

HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT



Presentation
21 May 2024

Strategic Outlook 2024 +

Council of Europe Digital Partnership

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Objective

Combine Council of Europe's expertise in policies related to human rights, rule of law and democracy and partner's expertise in digital technologies

Legal Framework

Exchange of Letters

Launch

November 2017

Membership

27 digital companies and their associations

May 2024

Value added of the Partnership

1. **Boost** public **confidence** and users' trust
2. **Gain** a better **understanding** of the Council of Europe legal frameworks
3. **Access** to **the network** of the Council of Europe's 46 member states and six observer states and civil society organisations
4. Better **understand** government and societal **expectations**
5. **Inform** the development of Council of Europe digital **policies**
6. **Devise** and implement corporate social **responsibility** initiatives more effectively



membership

May 2018



16 companies
and associations

Apple, Cloudflare, Computer & Communications industry association (CCIA), Deutsche Telekom, DigitalEurope, EuroISPA, the European Digital SME Alliance, European Telecommunications Network Operators' Association (ETNO), Facebook, Global Network Initiative (GNI), Google, GSMA, Microsoft, Kaspersky, Orange, Telefónica

DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND MICRO-TARGETTING

- New tools aim to provide transparency and integrity to election processes
- E-voting still lacks trust
- More balanced newsfeeds



DATA PROTECTION

- AI requires Big Data
- The risk of bias is embedded in the data used to train algorithms
- Use of Big Data in justice systems poses challenges in terms of equality before the law
- Strengthening the rights of data subjects is necessary

CONTENT MODERATION

- Increasingly performed by AI (99% for Facebook)
- A human-rights based approach to the removal of illegal content is required
- Transparency and fairness of algorithms is necessary

CYBER SECURITY

- AI is sensitive to cyber-threats
- Cyber-security services and education become increasingly important
- Holistic stakeholder forums are needed



Deputies and representatives of the internet and telecommunication companies exchanged views:

- ✓ **good progress** was achieved in areas such as **internet governance**, the fight against **cybercrime** and **education**.

They further debated:

- ✓ approaches to **content moderation** and prevention of **misinformation**, notably during elections;
- ✓ the opportunity of a legal framework for the development, design and application of **artificial intelligence** based on Council of Europe standards.

new members

since February 2020



21 companies
and associations

ServiceNow (formerly Element AI), **ICCO**, **IEEE**, **Intel**
and **RIPE NCC**





On 3 and 4 February 2022, the Council of Europe organised an online **exchange of views** with the 23 members of the Digital Partnership with the following aims:

- Better understanding of the **added value** of the partnership and its objectives
- Setting-up of a **regular dialogue** and exchanges of views between CoE digital actors and partner companies
- Identify **cooperation opportunities** for 2022-2023

new members

By October 2022



27 companies
and associations

AT&T, BT, IBM, the Internet Society (ISOC), Lego Group, ICC



21 cooperation activities

9 sectors: Data Protection, Action Against Cybercrime, Combating Hate Speech, Addressing Digital Violence Against Women, Accompanying Digital Transformation in Education, Cooperation on Criminal Justice, Combating Xenophobia and Racism, Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings, Safeguarding Freedom of Expression.

12 partners: GSMA, Digital Europe, Cloudflare, Etno, Meta, EuroDIG, Orange, IEEE, Google/Alphabet (including YouTube and Google Education), LEGO Group and Microsoft.



Current Human Rights Challenges

- ✓ Privacy
- ✓ Surveillance
- ✓ Freedom of expression
- ✓ Fake news and hate speech
- ✓ Free elections
- ✓ Access to information
- ✓ Cybercrime
- ✓ Discrimination
- ✓ Environment

Council of Europe approach

How to find the right balance between the respective roles of **states, online platforms and media stakeholders**, as well as **individuals themselves** ?

- Develop a shared responsibility of both **public and private actors**.
- Ensure that **human rights are protected**, and the ECHR applies, both offline and online.

TRIANGULAR
Methodology

STANDARDS
Recommendations
Conventions

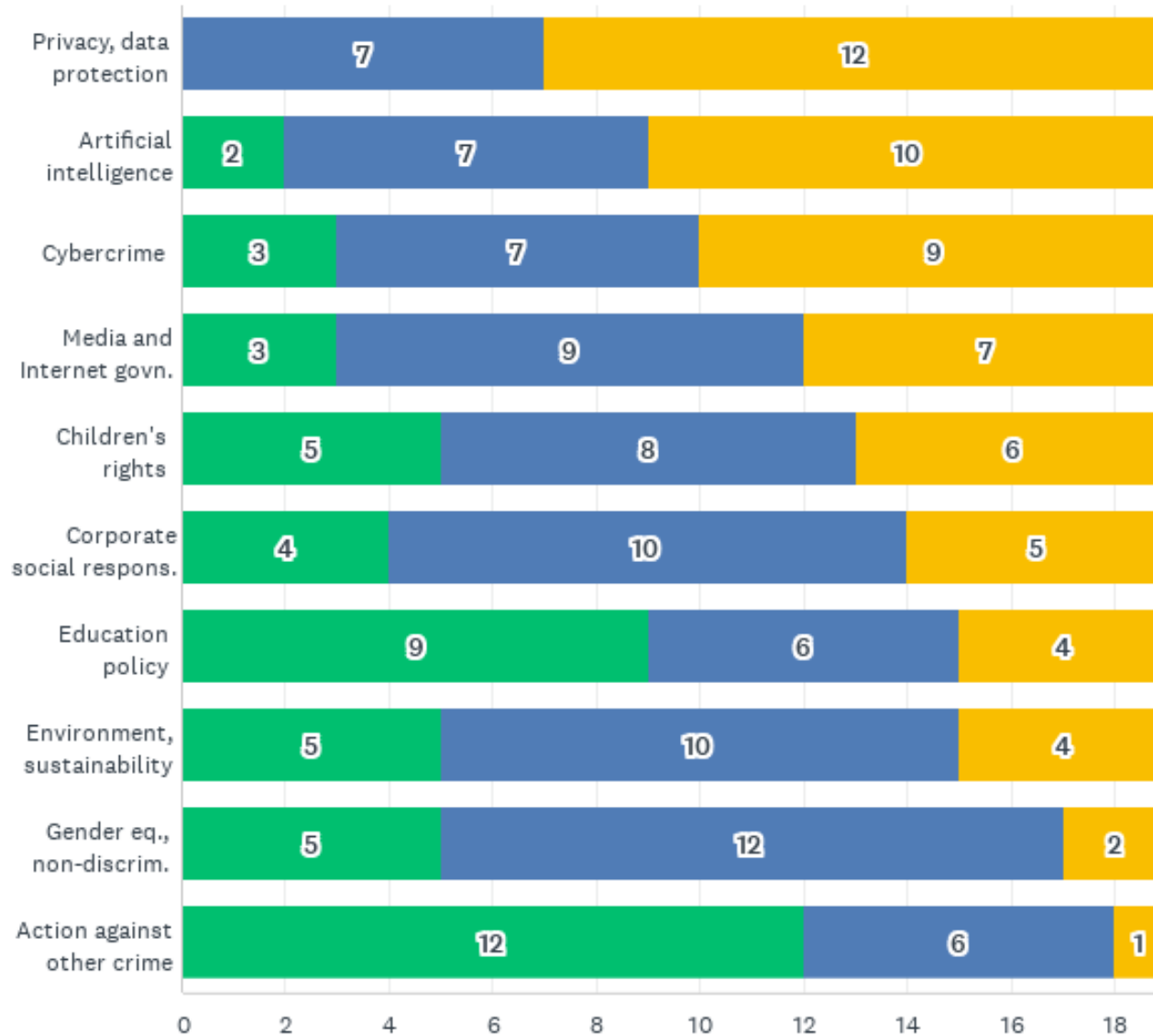
Projects
Programmes
ASSISTANCE

Surveys
Mechanisms

MONITORING



Partners' preferences for 2022 - 2023



Which policy-related topics are the most **urgent** and **important** for your cooperation with us in **2022-2023** ?



Source: Survey January 2022

- **privacy and data protection**
- transborder data flows
- **investigation of war crimes**
- handling of electronic evidence
- **malware investigations, network investigation**
- forensic expertise, exchange of threats intelligence
- **online and technology-facilitated trafficking in human beings**
- freedom of expression in immersive realities
- **emerging technologies and AI**
- production of child-friendly materials

Topics of interest to be explored in cooperation with partner companies in **2024 and beyond ?**



Source: Survey March 2024

Digital Partnership



Workshop agenda

Key objectives:

- **Review 2017-2024 achievements**, assess results and working methods, propose new ideas
- **Assess needs for further input** on the part of the Council of Europe thematic sectors on one side and Digital Partners on the other
- **Design a Partnership Roadmap**: go through upcoming activities of interest of both parts and identify cooperation opportunities for 2024 and beyond

Digital Partnership



cooperation
formats

- **participating in the work of committees** and other intergovernmental or expert organs, bodies and structures of the Council of Europe to contribute to the drafting of legally and politically binding standards;
- **co-organising conferences** and other awareness-raising events;
- **providing expertise for Council of Europe studies** and thematic reports (i.e., hearings with experts, brainstorming sessions);
- **receiving Council of Europe expertise** (i.e., training sessions, seminars);
- **joint projects**, targeted partnerships.

Thanks for your
attention !



further resources:

www.coe.int/freedomofexpression

www.coe.int/internetgovernance

www.coe.int/dataprotection

www.coe.int/cybercrime

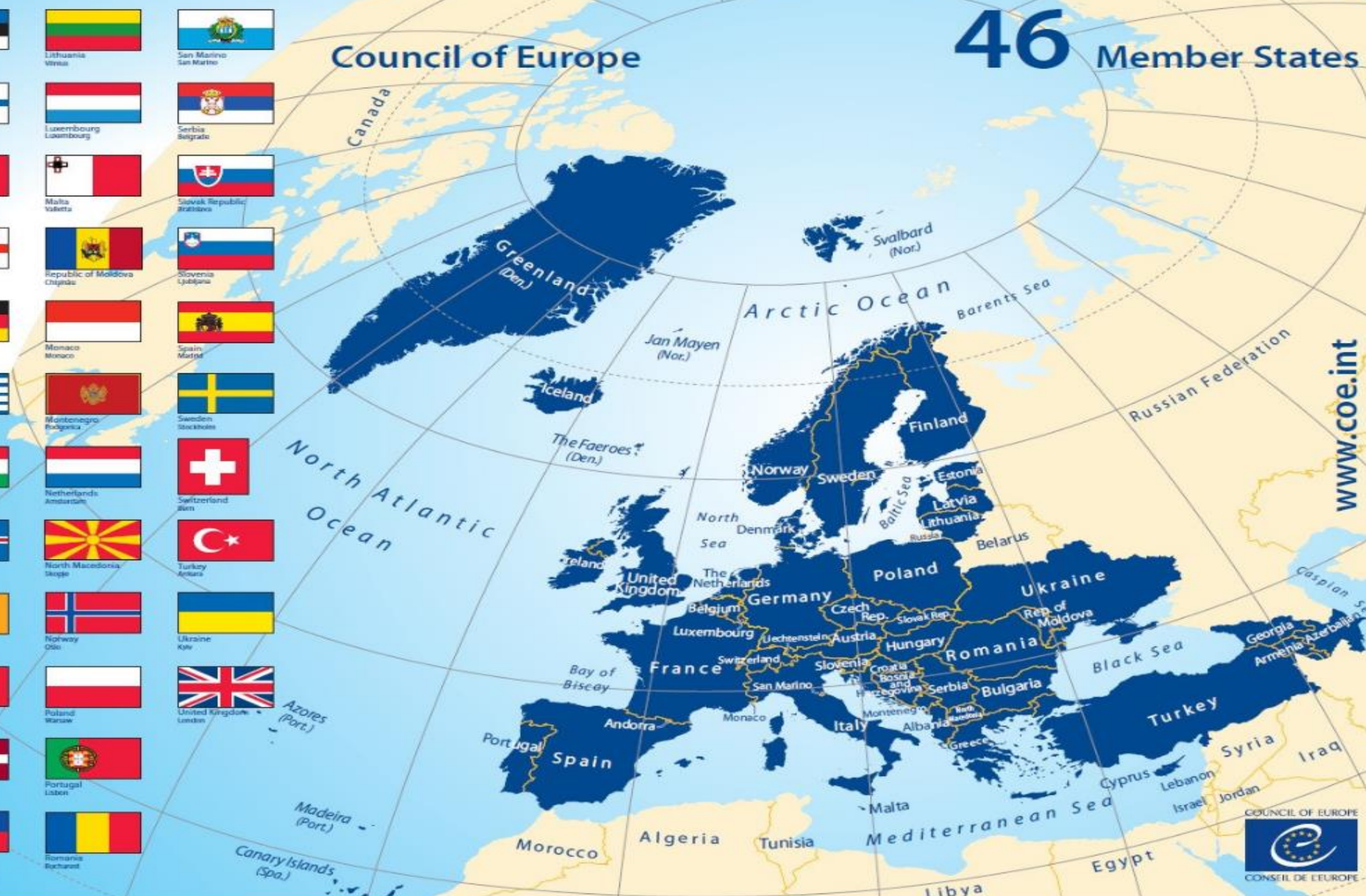
www.coe.int/AI

Facebook and X Pages

[Council of Europe @ Digital Governance](#)

46 Member States

Council of Europe



www.coe.int

