

FINAL PROGRAMME

>TECH
AND
SOCIETY
SUMMIT<

1 October 2024
Residence Palace, Brussels

08:00 - 09:00

BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION

09:00 - 10:00

Welcoming words by hosts

Opening hearing: The role of tech and society - visions from
MEPs

10:00 - 11:30

PANELS POLAK ROOM

Digital Austerity:
impact of digitalisation
of essential services

Breaking Open Big Tech:
a positive vision for a
fairer digital economy

11:30 - 13:00

ROUND TABLES MAELBEEK ROOM

From broken by design to
building a better internet
from the ground up

Making EU laws work for
people: best practices for
engaging with civil
society

INVITE-ONLY SALON ROOM

Visionary round-table:
building an EU digital
enforcement strategy

Round-table Fundamental
Rights in Focus: Joint
Efforts for Spyware
Regulation in the EU

13:00 - 14:00

LUNCH

14:00 - 15:30

Exposing the
environmental costs of
technology: what's the
alternative?

Safety beyond
surveillance: a rights and
justice framework for
safety in EU digital
policies

15:30 - 17:00

Community-based
alternatives: a tool to rein
in Big Tech and build a
healthy online public
sphere

Brussels in the world:
platform regulation
beyond 2024

FIRESIDE CHATS SALON ROOM

14:00 - 15:00

Voices from the
European Parliament
on Big Tech lobbying

17:00 - 19:00

Closing words by hosts
and drinks

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» Welcoming words by hosts

POLAK
ROOM

- Claire Fernandez, Executive Director, European Digital Rights (EDRi)
- Patrizia Heidegger, Deputy Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- Agustín Reyna, Director General, BEUC, The European Consumer Organisation
- Laurence Meyer, Co-Director, Weaving Liberation

» OPENING HEARING: The role of tech and society - visions from MEPs

POLAK
ROOM

- Moderator:
 - Clothilde Goujard, Senior technology reporter, Politico
- Speakers:
 - Kim van Sparrentak, MEP, Greens/EFA
 - Anna Cavazzini, MEP, Greens/EFA
 - Bruno Gonçalves MEP, S&D

10:00 - 11:30

» PANEL: Digital Austerity: impact of digitalisation of essential services

POLAK
ROOM

The current growing trend of digitalisation and datafication of public services is predicted upon a promise of increased flexibility, cost effectiveness and time gains. However, the forced march towards an ubiquitous digital life comes with multiple negative impacts on our privacy, dignity and autonomy, especially on those of us already experiencing social exclusion, including people living in homelessness, undocumented, migrants, elderly people, people with disabilities or low-income groups. The right to access essential services and equal treatment are no longer guaranteed. Furthermore, the digitalisation of services and social protection schemes comes at new costs, inducing new forms of exclusion. It normalises discriminatory and harmful systems like predictive identification and risk scoring systems, towards systems of surveillance and punishment and away from approaches focusing on care and well-being.

- Moderator:
 - Chloé Berthélémy, Senior Policy Advisor, EDRi
- Speakers:
 - Juliana Wahlgren, Director, European Anti-Poverty Network
 - Soizic Penicaud, Researcher
 - Hellen Mukiri-Smith, Researcher/Adviser on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Amnesty International
 - Nadja Marković, Senior Legal Adviser, A11 initiative
 - Louise Culot, Head of Analysis and Research, Lire et Ecrire
 - Alex Saliba, MEP, S&D

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»» ROUND TABLE: From Broken by Design, to Building a Better Internet from the Ground Up

MAELBEEK
ROOM

As the dominant Big Tech business models often amplify division, commodify our attention and our data, we face significant challenges, particularly affecting children, young people, women, and marginalised communities. How can we create a safer, more inclusive online environment? This roundtable will explore privacy, consumer protection, addictive design, and safety-by-design principles. We will discuss different solutions that have been proposed. What are the concerns relating to smartphone bans for children, age verification and digital security? How do we shift the burden away from the individual and families? Join us as we envision a future where online spaces are safe and equitable for all.

- Moderator:
 - **Sanne Thijssen, People vs Big Tech**
- Speakers:
 - **Caroline Sinderson, machine-learning-design researcher, artist and online harassment expert**
 - **Molly Hickey, Youth Ambassador, People vs Big Tech**
 - **Diana Vlad-Câlcic, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Věra Jourová, European Commission**
 - **Yassine Chagh, Executive Board Member (Anti-Racism Panel Coordinator) IGLYO**
 - **Key responses from Dóra Dávid, MEP (EPP), Amnesty International, EDRI, Bits of Freedom and Liberties**

»» INVITE ONLY: Visionary round-table: building an EU digital enforcement strategy

SALON
ROOM

11:30 - 13:00

»» PANEL: Breaking Open Big Tech: A positive vision for a fairer digital economy

POLAK
ROOM

We live in a digitalised society almost entirely shaped by a small handful of dominant tech companies. Despite over a decade of regulation and competition investigations, Big Tech's dominance and core business model remain largely untouched. They use their immense power to set the rules of the digital economy, to extract reams of data and money from smaller businesses, governments and people, as well as to shape politics and block alternatives. The concentration is also constitutive of the AI market as we know it today.

Is it time to stop treating the symptoms and instead solve the problem of Big Tech power? Join us for an exciting panel that will dive deep into concrete examples such as Alphabet's and Meta's power to impose surveillance advertising and use the resulting data dominance for advantages in AI, or Amazon's ability to exploit smaller businesses and drive prices up across the economy. The panel will also look into discussions about breaking open Big Tech's power and building an alternative, people-led digital future.

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- Moderator:
 - **Paul Keller, Director of Policy, Open Future**
- Speakers:
 - **Filomena Chirico, Head of Unit, Digital Markets, DG CONNECT, European Commission**
 - **Dr Seda Gürses, Associate Professor, Department of Multi-Actor Systems at TU Delft**
 - **Mark Dempsey, Senior EU Advocacy Officer, ARTICLE 19**
 - **Frederike Kaltheuner, Senior EU and Global Governance Lead, AI Now Institute**
 - **Margarida Silva, Researcher, SOMO**

» **ROUND TABLE: Making EU laws work for people: best practices for engaging with civil society**

MAELBEEK
ROOM

In the last few years, the EU has adopted several legislative initiatives critical for addressing the impacts of technology on society, fundamental rights and consumer protection. These include the GDPR, the Digital Services and Market Acts and the Artificial Intelligence Act. Civil society expertise has been vital for providing evidence of harms and concerns and for proposing practical policy solutions. However, the legislative process and the subsequent enforcement mechanisms are often difficult to access and contribute to by civil society, especially organisations representing people affected by the use of technologies. How can EU decision-making and enforcement processes be more inclusive so that they work for people in practice? This roundtable will create a space for exchange between civil society and EU and national institutions regarding lessons learned and best practices related to civil society participation in policymaking, implementation and enforcement of EU laws.

- Moderator:
 - **Karolina Iwańska, Digital Civic Space Advisor, ECNL**
- Speakers:
 - **Irina Orssich, Head of Sector, AI Act Governance and Compliance, AI Office**
 - **Rita Wezenbeek, Director of Platforms Policy and Enforcement (DG CNECT.F), European Commission**
 - **Marina Kaljurand, MEP, S&D, Vice-Chair of the LIBE Committee**
 - **Asha Allen, Director and Secretary General of the Centre for Democracy and Technology Europe Office**
 - **Alexandre Biard, Head of enforcement and redress, BEUC**
 - **Katarzyna Szymielewicz, President and co-founder, Panoptikon Foundation**

» **INVITE ONLY: Round-table Fundamental Rights in Focus: Joint Efforts for Spyware Regulation in the EU**

SALON
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14:00 - 15:30

»» **PANEL: Exposing the environmental costs of technology: what's the alternative?**

POLAK
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Digitalisation and the 'twin digital and green transition' are the big promises of our times to bring about new economic prosperity while saving the planet. Yet digital transformation creates significant pressure on the environment and people, from their production to waste and including the substantial energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions emitted by producing and using digital devices. These intertwined social and environment costs remain mostly hidden, and often false and misleading tech solutions to the climate crisis are being put forward - addressing 'future existential harms' rather than current ones. Given that there is no such thing as climate neutral Big Tech and that green growth is unlikely to achieve the Paris Agreement, it becomes clear that a more nuanced and holistic approach is needed.

- Moderator:
 - **Laurence Meyer, Co-Director, Weaving Liberation**
- Speakers:
 - **Johannes Schilling, Deputy Head of Unit, Strategy, digitalisation, better regulation & economic analysis, DG ENV. European Commission**
 - **Friederike Hildebrandt, Coordinator, Bits & Bäume**
 - **Paz Peña, Independent activist and researcher, Latin American Institute of Terraforming**
 - **David Maenda Kithoko, President, Association Génération Lumière**

»» **ROUND TABLE: Community-based alternatives: a tool to rein in Big Tech and build a healthy online public sphere**

MAELBEEK
ROOM

Big Tech platforms have long functioned as 'walled gardens', locking people into their toxic structures and promoting disinformation and hate speech through surveillance-based business models. Recent EU laws like the Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Markets Act (DMA) have taken big steps to tackle the abusive positions of Big Tech firms, but there is still a lot of work to be done, especially with the rise of AI-generated content. This round-table will explore not only the harms of Big Tech's business model and how we are fighting back against Big Tech dominance, but crucially how community-driven platforms and services, like Wikimedia and the Fediverse, offer a genuine and meaningful alternative of community-led governance, as well as exploring the major sustaining role of civil society organisations and unpaid activists. The critical questions will be: what is needed for these community-centric alternatives to flourish, and what are the tools that we have - both legislative and otherwise - to achieve a healthier public online space in Europe and beyond?

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- Moderator:
 - **Jan Penfrat, Senior Policy Advisor, EDRi**
- Speakers:
 - **Rebecca MacKinnon, Vice President for Global Advocacy, Wikimedia Foundation**
 - **Aleksandra Herzyk, Artist, Author and human rights activist**
 - **Alexandra Geese, MEP, Greens/EFA**

14:00 - 15:00

» FIRESIDE CHAT: Voices from the European Parliament on Big Tech lobbying

SALON
ROOM

- Moderator:
 - **Bram Vranken, Researcher and Campaigner, Corporate Europe Observatory**
- Speaker:
 - **Florine Rooos, Accredited Assistant, Office of Leila Chaibi MEP, The Left**
 - **Kirsten Fiedler, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Alexandra Geese MEP, Greens/ETA**

15:30 - 17:00

» PANEL: Safety beyond surveillance: a rights and justice framework for safety in EU digital policies

POLAK
ROOM

The last EU mandate saw a surge of tech and data-driven surveillance, within and at the EU borders, from spyware and mass hacking to migration control and racial profiling, dangerously eroding EU's fundamental rights and values. Instead of pouring resources into surveillance and criminalisation infrastructures, what political responses are needed to address the root causes of social problems? The panel will explore visions for safety centered on rights and justice, away from the current paradigm that prioritizes technological quick fixes and extensive or mass surveillance, which lead to harms and discrimination. To address societal issues at their roots, what policies and public investments would benefit everyone?

- Moderator:
 - **Chloé Berthélémy, Senior Policy Advisor, EDRi**
- Speakers:
 - **Lise Schwimmer, Office of Saskia Bricmont MEP, Greens/EFA**
 - **Anna Buchta, Head of the Policy and Consultation Unit, European Data Protection Supervisor**
 - **Jennifer Kamau, Activist and Co-founder, International Women* Space**
 - **Elina Castillo Jiménez, Advocacy and Policy Advisor, Amnesty International**
 - **Sarah Chander, Director and Co-founder, Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice**

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»» ROUND TABLE: Brussels in the world: platform regulation beyond 2024

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The round table creates a space of exchange and learning for human rights defenders and decision-makers alike, looking to understand the nuances of promoting EU regulatory models as one-size-fits all solutions around the world, with reference to DSA (Digital Services Act)

Defining the "Brussels effect", speakers will present different angles of understanding the phenomena, tackling issues as Big Tech's varying attitudes towards regulation/compliance across the world, EU officials' interventions in the legislative processes of Global Majority countries, as well as in the context of EU accession countries. In the second part of the discussion we will tackle concrete examples around the DSA.

Opening Speaker: **Iverna McGowan, Advisor on Tech & Human Rights, United Nations Human Rights (OHCHR)**

Roundtable and workshop: Platform accountability globally

- Moderator:
 - **Eliška Pírková, Senior Policy Analyst and Global freedom of expression lead, Access Now**
- Speakers:
 - **Snežana Bajčeta, Media and communication expert and researcher, Share Foundation**
 - **Bruna dos Santos, Global Campaigns Manager, Digital Action / Global Coalition for Tech Justice**
 - **Christoph Schmon, International Policy Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation**
 - **Mohamed Najem, Executive Director, SMEX West Asia / North Africa TBC**

17:00 - 17:10

»» Closing words by hosts

POLAK
ROOM

- **Claire Fernandez, Executive Director, EDRi**
- **Margarida Silva, Researcher, SOMO**
- **Alyna Smith, Deputy Director, PICUM**