

Fostering equal opportunities in the digital era

GRAND CHALLENGES :

C6. Europe in a Changing World – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies



CHALLENGE

The on-going digitalization of every-day life is predominated by big players/platforms, and a new generation of Internet provide great opportunities, but also threats to equal conditions for all. We must ensure that new digital technologies do not oppress individuals and create inequality. For this, it is important to ensure equal access to infrastructure cheap or even free devices and services, information (such as online learning resources), and tools (including the AI-based systems). Digital consumers can be empowered and become digital producers themselves.

SCOPE

Research should explore ways to implement a fully distributed information and communication system model. The next generation Internet should be a digital architecture for an information and communication system that covers everybody in an equal way. Every node of the net has similar possibilities and opportunities.

Better understand inequalities and access in the next digital era (driven by Internet of Things, virtual reality, use of natural language in men-machine interaction etc), define them in terms of human rights and minimum skills required for ensuring equal opportunities. Finding ways of avoiding the monopolisation of the key capabilities of the new digital era, including of the data on various human behaviour used for training artificial intelligence.

EXPECTED IMPACT

Online
consultation
rating



- Access to digital technologies will be equal and universal for all EU citizens (“basic right of being connected” – including the right to disconnect freely)
- Digital empowerment becomes an important driver for bridging economic, social and generational gaps
- A change in culture of digital education (related to the way data is collected and used)
- Citizens have access to open learning resources, courses

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Research topic:

Fostering equal opportunities in the digital era

Grand Challenges :

C6. Europe in a Changing World – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

C7. Secure Societies – protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens

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Online consultation rating: average importance: 3,67/5

Countries where this is priority: Cyprus (4), Lithuania (5).

CITIZENS' VISIONS

[FIN] Vision 1: VALUES - immateriality and minimalism

"Information belongs to all: data communication is a basic right and data/interfaces open to citizens."

[CHE] Vision 3: Harmony between the social and the global

"Online education, shared values / ethics - Pacifism, solidarity, mutual aid"

[CYP] Vision 2: A just society oriented towards human rights

"A society where justice is prevailed and is oriented on the basis of human rights. A society that provides equal opportunities for all EU citizens, as well as direct access to a secure health and education system."

[MAL] Vision 4: Technology at society's service

"In 2050, all members of society have equal access to quality education and opportunities to engage and contribute equitably to fair-decision making and all other processes that affect their lives. Family units in their various forms are accepted and supported to ensure that each individual is embedded in a nurturing social system."

[CYP] Vision 3: Human rights

"The vision is referred to better living conditions, to equal access to issues that we take for granted, such as health, education and retirement. Also, the right opportunities have to be provided to younger people in order to have a proper job school counselling in order to ensure proper career perspectives."

[SWE] Vision 1: Equality between women and men

"That all parents shall have the possibility to a fair division of parental leave"

[GR] Vision 1: Humanity - Environment – Justice Schools fully equipped with the latest technology.

For example, all schools shall have digital libraries and the ability to host video conference for remote learning.

Policy recommendation on social economy

1. It is important to **keep safe market conditions** to secure confidence in the economy. In a period where new models are emerging at fast pace, it is important to make research on them. The research agenda should also target misuse of some alternative economic models (eg. Local/digital currencies: the risks, the beneficiaries, the risks of abuse and their impact, etc.).
2. It is proposed that **more programs include intercontinental exchanges**, because social economy is a global theme (for instance flagship programs); it can be interesting to have the “external” vision and expertise on Europe, and to benchmark Europe with other continents.
3. Fund **research that investigates how to integrate social economy with the “normal” economy**, with the aim to create a significant number of new jobs. It will contribute to the emergence of an economic model more open to society and to a more resilient economic paradigm.
4. **Create more local/ regional/ national / international networks to connect citizens engaged in communities of practice for the development/improvement/learning, developing synergies, etc. of (new/alternative) business models/economic models.** These virtual and real networks will be connected to research communities in order to bring collective intelligence based on collective awareness and sharing experience. Governments and research programmes on different levels can support the development of these networks (financially, physically, virtually, etc.).
5. There is a need for **coupling social economy, start-ups and social innovation, in order to boost the emergence of the new economic paradigm.** Research could address the question of how to stimulate start-ups having a positive influence on the common good/that make use of/introduce alternative economic models (financial support, setting rules for micro-credits, resources for micro credits, tax policy, developing incubators etc.).

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[GR] **Vision 1:** Humanity - Environment – Justice

Schools fully equipped with the latest technology. For example, all schools shall have digital libraries and the ability to host video conference for remote learning.

Policy recommendation on technologies at the service of humanity

1. Co-creation of technologies useful for community

Extending the scope of “entrepreneurial discovery process” used for smart specialisation. New types of entrepreneurial discovery workshops may involve citizens and scientists for co-creation of new technologies useful for the community.

2. Testing the acceptance of certain technologies

Creating virtual and real spaces in which emerging technologies (in phase of idea) are presented in real life contexts, and citizens can express their opinions.

3. Testing technologies in real environments

Communities entering the experiment programmes receive 1 million Euros for any purpose, if 10,000 persons accept being part of the programme for testing the new technologies (e.g. a new form of media platform).