisations which report on Internet freedom will be also showcased and discussed. The conference will engage a larger multi-stakeholder audience in order to promote a multi-stakeholder engagement to Internet freedom and will be webcast (links).

The conference is organised by the Estonian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers and the German Chairmanship of the OSCE and supported by the Council of Europe.

Draft programme as of 6/06/16

8:30 – 9:30	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
9:30 – 9:45	Opening and welcome by Mr Thorbjørn Jagland , Secretary General of the Council of Europe
9:45 -10:00	Address by Mr Mart Laanemäe , Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia
10:00-10:15	Address by Mr Gernot Erler , Special Representative of the Federal Government of Germany for the OSCE Chairmanship
10:15-11:30	<p>High Level Panel: human rights standards and practice constantly on the verge of conflict</p> <p>What are the challenges to the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms online, especially in the age of security crisis?</p> <p>How to secure Internet freedom while combatting hate speech?</p> <p>How to ensure a holistic and harmonised approach to Internet freedom?</p> <p>What is the institutional commitment of member States, international organisations and other stakeholders to Internet freedom?</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Mr Mart Laanemäe, Undersecretary of MFA</p> <p><i>Speakers:</i> representative of Commissioner for Human Rights` Office (tbc);</p> <p>Ms Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Special Representative on Freedom of the Media (tbc);</p> <p>Mr Joseph Cannataci, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy;</p> <p>Mr Goran Marby, CEO of ICANN (tbc),</p>

Mr Andrus Ansip, Vice-President of the European Commissioner, Digital Single Market (tbc);

Mr Robert Spano, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights;

Mr Volodymyr Arieu, Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, PACE (tbc);

Mr Frank la Rue, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, UNESCO.

11:30-12:00

Coffee Break

12:00-13:00

A human rights approach to Internet freedom – best practices and leading examples

What are the Council of Europe Internet freedom indicators, and how can they be used?

Are there examples of member States reviewing and reporting on Internet freedom?

How have international organisations approached monitoring of media and Internet freedom issues?

Moderator: **Ms Katrin Nyman-Metcalf**, Head of Research at the Estonian e-Governance Academy, Head of Chair of Law and Technology, Tallinn University of Technology

Speakers: **Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers’ Thematic Coordinator on Information Society** (tbc);

Mr. Frane Maroevic, Director of the Office of the OSCE RFOM;

Ms. Karmen Turk, Lecturer of IT-Law in University of Tartu;

Mr. Carl Fredrik Wettermark, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Co-Chair of the Working group “Digital Development and Openness” in the Freedom Online Coalition

Foreign and Commonwealth Office's UK representative (tbc)

Ms. Simone Halink, Deputy Head International Cyber Relations at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands (tbc)

13:00-14:30

Lunch break

14:30-16:00

New Horizons for Internet Governance – bringing actors together

How can we make Internet freedom a shared commitment?

What can be learnt from the experience of non-governmental organisations reporting on media and Internet freedom?

What can be learnt from Internet companies' transparency reports?

How can member States step up their commitment to disclose information about online restriction of human rights and fundamental freedoms, what are the challenges and opportunities?

Moderator: **Mr. Matthew Shears**, *Co-Chair of the Working group "An Internet Free and Secure"* Freedom Online Coalition

Speakers:

Mr. Christophe Deloire, Director General Reporters without Borders (tbc);

Ms. Sanja Kelly, Freedom House;

Ms. Jodie Ginsberg, Chief Executive Index on Censorship;

Mr. Allon Bar, Research Coordinator and Human Rights Specialist;

Ms. Aibhinn Kelleher, Facebook;

Mr. Marco Pancini, Policy Manager Google (tbc);

Ms. Karen White, Policy Manager Twitter;

Mr. Michael Rotert, Honorary Spokesman, EuroISPA, Chairman of the Association of the German Internet Industry;

Prof. Yaman Akdeniz, Istanbul Bilgi University.

16:00-16:30

Conclusions by the Estonian and German Chairs and closing