



# COUNCIL OF EUROPE @IGF 2023

*Brief overview:  
Council of Europe  
participation in  
the Internet Governance  
Forum 2023*

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**International Cooperation  
Internet Governance**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

# Council of Europe at IGF 2023

Kyoto, Japan, 8-12 October

**8 October, 14.00 - 15.30 UTC+9**

**Day 0 event: Shaping Artificial Intelligence Technologies to Ensure Respect for Human Rights and Democratic Values**



The pace of technological development is picking up speed and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is playing an ever-growing role in all aspects of our lives.

Automated systems have brought about extraordinary benefits from technology that helps farmers grow food more efficiently and computers that predict storm paths, to algorithms that can identify the diseases in patients.

These tools hold the potential to redefine every part of our societies and make life better for everyone. However, this important progress must not come at the price of human rights or democratic values. If we are going to seize the benefits of AI we have to start tackling its risks.

Since AI is developed and used across borders, it makes sense to develop a common global approach to basic principles which should govern how we, as humanity, develop and use AI systems. States all around the world must keep up with the increasing reliance on automated processes and machine-learning and ensure that they safeguard the human rights of everyone in society in this fast-evolving context.

Bjorn Berge, the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe will be the key note speaker of this session.

**9 October, 15.15 - 16.15 UTC+9**

**Open Forum: Benefits and challenges of the immersive realities**

An immersive reality, frequently associated with the concept of Metaverse is a virtual world that blurs the distinctions between digital and physical space, and which has the potential to revolutionise how individuals interact with each other and the world.

Compared to the digital space as we know it so far, an immersive reality, with its potential for (almost) total immersion in an alternative universe creates multitude of opportunities. It may provide individualized learning opportunities, improve efficiency of medical interventions, test architectural solutions prior investing in building them, and enrich gaming experience, just to mention few.

Equally, it comes with a whole host of questions about its governance, the place for rule of law and human rights and related safeguards in the virtual reality. The right to privacy, freedom of expression, right to intellectual property, consumer protection may be challenged in the Metaverse applications. Their accessibility also may cause issues with equality among society members.

The Council of Europe has made a priority from addressing the challenges posed by the digital space, including the emerging technologies such as the metaverse.

Findings of a joint comprehensive Report elaborated for the Council of Europe by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), exploring these and other challenges immersive realities pose, will be discussed during the Open Forum.

The discussions are meant to explore the topic of immersive realities, their potential and impact on human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, as well as a general understanding of the ways in which these emerging technologies are likely to reshape society in the years to come.

## **11 October, 17.00 - 18.30 UTC+9**

### **Workshop: War crimes and gross human rights violations: the case of e-evidence**

The need for enhanced accountability mechanisms in addressing gross human rights violations, including war crimes has become increasingly evident in recent times. The Russian aggression against Ukraine accompanied by serious violations of human rights and of international law, including war crimes serves as one of the examples and a stark reminder of the urgency to employ effective measures and approaches in pursuing justice. The critical role of electronic evidence and open-source intelligence (OSINT) in uncovering and documenting war crimes and gross human rights violations gains more and more recognition.

- ▶ How can international legal frameworks such as the Budapest Convention and its 2nd Additional Protocol be utilised to facilitate cross-border cooperation and secure electronic evidence for addressing war crimes and gross human rights violations, and what are the challenges?
- ▶ How can admissibility and chain of custody requirements be respected in relation to collection and use of electronic evidence and OSINT, and what conditions and safeguards for the protection of human rights should be in place in accountability processes?
- ▶ How can public-private partnerships be effectively leveraged to enhance the collection, preservation, and sharing of electronic evidence for prosecuting war crimes and human rights abuses?

The session will tackle these and other critical policy questions related to collection, admissibility, processing and cross-border exchange of electronic evidence and OSINT, fostering dialogue and debate among different stakeholders and disciplines. By examining policy implications and exploring potential solutions, participants will contribute to shaping effective policies and frameworks for leveraging technology in addressing war crimes and human rights violations.

## **12 October, 14.00-15.00 UTC+9**

### **Networking session: Artificial Intelligence and Environment: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Development**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is improving the ways we live, work and solve problems. It can also help us fight climate change and protect the environment.

The technology has the potential to accelerate global efforts to protect the environment and conserve resources by, for example, reducing energy emissions, CO2 removal, helping develop greener transportation networks, monitoring deforestation, managing natural hazards and predicting extreme weather conditions.

With more than two-thirds of the world's population predicted to live in urban spaces, AI could play a key role in improving spatial use, greening cities and managing energy in the near future.

But it also comes at a cost to the planet, as AI is highly energy-consuming.

The session will discuss on how to truly benefit from the technology's potential to find solutions to environmental challenges, but also the need a better understanding of AI's growing carbon footprint.

Digital technologies can greatly facilitate the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, boost participatory and democratic processes and facilitate social and commercial activities. But also, they carry with them human rights challenges that require prompt and balanced solutions.

The Council of Europe engages in setting standards, promoting democracy and the rule of law by fostering multi-stakeholder dialogue to ensure a sustainable, people-centred and human rights-based approach to the challenges of the digital environment.



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

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