

'New normal' nudged people online

December 10 2021, by David Bradley



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The national and local lockdowns put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic forced many people to re-evaluate the way they lived and worked. Research published in the *International Journal of Web Based*

Communities looks at how different activities were relocated to the virtual world during lockdown and how this affected people's wellbeing and their social interactions.

Iryna Sekret of StartinForun International in Turkey explains how her [ethnographic study](#) is based on observations of changes in the realms of education and business during the COVID-19 lockdown around the world. Given the [paradigm shift](#) in our attitudes and behavior that have been wrought by the [pandemic](#), the world community is unlikely to ever return to the way things once were. The "new normal" is here to stay. Sekret's analysis provides new pointers to how teaching and commerce might be revitalized in the online environment.

There are some distinctions to be seen between the world of reporting of events and changes in the research literature and how the media represented the new normal, of course. Sekret details the shift from classroom teaching and bricks-and-mortar business to the online models. However, it is difficult to make predictions as to how the new normal will evolve, she concedes. We are yet to fully reflect on our experience of almost two years of living with the pandemic and its impact on our social lives, education, and business.

Regardless of how it is reported, 2020 marked a turning point for a large proportion of the world's population, if not all of it. Social media communities and other online communication platforms have been with us for many years. But, in the last couple of years, they have extended their reach to people who previously never entered such virtual spaces. They have given many of those people a new dimension in which to live their lives in ways some may well have never previously imagined existed and for those who knew about them all along have expanded way beyond even their imagination. This new study offers a template for how we might study the changes that have taken place and offer some clues as to how new strategies can be used to adjust our lives and behavior in

this pandemic and any future crises that nudge us into the online environment and out of the offline world.

More information: Iryna Sekret, Societal transformations through web-based communities during and after the global lockdown from an ethnographic perspective, *International Journal of Web Based Communities* (2021). [DOI: 10.1504/IJWBC.2021.119475](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJWBC.2021.119475)

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