

MAPPING explores Internet's impact on society

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Do you remember how the Millennium bug had everyone sitting on the edge of their seats some 15 years ago? If such a blackout occurred right now, we would immediately take stock of how much the Internet has become ubiquitous in our lives, and how much we use it to share valuable and sometimes sensitive information. More than enabling quick access to information and online shopping, the Internet helps us as a society define who we are. It is central to public debates and actions, and it reflects the evolution of our nations with regards to privacy and freedom of speech—which recent events have called into question.

The MAPPING project was born from a desire to understand the Internet's impact on society. Bringing together universities, research institutes, international organisations, NGOs and software companies, the team is contributing to the European debate around Internet governance, privacy and [intellectual property](#).

'A major challenge is how to enable information discovery (on the one hand) and also enable information protection (on the other). The answer, if there is one, is "it depends". It depends on lots of things, but first we need to understand some more basics on what the Internet is rather than how it is used,' reads a blog from Patrick Curry, CEO of the British Business Federation Authority, on the project's website.

This question and others will be at the centre of MAPPING debates until the project's completion in February 2018. Innovation policies, business models and the legal framework surrounding the Digital Agenda for

Europe will be monitored and suggestions for improvements will be made, eventually resulting in a fully-fledged action plan with policy guidelines taking into consideration the interests and opinions of all stakeholders.

This work will largely rely on four initiatives. The first is a 'Policy Watch', which is monitoring relevant evolutions such as the recent decision of the Romanian Constitutional Court to declare the country's cybersecurity law unconstitutional, the EU's push for obtaining encryption keys from Internet firms to counter terrorism, or Spain's [intellectual property law](#). The Policy Watch benefits from a dedicated website which constitutes a gold mine of information for anyone interested in these topics.

The second initiative focuses on Internet Governance and will be looking for a balance between territorial jurisdictions and what the project calls 'the universal heritage of mankind' in the European space. A gap analysis will be made in light of existing constraints, and ways to encourage citizen participation will be explored.

The last two initiatives will consist in finding the right balance between privacy, personality and [business models](#), as well as in releasing recommendations with regards to IPR protection in the EU.

MAPPING's conclusion and recommendations will be compiled in a Road Map which promises to be very important for the future of Internet technologies in Europe. For innovations such as the Internet of Things to be welcomed with open arms, the boundaries of Internet privacy need to be clearly defined.

More information: For further information, please visit MAPPING: www.mappingtheinternet.eu/

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