IGF POLAND 2022

Final report

IGF POLSKA

Warsaw, December 2022

SUMMIT ORGANISATION

The **Internet Governance Forum Poland 2022** was yet another edition of the national Internet Governance Forum (IGF), held as part of a global UN initiative aiming to bring together different stakeholder groups on an equal footing to discuss public policy related to the functioning of the Internet. In itself, IGF does not make laws. Its role is to determine the direction of the global discussion on the Internet's future and to inform and inspire individuals with the power to legislate and shape policy, both in the public and private sectors. At the annual IGF meetings, participants discuss the future of the world wide web, exchange information and share best practices. IGF makes it easier to understand how to maximise the potential of the Internet and how to deal with the threats and challenges it presents.

This year's edition of IGF Poland was co-organised by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the NASK National Research Institute. All stakeholder groups envisaged by the UN contributed to the IGF Poland agenda, namely public administrations, NGOs, academia, business sector, technical organisations and other stakeholders willing to engage in a dialogue that facilitates cooperation between communities interested in internet-related public-policy making and development.

The participants of IGF Poland aim to create a space for sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices based on an equal, free and open discussion about the most pressing problems related to the broader functioning of the Internet.

The IGF Poland 2022 served as a local continuation of the 16th UN IGF global meeting held in Katowice on 6–10 December 2021. As the host country with a real influence on the event's agenda, Poland proposed to draft a concise final document, the so-called *Katowice IGF Messages*, containing an overview of the most important feedback from the participants of the Katowice edition of IGF on Internet and digital policy governance.

A new goal of IGF Poland is to promote the *Katowice IGF Messages* as a final document of UN IGF 2021, which could be implemented on a national level.

Programme Board

Composed of representatives of all stakeholder groups, the IGF Poland Programme Board outlined the thematic scope of this year's Summit and monitored the call for sessions process. The work of the IGF Poland Programme Board is managed by **Krzysztof Szubert**, the Board's Chair, Member of the IGF Leadership Panel, Vice-President of the Management Board at PKO TFI (Poland), former Secretary of State and Republic of Poland Plenipotentiary for UN IGF 2021. Between 2017 and 2019, he was a Member of the Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) established by the UN Secretary-General.

Thematic tracks

Promoting the idea of IGF in Poland is crucial in terms of presenting the Polish perspective in the global discussion on the future of digital space.

Analysing the main themes of previous IGF editions, the Programme Board and the organisers chose the following thematic tracks for IGF Poland 2022:

- Technologies in the Service of Society,
- Man on the Internet,
- Digital Legislation Forum,
- Youth Track.

As part of the "Technologies in the Service of Society", conference participants sought answers to the question of how technological advances affect citizens and how the new generation can shape the future of digital innovation.

The "Man on the Internet" track provided a glimpse into the virtual world in terms of the online dangers to which all Internet users are exposed. Accessibility and equal opportunities in a technology-driven labour market were also discussed.

The “Digital Legislation Forum” was an innovative track that allowed the experts invited to the discussion to take a closer look at the legal aspects of digitisation and the EU legislative process.

A dedicated Youth Track was prepared with young people and students in mind; the issues discussed during its course included the influence of social media on opinion formation and the dangers of spreading misinformation. Like every year, the organisers placed great importance on getting young people interested in digital space issues. The participation of young people in IGF Poland 2022 was greater than usual. Emphasis was placed on contact with universities, which promoted the IGF to students on an ongoing basis, resulting in increased interest from this target group in the sessions held as part of the Youth Track.

Call for sessions for IGF Poland 2022

More than 70 applications were submitted as part of the open call for proposals for IGF Poland 2022 sessions. Everyone had a chance to submit their own proposal. The organisers particularly urged NGOs, the scientific community, technical organisations, IT companies and the younger generation to submit applications.

Following the closing of the call, the Programme Board analysed and evaluated the proposals and selected the most highly rated ones for inclusion in the agenda. The results of the call were announced and the winning sessions were incorporated into IGF Poland 2022.

IGF POLAND 2022
Lublin, 20 October 2022

Lublin Conference Centre

AGENDA

9.00 - 9.30	**OPENING SPEECHES** **Paweł Lewandowski**, Undersecretary of State, Chancellery of the Prime Minister **Jarosław Stawiarski**, Marshal of the Lubelskie Voivodeship **Wojciech Pawlak**, Director of the NASK National Research Institute **Patrycja Sass-Staniszewska**, IGF Poland Programme Board; Board President at the Chamber of the Digital Economy **Krzysztof Żuk**, Mayor of Lublin **HOST** **Krzysztof Szubert**, IGF Poland Programme Board Chairman, Member of IGF Leadership Panel (Chancellery of the Prime Minister) **(room S2)** - streamed on YT				**ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUTH** **(rooms S7 C & S7 D)**
9.30 - 10.20	**DEBATE** **How can digitisation support micro-entrepreneurs and start-ups?** (Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers in cooperation with the Chancellery of the Prime Minister) **(room S2)** - streamed on YT				**8.30 - 15.00** **Educational and informative workshops for schoolchildren on online safety and programming** **(2 courses of 6 hours each)** (NASK National Research Institute)
10.20-10.30	**BREAK**				
	TRACK I: **TECHNOLOGIES IN THE SERVICE OF SOCIETY** **(room S7 A)** - streamed on YT	**TRACK II:** **MAN ON THE INTERNET** **(room S7 B)** - streamed on YT	**TRACK III:** **DIGITAL LEGISLATION FORUM** **(room S1)** - streamed on YT	**YOUTH TRACK** **(room S8)** - streamed on YT	
10.30 - 11.10	**Stop voice theft. Innovative voice biometrics services for commercial applications.** (BiometrIQ Sp. z o.o.)	**Deepfake and cyber resilience** (EY Poland)	**10.30 - 12.00** **Influencing the EU legislative environment and building effective coalitions supporting the interests of Polish industry and science in Brussels.** (Business & Science Poland)	**10.30 - 12.10** **Youth IGF Poland Digital Summit** (NASK National Research Institute and Youth IGF Poland)	
11.10 - 11.20	**BREAK**				
11.20 - 12.00	**How can artificial intelligence — the grammar of the 21st century — improve the quality of Polish education?** (THINKTANK analysis centre)	**PARPverse: Enter the metaverse — how will man find his way in a new virtual world?** (Polish Agency for Enterprise Development - PARP)			
12.00 - 12.10	**BREAK**			**12.10 - 12.20** **BREAK**	
12.10 - 12.50	**Data-driven economy and its benefits for consumers and socio-economic development** (Visa Europe)	**Fake news. How to recognise and defend against it? Practical classes with the use of eye trackers** (UMCS Digital Resources and Intelligent Systems Research Centre)	**Time for the digital economy** (Digital Poland Foundation)	**12.20 - 13.10** **How does social media shape social attitudes in times of crisis, in particular the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine?** Startup Poland Foundation	
12.50 - 13.30	**LUNCH** **(room S5)**				
13.30 - 14.10	**Will Millenials and Gen-Zers revolutionise healthcare? Will they receive support from mature economic ecosystems and clusters?** (Lublin Medicine — Medical & Wellness Cluster)	**Youth's skills of the future: Are we still catching up with Europe?** (ZIPSEE Digital Poland)	**Poland in cyberspace — where are we, where are we headed?** (Warsaw Enterprise Institute Foundation)	**Why do we need fact-checking?** (Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation)	
14.10 - 14.20	**BREAK**				
14.20 - 15.00	**Key digital skills in Poland as exemplified by Lublin's smart economic specialisations.** (Strategy and Entrepreneurship Department, Lublin City Hall)	**The labour market and professional competencies in the digital transition era** (The Kosciuszko Institute)	**Digital economy without barriers. Digital Poland — a package of changes** (Chamber of the Digital Economy - e-Chamber)	**The world wide web and ecology — what steps can we take to reduce CO2 emissions caused by the use of the Internet?** (Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation)	
15.00 - 15.10	**BREAK**				
15.10 - 15.50	**Technology in the service of society: will Poles transition to Society 5.0 by supporting the implementation of SDGs and ESG policies?** (Digital Poland Foundation)	**Female leaders of the digital world — the need for women in the tech industry** (Warsaw Enterprise Institute Foundation)	**The issue of liability for software errors as exemplified by IoT** (Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences)	**Young Poland 4.0** (ZIPSEE Digital Poland)	
16:00-16:10	**IGF Poland 2022 SUMMARY SPEECH** Krzysztof Szubert, IGF Poland Programme Board Chairman, Member of IGF Leadership Panel **(room S2)** - streamed on YT				
16.10 - 17.00	**COCKTAIL RECEPTION** **(room S2)**				

SUMMIT COURSE

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

IGF Poland 2022 was held on **20 October 2022** at the Lublin Conference Centre **in Lublin**.

The conference began with opening speeches by:

- **Paweł Lewandowski**, Undersecretary of State, Chancellery of the Prime Minister
- **Jarosław Stawiarski**, Marshal of the Lubelskie Voivodeship
- **Wojciech Pawlak**, Director of the NASK National Research Institute
- **Patrycja Sass-Staniszewska**, IGF Poland Programme Board; President of the Board at the Chamber of the Digital Economy
- **Krzysztof Żuk**, Mayor of Lublin
- **Krzysztof Szubert**, IGF Poland Programme Board Chair, Member of the IGF Leadership Panel – introduction and moderation

"**IGF inspires decision makers. It creates a common ground for discussion between all internet stakeholders. Its mission is to share knowledge**", said Undersecretary of State **Paweł Lewandowski** while opening IGF Poland 2022, which was attended by more than 600 people.

The plenary session included a debate on the role of digitisation in the entrepreneurial and start-up environment, which is described in detail below.

The debate was followed by four parallel thematic tracks with a total of 22 substantive sessions held. Summaries of the sessions are presented below, maintaining the division into specific tracks.

Alongside the tracks, educational and informative workshops for schoolchildren on online safety and programming continued throughout the day. The latter was organised by NASK National Research Institute.

The IGF Poland 2022 Digital Summit was held entirely in Polish.

The conference was organised as an open, multistakeholder debate. During the sessions, the panellists discussed new proposals and solutions for a responsible Internet development policy, with the active participation of the audience.

Exhibition zone was set up as part of the IGF Poland 2022 side events, which housed the booths of such organisations as the Chamber of the Digital Economy, Łukasiewicz Research Network, NASK National Research Institute, Sectoral Competence Council for Modern Business Services, Lublin City Hall, University College of Enterprise and Administration in Lublin, Lublin Science and Technology Park, Lublin Innovation and Technology Centre, as well as the Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre of the Lublin University of Technology. The booths set up by the exhibitors were of great interest to conference participants and provided an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and exchange of views.

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

In his concluding speech at IGF Poland 2022, **Krzysztof Szubert**, IGF Poland Programme Board Chair and Member of the IGF Leadership Panel, pointed out the need for various actors to continue the dialogue on issues concerning the future of the digital space. He also stressed that this year's national IGF is a continuation of discussions from last year's UN Internet Governance Forum 2021 held in Katowice, a summary of which is included in the *Katowice IGF Messages* mentioned above.

Among the more than 600 registered participants of IGF Poland 2022 were representatives of central and local public administration, entrepreneurs, NGOs and technical organisations, academia and many young people.

All Summit sessions were broadcast live on the Chancellery of the Prime Minister's YouTube channel about digital affairs. See the end of this report for links.

OPENING DEBATE

How can digitisation support micro-entrepreneurs and start-ups?

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

The Forum included a debate on how digitisation could support micro-entrepreneurs and start-ups, which was moderated by **Jakub Bińkowski**, Board Member at the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers.

Among the debate participants were representatives of the private sector, government, science and NGOs:

- **Paweł Lewandowski**, Undersecretary of State at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister,
- **Tomasz Snażyk**, President of the Startup Poland Foundation,
- **Mariusz Mielczarek**, Director, CEE Public Policy at Amazon,
- **Łukasz Gołąbek**, Board Vice President at Netrix Group sp. z o.o,
- prof. **Dariusz Czerwiński**, Vice-Rector for General Affairs and Development of the Lublin University of Technology.

The introductory speech was delivered by Paweł Lewandowski, who noted that the SME sector undertakes nearly half of the pro-innovation activities across the European Union. He also outlined the government's digitisation efforts and plans, mainly related to investments in SMEs through the NCBR Investment Fund ASI S.A., established in 2020. Discussing the optimal regulatory landscape, the Undersecretary of State noted that the role of business is to articulate its interests already at the EU level.

Further, he pointed out that the legislation that appears in the EU is, to some extent, a reflection of the positions of the best and most active lobbying companies in Europe.

Tomasz Snażyk and Jakub Bińkowski drew attention to the problems of overregulation. The President of the Startup Poland Foundation noted that as of today entrepreneurs cannot operate on the European market without hiring law firms and tax advisors. In turn, Mr Bińkowski recalled that some EU regulations are targeted (often negatively) at narrow groups of companies from outside the EEA.

Mariusz Mielczarek spoke about the role played by platforms in digital business scaling in the context of enterprise expansion. Amazon's CEE Public Policy Director presented the three main related areas in which Amazon is active, i.e. global marketplace (for SMEs with export potential), cloud (for start-ups) and providing internet access for SMEs. He also pointed to hopes related to online exports. Moreover, he noted that as little as 2% of Polish SMEs export their goods or services (compared to around 7–10% in Western countries), indicating mental, financial and regulatory barriers as the main culprits.

The next part of the debate consisted of a discussion on the activities of micro-enterprises. Łukasz Gołąbek pointed out that while regulation in this sector raises many doubts, many more problems are caused by technology. The Board VP at Netrix Group Sp. z.o.o. pointed to the rather bleak outlook for micro-enterprises which cannot afford to hire specialist IT staff while facing an increased need for technology consultancy at the same time. Ultimately, however, he said, it is mainly entrepreneurs who pursue efficiency – optimising, reducing logistics costs, as well as using technology for environmental and energy savings.

Examining the needs of micro-entrepreneurs on a regional scale from a scientific standpoint, professor Dariusz Czerwiński noted that the needs of entrepreneurs are not

merely a result of ignorance. Nonetheless, he also pointed out that while many Polish industrial companies represent Industry 2.0 standards, the European Union is already in the process of adopting a concept for Industry 5.0. The Vice-Rector of the Lublin University of Technology also emphasized the positives resulting from networking between universities, local governments and businesses.

Concluding the debate, all panellists agreed that the SME sector is the driving force behind the Polish economy. Areas where public administration should act were also identified: digitisation of services and funding (targeted assistance). Calls for a longer vacatio legis for regulations, as well as for EU funding to be released promptly, were voiced as well.

The panellists noted that when it comes to digitisation support for SMEs, the focus should be on local ecosystems because it is there that innovation and new jobs emerge.

Track: TECHNOLOGIES IN THE SERVICE OF SOCIETY

Session: **Stop voice theft. Innovative voice biometrics services for commercial applications.**

The following issues were discussed during the panel:

- development prospects for the voice communication market, with particular emphasis on those for speech and voice recognition technologies;
- areas of application of voice biometrics;
- risks associated with the development and mass adoption of solutions using speech synthesis technologies and voice biometrics systems;
- methods to protect against voice impersonation attacks;

Organiser:
BiometrIQ Sp. z o.o.

Moderator
Maciej Kurzajewski, journalist

Panellists
Adrian Boczkowski, owner of BQ Consulting
Michał Hałoń, expert at the NASK National Research Institute
Tomasz Jadczyk, CTO and Board Member at TECHMO
Andrzej Tymecki, Managing Director at BiometrIQ

Summary

The panel debate began with a discussion of the technical possibilities of voice synthesis based on available voice samples. Tomasz Jadczyk confirmed that technology is developing at a rapid pace and we are now able to produce synthetic voices increasingly quickly and accurately using acquired voice samples. Merely a few years ago, one needed several hours of recording to create a high-quality voice replica. It was also necessary to train each model independently to ensure correct voice modulation. Today, with the widespread use of deep neural networks, as little as several minutes to an hour of voice recordings is sufficient to create a good model of someone's voice, depending on the model's intended use.

Responding to a question about the applications of voice biometrics, Adrian Boczkowski pointed to the possibilities of using speech and voice recognition technology and voice biometrics in virtually every aspect of our lives. This is primarily because speech is the most natural mechanism of communication between people. At the same time, he stressed that the main sectors currently using this technology are financial institutions, telecoms, government and health sectors. Expanding on the issue, Andrzej Tymecki pointed out that the events of the last two years, i.e. the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine, served as a powerful catalyst for the development of voice technologies. The COVID pandemic has shifted many activities to online communication platforms and it appears that for many of these, such as management board and supervisory board meetings, the use of voice biometrics to authenticate participants will be a necessity. Andrzej Tymecki also pointed out the enormous threat posed by the possibility of destabilising social groups through socio-technical attacks. Since there are hundreds of hours of voice recordings of security-critical individuals available in the public domain, it is possible to synthesise the voices of these individuals and then generate statements that are difficult to verify biometrically, which can have unforeseen consequences.

Michał Hałoń pointed out the dangers of such things as indiscriminate communication with bots, which can result in voice samples being left behind in an uncontrolled manner, often in combination with personal data provided during such communication.

Responding to the moderator's question about the development of the bot market, Andrzej Tymecki pointed out that this market is seeing rapid development, with 8.5 billion units expected to be in operation by 2026, indicating that these devices are replacing touchscreen systems (computers, tablets), thus naturally becoming points of authentication as well. Given the intense deployment of these technologies by commercial players, it is essential to rethink how to protect the digitally excluded, who can be easy targets for attacks on voice systems.

Answering the moderator's closing question about whether it is easy to steal a voice these days, Andrzej Tymecki noted that the biggest issue today seems to be recordings available in the public domain. Citing figures, he pointed out that as of today there are 800 million recordings in the YouTube archives alone, with an average length of 11.7 minutes,

which equates to approximately 70 seconds of footage attributed to every person alive on Earth. Further, the current youth culture actually promotes the mass posting of one's recordings on various platforms, often with other metadata buried in the streams.

To conclude, Michał Hałoń said that given the abundance and availability of millions of audio-visual recordings online, it seems that obtaining voice samples of many people has never been easier.

Session: How can artificial intelligence – the grammar of the 21st century – improve the quality of Polish education?

Main questions and scope of discussion:

- How to accelerate the introduction of artificial intelligence into education to improve its quality and optimally prepare young people for the world of new technologies?
- How best to coordinate all existing initiatives and scale them up?
- How to disseminate Polish and foreign best practices effectively?
- Where to find the funding for this?

Organiser:
THINKTANK analysis centre

Moderator
Zbigniew Gajewski, fellow at the THINKTANK centre

Panellists
Iwona Brzózka-Złotnicka, President of the Digital Dialogue Association
Michał Dżoga, Corporate & Government Affairs, Intel Corporation
Antoni Rytel, Deputy Director, GovTech Centre, Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Summary
The primary aim of the discussion was to answer the question of how to improve the development of the education ecosystem with regard to AI. Poland currently has numerous valuable initiatives to teach AI-related issues in schools and universities and to engage AI to improve the education system. These are undertaken by public institutions, as well as businesses, and NGOs. However, their scale does not warrant the conclusion that Poland has a systemic programme in this area. Employers agree that both secondary and tertiary graduates have a skill gap in terms of practical digital skills and that they find the need for specialists who can implement AI solutions to be an even more pressing issue.

Participants in the discussion agreed that today's labour market, influenced by the development of new technologies, is evolving very rapidly. Education must respond to this because countries that manage to better prepare their citizens for the new era will have the upper hand in the international division of labour. The main challenge is therefore to

adapt the modes of education to the ongoing digital revolution. The panellists felt that this process should involve the strengthening of cross-sectoral cooperation.

Michał Dżoga of Intel Corporation pointed to examples of such cooperation already underway. The year 2019 saw Polish students compete in the international Intel AI Global Impact Festival for the first time. Intel is also implementing its world-renowned education programmes in Poland, including Intel® Skills for Innovation, Intel Digital Readiness and AI for Future Workforce. The AI for Youth programme benefits more than 332,000 students from 25 countries, including Poland.

Mr Rytel of the GovTech centre noted that he views this cooperation very positively. The government also introduces its own solutions like edukacja.gov.pl, a free online platform with e-services for students and teachers. The government is supplying all schools with the equipment needed to teach new technologies – including modern computers and 3D printers. Moreover, starting from September 2023, the “Introduction to Business” subject that is currently part of the high school curriculum will be replaced by “Business and Management”, which is expected to teach new technologies and their practical use to a greater extent.

The panellists stressed that well-prepared teachers are the key to disseminating AI knowledge in education. Unfortunately, for the time being, most of them are not aware that AI is not only an educational challenge but can also improve and significantly enhance the quality of teaching. According to Iwona Brzózka-Złotnicka, President of the Digital Dialogue Association, the good practices already used in this area ought to be strongly expanded, and this requires a massive improvement in the competencies of the teaching staff and sufficient financial investment to introduce AI into all schools.

Session: **Data-driven economy and its benefits for consumers and socio-economic development**

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Issues raised during the debate:

- What are the challenges in the context of open data and how can the government support and encourage the ongoing processes in this area?
- How does the process of opening up data contribute to urban development?
- How can private sector collaboration with public administrations on data sharing benefit consumers and the entire economy?
- How does the use of data contribute to improving public services in practice?
- Are citizens aware of the value of their data and to what extent are they willing to share it with the public administration?

The issue of data and its use was discussed from the perspective of experts representing public administration, local government, academia and business.

Organiser:
VISA Europe

Moderator
Zuzanna Bartczak, PwC Poland

Panellists
Anna Gos, Data Management Department, Chancellery of the Prime Minister
Grzegorz Hunicz, Lublin City Hall
Andrzej Szarata, Cracow University of Technology
Karol Jaroszewski, Data Science Lab, VISA
Krystian Łukasik, Polish Economic Institute

Summary
The use of data makes it possible to develop innovative services and solutions that ultimately benefit the citizens; however, such activities should be based on ethical and responsible processing.

Anna Gos, Director of the Data Management Department at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, noted that the responsible use of data represents a huge potential for national development, and is a process that has been further accelerated by the pandemic crisis and the outbreak of war in Ukraine. The Director pointed to the three pillars of the Chancellery's work (regulatory, institutional and technical), which form the basis for building a secure environment for data use in Poland. The Chancellery's achievements in this regard included the introduction of the Open Data Directive into the Polish legal order, the implementation of the "Open Data Programme" utilising the data.gov.pl portal, the establishment of a working group on strategic directions for data management, as well as educational activities (e.g. the Open Data Academy). She also stressed that transparency in the public administration's activity and building public awareness are essential for the further development of this area.

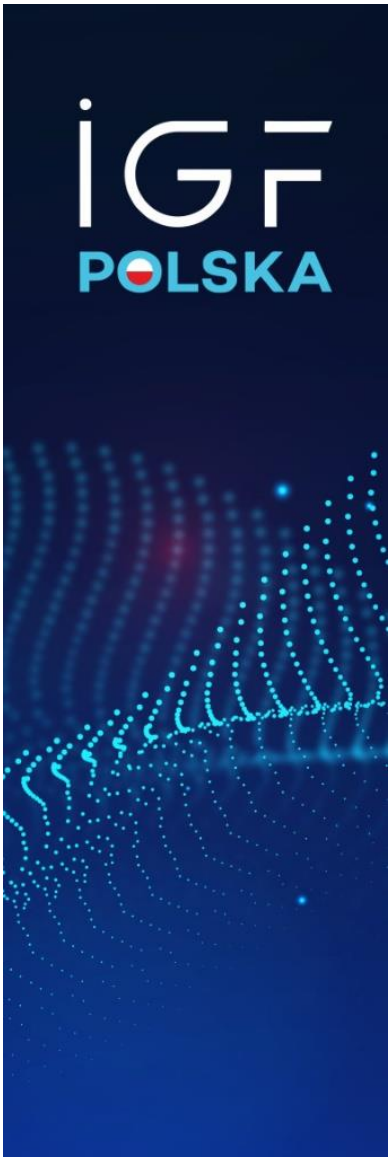
Grzegorz Hunicz, Director of the IT and Telecommunications Department at the Lublin City Hall, added that the development of smart cities would be impossible without access to data, and a city is only worth as much as the data it has. He stressed that legislation ought to support digital transition and that it is necessary to break down citizens' mental barriers.

Karol Jaroszewski of Visa emphasised the need for responsible data processing and the added value of using data ethically. He pointed out that access to data available to the banking sector can help diagnose many local problems, e.g. identifying the regions most affected by the pandemic. He noted that while the exchange of data between the private sector and public administration can bring many benefits to the economy as a whole, the basis of the processing of such data should be a concern for consumer safety.

Andrzej Szarata, professor at the Cracow University of Technology, spoke about the importance of the interdisciplinarity of processed data and how mobile or payment registration data can be used in other, non-obvious areas with the help of artificial intelligence and machine learning. He explained how important it is for forecasting and urban planning to collect reproducible and anonymised data and then interpret it.

Krystian Łukasik, analyst at the Polish Economic Institute, quoted some interesting data based on the Institute's report titled "How much is our data worth?". It shows that in 2020 the combined value of Polish users' data to Google and Facebook was more than PLN 6 billion, yet the average Pole would not be willing to pay more than PLN 17 per month for these platforms to have no access to their data. At the same time, research shows that only 45% of respondents would be willing to share personal data with the public administration and as little as 30% would share location data for such things as stopping the spread of a virus. The analysis showed that people with higher digital skills and a higher sense of control over their data are more likely to share it.

Participants in the debate said there is a need to build a culture based on cooperation, trust and data sharing between the public and private sectors and to invest in the quality of the data processed. However, such actions must be based on the responsibility and education of citizens.



Session: **Will Millenials and Gen-Zers revolutionise healthcare? Will they receive support from mature economic ecosystems and clusters?**

Photo: Łukasz Głaczkowski

Organiser:

Lublin Medicine – Medical & Wellness Cluster

Moderator

Marzena Strok-Sadło, Management Board Member at Lublin Medicine – Medical & Wellness Cluster, Strategy and Entrepreneurship Department of Lublin City Hall

Panellists

prof. dr hab. **Marek Niezgódka**, Digitisation Council Chair, Medical University of Lublin
Kazimierz Murzyn, President of the LifeScience Cluster Kraków Foundation, Managing Director at LifeScience Cluster Kraków
Michał Szabelski, Deputy Director for Finance and Development, Independent Public Clinical Hospital No. 4 in Lublin
Paweł Paczuski, Co-Founder and CEO of upmedic (Pacode sp. z o.o.)
Marcin Waryszak, Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of the Calmsie sp. z.o.o. start-up

Summary

The average age of innovators – start-up owners – is 34 and continues to decrease. Marcin Waryszak and Pawel Paczuski, both of whom are start-up co-founders, are now 24 and 27 years old, respectively. Both had started their businesses 2–2.5 years earlier and are winners of national and international competitions. They continue to refine their solutions and have the competencies to manage their businesses. They confirmed that more than 20% of start-ups are using artificial intelligence and machine learning and are seeking support from the environment, clusters and innovation ecosystems to develop their solutions. Their success depends on the acceptance of the proposed solution by the end user. Clusters make it possible to reach a wider range of users systemically, through the entities that are affiliated with them.

Marzena Strok-Sadło emphasised that since they are organised and formal initiatives that have their own coordinators and service offices for their members, clusters in particular should ensure that companies benefit from the expertise that will help them develop innovative solutions, including through cooperation within national and international networks.

Kazimierz Murzyn added that clusters provide other assistance apart from knowledge, e.g. information on available funding and help with networking. These are systematic and long-term measures. Clusters create an environment that start-ups can enter and experiment in – one that is supportive and facilitates overcoming barriers.

Participants in the discussion also referred to the number of new developments in the MedTech sector. They noted that we should increase the critical mass of innovation and implement it more effectively.

Professor Marek Niezgódka pointed to the low level of readiness of healthcare entities to implement new technologies, particularly those based on artificial intelligence solutions.

Start-ups create solutions that are ahead of their time. While these solutions do get implemented, this only happens in isolated cases and is by no means a general rule. The main issue here is the mismatch between education models and current needs. And all the while we are facing the enormous challenge of structural systemic transition, which requires a new operating model. What is needed is new educational programmes the graduates of which will be able to integrate knowledge from substantially different fields and also interpret data not only at an analytical level but also at the level of creating models to support all phases of decision-making processes. A revolution is underway among the creators of solutions that require audiences prepared for change, and the latter must be able to implement and use these solutions on a massive scale in their daily practice.

Public hospitals are an important part of the health innovation ecosystem. Deputy Director Michał Szabelski highlighted two key elements – the willingness of managers to bear risks and implement new technologies, and the ability to quickly and effectively analyse

a solution at an early stage and determine whether it could be implemented, which requires those involved in the decision-making process to have specific knowledge and competencies.

Conclusions of the discussion:

- systemic solutions must be developed and implemented to increase the critical mass of innovation and its implementation in the health system;
- healthcare providers need employees with new competences who can integrate knowledge from substantially different fields to implement new technologies;
- start-ups expect healthcare providers to be more willing to take risks, validate solutions faster and deploy at scale;
- it is necessary for the process of innovation evaluation and implementation in healthcare entities (e.g. hospitals) to be defined, transparent and structured; start-ups should know what conditions they have to meet to be able to test their solutions, obtain expert feedback and finally implement the solutions themselves;
- we are still at the beginning of the road towards a systemic approach; processes are not fully structured and do not correspond to the needs of innovators;

Session: **Key digital skills in Poland as exemplified by Lublin's smart economic specialisations.**

Introductory speech

dr **Mariusz Sagan,** Head of the Strategy and Entrepreneurship Department, Lublin City Hall

The City of Lublin has defined and supports 7 smart specialisations included in the 2030 Strategy (smart grids and ICT, modern business services, innovative logistics, automotive and machine industry, healthy society, automated food processing and functional food, as well as chemical processes and specialty chemistry products), which are linked by a common denominator – digital skills. The discussion held during this session aimed to answer questions on how to enable the success of the above-mentioned business ecosystems using the opportunities offered by digitisation, automation and robotisation, and how the local government can support the business and industry sector in meeting the needs for digital skills development.

Organiser:

Strategy and Entrepreneurship Department, Lublin City Hall

Moderator

Piotr Fałek, Chair of the Sectoral Competence Council for Modern Business Services

Panellists

Ewa Mikos-Romanowicz, Business Development Director, Governmental Affairs, Siemens Sp. z o.o
Elwira Pyk, RPA Project Manager, Vistra Corporate Services Sp. z o.o.
Kamila Kucharczyk-Biernacka, Director of Operations, Phlexglobal Sp. z o.o.
Piotr Pietras, Founder and Manager of the Green Lanes holding company

Summary

Global trends pointing towards tomorrow's competencies in smart economic specialisations.
We are witnessing a phenomenon of hyper-automation – the comprehensive use of available automation, artificial intelligence and business intelligence tools to digitally transform enterprises. In the future, we will all be "IT people". It is therefore extremely valuable to combine digital skills with expertise from other industries.

The degree of sophistication of digital skills of young people – an indication of which competencies of young people are well-developed and which need to be improved or supplemented (including through formal or informal education) according to employers.
Having "3-in-1" competencies is exactly what the industry of the future expects. It is crucial for people in the labour market to have different competencies ranging from digital to soft to linguistic ones. Employees who speak two or even three foreign languages at least at the B2 proficiency level are highly sought after. Combined with digital competencies, their language skills give them an incredible advantage as candidates for jobs in smart economic specialisations. Local governments, as well as high schools and universities with their support, should take steps to prepare the "workforce of the future", made up of employees possessing combined digital skills and competencies of the future in such areas as robotisation, automation and digitisation.

Competencies that differentiate human work from the work of IT systems, robots and artificial intelligence.
Robots are partially replacing humans or even fully eliminating some jobs. At the same time, they support human work and create new opportunities for the business sector and the entire economy. To have a competitive advantage over robots, human resources must adapt to the changing environment and embrace lifelong learning. We should take care to raise the digital skills of young people starting from the earliest stages of education so that they have a chance to "win" against artificial intelligence in the future labour market.

Support from local governments and universities in shaping human resources equipped with tomorrow's competencies for business.
Local governments should support universities and high schools in improving the digital skills of young people. This allows cities to increase their competitiveness by creating a workforce with extensive digital skills.

However, the retention of employees in the local market is a separate challenge. We now live in a global ecosystem where direct competition is no longer limited to another company operating in the same industry in a given city or even country: we now compete with countries all over the world.

Session: **Technology in the service of society: will Poles transition to Society 5.0 by supporting the implementation of SDGs and ESG policies?**

Can digitisation and new technologies help solve the pressing problems facing Polish society? Can robotisation and digital transition bring us closer to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? Is Polish society open to new solutions and ready to embrace them? How do Poles feel about ESG/SDGs? The panellists answered all these questions and more based on the latest study “Technologies in the Service of Society”.

Organiser:
Digital Poland Foundation

Moderator
Piotr Mieczkowski, Digital Poland Foundation

Panellists
dr hab. **Urszula Soler**, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin
Agnieszka Jankowska, Public Affairs Director, T-Mobile Poland
Weronika Bajbak (Kuna), Public Affairs Director, Microsoft Poland
Tomasz Rychter, Director of the e-Services Department, Centre for Information Technology
Mariusz Sagan, Head of the Strategy and Entrepreneurship Department, Lublin City Hall

Summary
Prior to the discussion, Piotr Mieczkowski of the Digital Poland Foundation presented the results of the Foundation's survey on the attitudes of Poles towards new technologies, as well as their awareness of the ways these technologies could help solve strategic problems facing Poland, and their knowledge of and attitudes towards ESG/SDG.

The discussion was opened by Weronika Bajbak, who pointed out that the ESG is a welcome regulation since until recently only the citizen and the state have had to function within democratic processes and undertake such tasks as taking care of the planet. At last, companies too will be required to report their CSR activities and be more responsible for economic life and their impact on society.

Urszula Soler of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin pointed out that Poles are generally optimistic about new technologies. In total, 63% of Poles are optimistic about them, 27% are more reserved and 10% are their true opponents. Poles want to use new technologies; they merely lack knowledge about them.

Agnieszka Jankowska pointed out that new technologies can help solve problems faced by Poland and the world. The survey shows that over 80% of Poles share this view. For example, the Internet of Things (IoT) can help society take care of water quality in rivers and lakes by reporting contamination levels (similar to smog sensors). Like robotics, it can help us solve the problem of labour shortages in such areas as highly repetitive and tedious jobs.

Tomasz Rychter pointed out how today's digital public services, e.g. digital and paperless dealings with citizens, contribute to reducing the carbon footprint by saving paper and reducing unnecessary travel to public offices. Solutions like the latest version of the mObywatel (mCitizen) app offer extensive possibilities, with the app itself set to eventually become not only a digital identity but also a means to support e-government processes.

Mariusz Sagan of the Lublin City Hall noted that digital technologies may contribute to better and smarter and cleaner cities. Lublin is already using many such technologies, including such solutions as smart metering. However, Mr Sagan also pointed out that getting the public to agree to such applications of technology is crucial since nearly 40% of people fear that robotisation and new technologies will take away their jobs.

Track: MAN ON THE INTERNET

Session: **Deepfake and cyber resilience**

The debate raised the extremely important issue of the impact that artificial intelligence has on people's security – not only in the digital world but also in the real one. Our experts presented different perspectives and contexts on the use of AI in business, but also medicine, the arts and many other areas. They tried to draw a line between good and inappropriate uses of technology and considered whether bringing new technologies under regulation would slow their development or help them to grow.

Organiser:
EY Poland

Moderator
Joanna Gałajda, Manager, EY Law

Panellists
Krzysztof Biernacki, CEO, Digital Gateways
Pamela Krzypkowska, Cloud Solution Architect at Microsoft
Jakub Walarus, EY Partner, Cyber Security Compliance
Maciej Bisch, Manager, EY Law

Summary

The discussion was similar to an Oxford debate in style, allowing all participants to present their views and dynamically exchange arguments.

In her opening remarks, Joanna Galajda of EY Law identified three key aspects of AI that are worth examining more closely: the use of new technologies, the approach to their development, and the question of sacrificing privacy for the sake of artificial intelligence.

The discussion started with the most controversial example of the use of AI which is deepfake. Krzysztof Biernacki pointed out that the deepfake phenomenon has already spread globally since its first algorithm was created in 2017. It is not uncommon for crimes like identity theft to occur, too. The CEO of Digital Gateways indicated that there are methods to identify and prevent deepfakes, but they are complex processes.

Jakub Walarus, Partner at EY, pointed to the positive examples of the use of deepfake, remarking that it is up to people to use it for a good purpose. In this regard, he noted the possibility of using AI to create historical visualisations, as well as using images of well-known individuals for information purposes as a new way of reaching out to the public that may soon be necessary.

Maciej Bisch, attorney at EY Law, pointed to areas of AI application in which a threat of violations of fundamental human rights is noticeable. To provide an example, he referred to a recruitment process at an international corporation during which algorithms were used that discriminated against women.

Pamela Krzypkowska stressed the importance of realising that humans should always be at the heart of technology creation. She expressed the hope that the AI Act, which the European Union is working on, will bring together the views of entrepreneurs, lawyers and technology architects.

Krzysztof Biernacki pointed to PSD2, which was feared at first, but turned out to have brought many opportunities, including in the banking sector.

Maciej Bisch demonstrated a positive approach to the regulation of AI, noting that codes of ethics are only voluntary and do not provide for sanctions for breaching them. Therefore, in his view, we need a regulatory framework, albeit not necessarily a rigid one. Jakub Walarus disagreed, stating that we need to look at the issue of regulating AI globally. Assuming that technology has no boundaries and that synchronising legislation across the world seems impossible, it is worth pursuing standards that will work across the globe and enable a breakthrough to push technology forward through their use.

The debate was closed by Joanna Galajda, who emphasized that AI should always be viewed from a broad perspective covering law, security, technology and business.

Session: PARPverse: Enter the metaverse – how will man find his way in a new virtual world?

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

The virtual world has become an integral part of our lives. The metaverse hearkens back to a vision first described 30 years ago. Now, however, we are but one step away from further immersion into the digital reality, thanks to advances in technology.

Organiser:
Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP)

Moderator
Jacek Bukowicki, Start-up Development Department, PARP

Panellists
Andrzej Horoch, Connected Realities
Magda Kubicka, Łódź Special Economic Zone
Przemysław Nowakowski, Łódź Special Economic Zone
Rafał Siejca, Mazer Inc., XR Wizards

Summary

By no means is the idea of the metaverse a new thing; however, it is only now that "technology is catching up with the dream" and opportunities are opening up for us to use it without compromising our health. It is also increasingly accessible to businesses, including both company employees and customers. The metaverse offers new opportunities for staff meetings and training, among other things, and new channels for interacting with customers. It also brings unique opportunities to the fashion segment (dressing avatars, virtual fitting rooms) and the industrial sector (digital twins, onboarding at industrial sites, remote fault diagnosis, repairs, maintenance, etc.). For customers, virtual car showrooms already offer interesting options, going as far as to offer virtual test drives. A newly opened virtual branch of a Polish bank was also an interesting example cited during the discussion.

It was repeatedly stressed during the discussion that the key to introducing such innovations in business is proper preparation, education and awareness, as well as familiarisation with new technologies and opportunities. This is particularly vital in organisations where decision-makers themselves do not use and are not familiar with state-of-the-art solutions. At the same time, attention was drawn to a circumstance that is crucial from the customers' standpoint, i.e. the imminent entry of Generation Alpha, who grew up and learned to relate to their peers during the pandemic and for whom communication through the digital world has become commonplace. It was also explained that due to long innovation processes, large corporations are already testing virtual solutions to adequately prepare for entry into the market of younger generations of customers and to communicate in a language and environment familiar to them.

Talking about the younger generations brought another issue: concerns that often arise among today's parents and elderly people. Parents fear the as-yet-unknown consequences of children being in a virtual space, rather than developing skills and social relationships naturally, in the real world. This also evoked one of the most sceptical and pessimistic fears related to the metaverse – that it could be a contributor to humanity's extinction by bringing about a future in which people stay at home at all times, on their sofas, and carry out most activities only in the virtual world via their avatars.
Other concerns mentioned related to the vision of digital exclusion for those for whom technological progress is happening too fast to keep up, such as the elderly or those who have never played video games. It was determined that this could be avoided by offering comfort and enabling the intuitive operation of devices. One of the examples given was the excitement of older people who, having become familiar with technology, discovered the unlimited possibilities of virtual tourism and world exploration, especially in cases where their health condition did not allow for physical travel.

Although predictions are being made that the metaverse is to be the successor to the current Internet, interviewees believe that depriving people of their current forms of interaction would be a too radical move restricting freedom and the market. Some noted that online tools, new technologies and digitisation are meant to enable customisation rather than limit options because people want to have a choice.

Thus, one conclusion of the discussion was that the metaverse will not replace but rather complement, expand and enrich the current ways of using online digital resources of the Internet.

Another conclusion was that not only should this issue be discussed, but people should be given the broadest possible opportunity to get a taste of the virtual world's quality and get to know the hitherto unknown possibilities, which should reduce their fear of it. Employers should play a special role in such education if they want to develop the digital skills of their employees and customers.

Session: **Fake news. How to recognise and defend against it? Practical classes with the use of eye trackers.**

The workshop presented the results of an interdisciplinary study that looked at the psychosocial mechanisms of consumption and the spread of fake news in the digital environment. The study aimed to explore the consumption patterns of news shared in the social media environment and to identify potential relationships between consumption patterns and the social characteristics of respondents. Conducted between 13 and 17 October 2022 using an eye tracker and a survey questionnaire (CAWI), the study covered 22 students at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin (UMCS). Eight messages were presented to the respondents: 4 fake news and 4 genuine news. Fake news was selected based on ratings from demagog.org.pl (news from a single community platform). Each message was assessed by the respondent in terms of (i) content veracity; (ii) source credibility; (iii) impartiality. The study ended with a survey on political participation, media consumption and media competence.

Organiser:
UMCS Digital Resources and Intelligent Systems Research Centre

Moderator
dr hab. **Jarosław Chodak**, UMCS Digital Resources and Intelligent Systems Research Centre, UMCS Faculty of Sociology

Panellists
dr **Kamil Filipek**, UMCS Digital Resources and Intelligent Systems Research Centre, UMCS Division of Sociology
dr **Monika Szkarłat**, UMCS Digital Resources and Intelligent Systems Research Centre, Division of Political Science and Administration
Jacek Czerwiński, UMCS Doctoral School of Social Sciences

Summary

Jarosław Chodak outlined the main problem and drew attention to the ambiguity of the term “fake news”. Based on scientific definitions, a news item generally becomes fake news if it fulfils the following conditions: it is a false (whether wholly or partially) or misleading claim; it is published as true information in a format that imitates a news item or report; the creators of fake news intend to mislead (deceive, manipulate) a specific audience.

Monika Szkarłat then briefly discussed the role of the law in combating fake news.

Kamil Filipek emphasised that there are 3 main approaches in detecting fake news: (1) human-based (crowd-sourcing, expert assessment); (2) automated (NLP, social network analysis); (3) mixed (expert assessment supported by technology). He then presented the following research hypotheses: (A) respondents do not focus on reading the text that accompanies the digital message; (B) graphic elements were of pivotal importance in the consumption of digital messages; (C) the consumption time of the “information source” area is greater for fake news than for real news; (D) respondents pay attention to social reinforcement.

The analysis of the study results led to the following conclusions: text is a vital part of the messages users encounter on Facebook; while graphic elements are a crucial part of digital news, they are not as important as the content of the message; the source of the information was only the third most important element that respondents devoted time to; even in the case of fake news, respondents did not analyse the source for longer than the main text and graphics; social reinforcement (e.g. “likes”) were the least important element of creating messages on social media.

During the workshop, Jacek Czerwiński conducted a live survey with one of the audience members using the tools that had been used for the study itself. Its results were consistent with those obtained in the study.

Session: Youth’s skills of the future: Are we still catching up with Europe?

Main discussion topics and key questions:

- What is the level of digital skills of Polish students and teachers?
- How to improve the competencies of the future?
- What competencies are the most important for entering the labour market and everyday life in the digital age?

Organiser:

ZIPSEE Digital Poland

Moderator
Błażej Prośniewski, Business Editorial Board of Radio Poland

Panellists
Antoni Rytel, Deputy Director, GovTech Poland
Leszek Janasik, Principal, Community High School No. 5 in Milanówek
Stanisław Zabandżała, Chair of the Centre of New Technologies, Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Warsaw
Jagoda Zakrzewska, Manager, Public Policy, Google

Summary
The session took the form of a discussion panel. Opening the discussion, the moderator pointed to the fact that Poland ranked fairly low in the Digital Economy and Society Index's (DESI 2021) Human Capital category. The basis for the discussion was the preliminary results of the pilot edition of the Visegrad Group's IT Fitness Test 2022, a digital skills survey. The test indicated a low level of skills in the use of office tools among students and teachers alike, as well as unsatisfactory involvement of schools in the project, among other things.

When asked to comment on the above results, public administration representative Antoni Rytel, Deputy Director of GovTech Poland, expressed his satisfaction that digital skills tests like the IT Fitness Test are being implemented. He noted that Generation Z and Generation Alpha, whose members are now being taught in schools, exhibit different attitudes to digital tools. Mr Rytel stressed the crucial role of cyber security as well. He pointed out the following as key areas of action to prepare young people for the digital age: providing equipment (including computers) for learning, ensuring universal access to the internet in education and including the issue of digital skills in teacher training and the core curriculum.

Leszek Janasik, Principal of Community High School No. 5 in Milanówek, also shared his views on the issue of digital skills. He pointed to the occurrence of "(secondary) digital illiteracy", i.e. the inability to use digital tools to retrieve and analyse information despite daily interactions with technology for other purposes. Moreover, Mr Janasik highlighted that students often report a lack of "cross-curricular correlation" of skills acquired through the study of computer science. The principal believes that the students are not taught how to use their computer competencies in other fields of study.

A representative of the university student community (and until recently a high school student) Stanislaw Zabandżała, Chair of the Centre of New Technologies at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Law and Administration, acknowledged that in the early stages of learning there is a lack of connection between digital skills and other classes; there are also few opportunities to use digital skills in other fields of study. He stressed that education should emphasize the ability to search for data online and analyse and evaluate it. Mr Zabandżała also pointed to a phenomenon that still occurs in many classrooms: banning or discouraging the use of the Internet as a source of knowledge and information.

Jagoda Zakrzewska, Manager at Google Public Policy, spoke about how digital tools can support the development of digital skills from a business perspective and the need for digitally talented employees. In her view, it is not just the ICT sector that needs a digitally competent workforce – every branch of the economy does. She pointed to the vital role played by the private sector in the development of digital skills by such means as providing comprehensive tools for teachers and offering hardware tailored to education.

Closing the discussion, the panellists and the moderator offered the following conclusions:

- Digital skills are an interdisciplinary issue and this fact should be reflected in the curricula;
- Education on acquiring and critically analysing data, as well as on digital security, is of key importance;
- Digital skills development should be comprehensive (affecting the entire population regardless of age or economic sector);
- Digital skills development stands to gain much from public-private partnerships;
- The inadequate digital skills are due to such things as insufficient funding allocated to this purpose;

Session: **The labour market and professional competencies in the digital transition era.**

The session aimed to introduce young people to current and future labour market trends in the era of Industry 4.0, guide their educational efforts and prepare them for their career search in the coming months and years.

Organiser:

The Kosciuszko Institute

Moderator

Maciej Góra, Analyst and Project Coordinator, Kosciuszko Institute

Panellists

Weronika Bajbak, Government Affairs Lead Poland, Microsoft Poland
Katarzyna Nosalska, Director of the Digital Competence Centre at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Summary

In response to a question about the level of digital skills of Polish employees posed in the initial part of the session, Director Nosalska noted that only 1/4 of Polish white-collar workers and only 1/10 of blue-collar workers have more than basic digital skills while the European average in this regard exceeds 50%. The attempt to improve this state of affairs, for which the Polish government is currently allocating a record amount of money, is in line with the objectives of the Digital Decade 2030, a European Commission programme.

Poland has also devoted special attention to increasing the number of qualified ICT specialists as part of its Digital Competence Development Programme. Director Nosalska also noted that today's companies no longer point to financing issues but rather digital skills as the main obstacle to development in the era of Industry 4.0.

When asked what digital skills Microsoft expects from its employees, Weronika Bajbak, Government Affairs Lead Poland at Microsoft, pointed out that digital transition involves the entire organisation and its decision-making processes and encompasses more than IT departments alone. As such, employees working in such areas as administration or HR also need to develop their digital skills. She also pointed out that digital skills are a lifelong learning process and emphasised the importance of soft skills, as well as communication skills, and leadership skills.

To address the distinction made between skills and qualifications, Director Nosalska drew attention to the importance of the European Union's Integrated Qualifications System, which is a vital reference point for employers in assessing prospective employees. She also emphasised the importance of university education in the development of both industry knowledge and crucial social competencies.

Responding to a question about Microsoft’s ways to combat exclusion in IT, Weronika Bajbak stressed that the sector lacks not only women but also elderly people, as well as people with disabilities, and people from small towns and rural areas. Since the involvement of such people is imperative given the growing gap in the technology labour market, Microsoft is seeking to promote an inclusive approach to employment and is working with the NGO sector to that end, including by partnering with the Kosciuszko Institute on the Cyber Trainees programme.

The final question to Director Nosalska concerned the issue of encouraging young people to work in the public sector. She noted that this sector carries out projects of a unique scale, requiring compliance with the applicable laws and regulations which can then be successfully translated into experience used in the private sector.

In her concluding speech, Weronika Bajbak asserted that there is a place in big tech for those with a humanities background – lawyers, marketers, etc. – people who can successfully design inclusive solutions, tell compelling stories, write interesting texts and reach a wider audience with products designed by technical specialists.

Session: **Female leaders of the digital world – the need for women in the tech industry.**

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

The following questions were answered during the panel:

- How are female leaders improving their technology competencies?
- What role do women play in the world of technology? What added value do they bring and what consequences does this entail?
- Why do we need technological talents? How do you seek them out and support them?

Organiser:
Warsaw Enterprise Institute Foundation

Moderator
Bianka Siwińska, Chief Executive Officer; Perspektywy Women in Tech

Panellists
Magda Biernat, Director, Centrum Cyfrowe (*Digital Centre Foundation*)
Justyna Duszyńska, Coordinator of the Łukasiewicz Research Group Digital Transformation
Natalia Matyba, Deputy Director, Digital Policy Department, Chancellery of the Prime Minister
Agnieszka Plencler, CEO, Forum Polskich Konsumentów (*Polish Consumer Forum*)

Summary

The session served as a platform to identify the needs of men and women and how policy-making and appropriate planning can support equitable access to technology education and careers in industries critical to an inclusive society and modern economy. In the course of the discussion, the experts demonstrated the huge role that both public institutions and businesses have to play in terms of technology education for women.

Track – DIGITAL LEGISLATION FORUM

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

Session: **Influencing the EU legislative environment and building effective coalitions supporting the interests of Polish industry and science in Brussels.**

The session showed the practical side of decision-making at the EU level. The presentation of all participants in this process, i.e. representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee, as well as academia and private business, was an ideal opportunity to exchange experiences and good practices in the field of advocacy.

The panellists also presented opportunities for cooperation within the European Union and the joint development of effective legislation covering processes in the digital space. Business & Science Poland, an employers' association, combines the experience of Polish companies and scientific institutes with the European Union agenda. It aims to strengthen the voice of Polish business and build dialogue with EU institutions; it also strives to shrink the distance separating EU lawmakers from business and science with respect to all regulations – from digital policies to taxonomy.

Introductory speeches
Paweł Lewandowski, Undersecretary of State, Chancellery of the Prime Minister
Grzegorz Dębowski, Board Member, Business & Science Poland

Organiser:
Business & Science Poland

Moderator
Kamila Pendyk, Director of the Digital Transition Programme of the PPL Business Group, CEO of Digital Affairs Institute

Panel 1: Decision-making at the EU level

Panellists
Justyna Romanowska, National Expert, European Commission
Anna Podgórska-Buompane, Counsellor, Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the European Union
dr hab., prof. SGH **Małgorzata Molęda-Zdziech**, Head of the Department of Political Studies, Proxy of the Rector of SGH Warsaw School of Economics for Cooperation with the EU
dr **Urszula Góral**, Director of the International Cooperation and Education Department, Personal Data Protection Office

Summary
The issues raised during the session included the role of independent regulators in the legislative process, the role of the Republic of Poland and other EU Member States in the Council of the EU and the current structure and impact of the Member States on the EU. Cooperation between Polish business and Brussels and the activities of the Permanent Representatives Committee were discussed as well. The decision-making process and the coherence of EU policies and actions were presented in detail.

Panel 2: Advocacy representatives

Panellists
Anna Maria Kaczmarek, Deputy Director, European Policies Department, Business & Science Poland
Aleksandra Trojanowska, Head of Strategic Projects Department, PKN Orlen

Agata Boutanos, Head of the Brussels Branch, Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers, Economic and Social Committee in Brussels
Grzegorz Zajączkowski, Specialist, "Polish Airports" State Enterprise
Jakub Turowski, Public Policy Director CEE, Meta

Summary
The panel saw the participants analyse the definition and nature of EU lobbying. It also demonstrated why it is worthwhile to have national representatives in Brussels. The issues raised included digital transition, lobbying, advocacy of cross-sectoral interests in EU digital policies, perspectives of technology companies, legislative solutions with new technologies for decarbonisation, increasing the impact of artificial intelligence in industry and strategic communication in business operations in the European environment.

Session: **Time for the digital economy.**

The session included a discussion on Poland's place in international rankings such as DESI, WDCR and GII, and examined what needs to be done for Poland to become a leader in innovation and new technologies. Other issues discussed included the DESI index and how well it represents the state of digitisation in Poland.

Organiser:
Digital Poland Foundation

Moderator
Piotr Mieczkowski, Digital Poland Foundation

Panellists
Michał Polasik, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń
Patryk Zakrzewski, Demagog Association
Ignacy Święcicki, Polish Economic Institute
Jan Zborowski, SoDA – Association of IT Services Employers
Ligia Kornowska, Polish Hospital Federation
Stefan Kamiński, Polish Chamber of Commerce for Electronics and Telecommunications (KIGEiT)

Summary
Prior to the discussion, the moderator presented the progress on "Time for the digital economy, Poland's largest set of recommendations co-authored by more than 40 organisations and two former ministers of digitisation. The first showcase of working recommendations in more than 20 areas, including autonomous and electric cars, fixed and mobile digital infrastructure, data centres, e-health, Polish IT, media education and public education, was scheduled to take place right after the panel.

The discussion was opened by Ignacy Święcicki, who pointed out that Poland ranks low in many international indices. This shows how much can still be done, even though there are areas where Poland is doing quite well, e.g. in connecting citizens through e-government services.

During the discussion, representatives of the leading organisations forming the recommendations presented their most important calls.

For example, Ligia Kornowska called for data to be opened up to expand applications of artificial intelligence in health, enabling faster diagnoses and better disease detection.

Jan Zborowski pointed to the lack of ICT specialists and the low saturation of the Polish economy with them (around 3.6% of Poland's total workforce compared to as much as 7.5% in Scandinavia). Further continuing education measures should be taken to address this issue. Likewise, the industry sees numerous potential changes in tax law that could boost the development of the domestic IT sector.

Patryk Zakrzewski discussed the need to combat disinformation and develop media education in Poland. One of the most important demands is the inclusion of media education in the core curriculum.

Michał Polasik discussed the development of Poland's fintech market, indicating the need to regulate cryptocurrencies and support the further development of the so-called cashless and paperless economy. One recommendation is to support the creation and development of regulatory sandboxes.

Stefan Kamiński pointed out the need to support the development of RES and smart metering. Poland's main challenge is the outdated electricity sector, hence the need to digitise it and develop the transmission grid to support the connection of wind turbines and photovoltaics. This will consequently contribute to lower energy prices.

At the end of the session, the panellists called for all stakeholders to join the "Time for the Digital Economy" project, the largest agreement and set of recommendations of its kind in Poland.

Session: **Poland in cyberspace – where are we, where are we headed?**

Organiser:
Warsaw Enterprise Institute Foundation

Moderator
Piotr Nowak, Research and Analysis Department Coordinator, Warsaw Enterprise Institute

Panellists

Marcin Olender, Public Policy and Government Relations Manager Central and Eastern Europe, Google
Bartłomiej Orzeł, Expert, NASK National Research Institute
Michał Kanownik, President, ZIPSEE Digital Poland

Summary

Recent events shed new light on the issue of Poland's cyber security. Today, one can plainly see that war is no longer fought on the battlefield alone but also in cyberspace, which is increasingly important from a strategic standpoint. The following issues were discussed during the panel:

- What is the state of Poland's cyber security from the public administration's point of view? What has changed in the approach to cyber security since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine?
- Information warfare is also part of cyber security. Recently, we have seen social media get flooded with fake accounts promoting the Russian viewpoint. How are we combating this issue and will any procedures be introduced to curb this?
- Work is currently underway at the EU level on the NIS2 Directive. In Poland, this Directive is to be implemented through the Act on National Cyber Security System. Is this a good solution?
- Poland has announced the establishment of Cyberspace Defence Forces, scheduled to reach their full operating capability by 2024, with the Ministry of Defence set to collaborate on the project with Google. Is this necessary?
- What strategy should Poland adopt in the context of cyber security? What key challenges can be noted in this regard?

Session: **Digital economy without barriers. Digital Poland – a package of changes.**

The key issue raised during the panel was the implications of the globalisation of e-commerce. They were presented from the perspective of business, consumers, public administration and legal practice. The discussion covered the benefits of the digital economy embodying the idea of global economic exchange between people and the challenges that arise at the interface between national legal systems and global trade.

Organiser:

Chamber of the Digital Economy (e-Chamber)

Moderator

Witold Chomiczewski, Attorney-at-Law, Partner at the Lubasz i Wspólnicy Law Firm, e-Chamber Legislation Representative

Panellists

Marta Kasztelan, e-Taxes Coordinator in the e-Chamber's Legislative Group, Tax Advisor, Sowiński i Partnerzy Kancelaria Radców Prawnych i Doradcy Podatkowego Sp. p.
Ewelina Stępnik-Godawa, Regulatory Affairs Leader, Allegro
Bartosz Skowroński, Antitrust Coordinator in the e-Chamber Legislative Group, BHR Adwokaci Radomski i Partnerzy Spółka Partnerska
Kamil Mirowski, Senior Public Affairs Lead Poland & CEE, Zalando
Grzegorz Kozłowski, Director of the Customs Department, Ministry of Finance
Michał Herde, President of the Warsaw Branch of Federacja Konsumentów (*Consumer Federation*)

Summary

Thanks to e-commerce, we live in a global marketplace where entrepreneurs from all over the world compete for the attention of consumers, with the latter having an unprecedented choice of digital goods and services. Due to universal payment methods, and above all, improvements in logistics, purchases on different continents are beginning to provide consumers with a similar "user experience" to those made in Poland or elsewhere in the EU. All in all, goods arrive promptly at the delivery point.

This description of the realities of today's digital economy points to major opportunities for Polish companies to build their global market position. This was emphasised during the panel by business representatives.

As for the consumers, the aforementioned specificity of e-commerce offers extensive access to goods and digital services and content. This allows them to purchase the goods they want at the best price and in the configuration most suited to their needs.

On the other hand, the development of Polish business offers the public administration a chance to create additional jobs and enjoy higher tax revenues.

At the same time, the global digital economy raises significant challenges both in the field of legislation and the enforcement of laws already in force whenever it intersects with national legal systems.

From a consumer perspective, the various product safety requirements are an issue. Products purchased outside the EU do not have to comply with the same stringent safety requirements as those sourced within the EU. Enforcing consumer rights outside the EU also presents an issue for consumers.

In turn, entrepreneurs recognise the difficulties of price competition with operators from some non-EU countries. The latter do not have to comply with EU product safety requirements; they often breach consumer rights, and collecting VAT and customs duties from them sometimes proves impossible. This leads to an uneven framework for competition in the global market.

However, the public administration is introducing solutions, including AI-driven ones, to control the shipments arriving in Poland and collect public fees more effectively.

Session: The issue of liability for software errors as exemplified by IoT.

The correct operation of IoT devices is determined by their software. Such software may contain not only vulnerabilities but also functionalities deliberately concealed from the purchaser. This is extremely dangerous to any user, including a professional one.
The presentation discussed the types of errors and the current and proposed EU regulations applicable to liability for software defects. Both typical examples of breaches and significant gaps in the current regulations – particularly in the B2B and B2A space – were identified.

Organiser:

Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

Speaker

dr **Piotr Marciniak**, Institute of Law Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

Summary

Two key categories of software errors were identified:

- common – typical software deficiencies and bugs that should be addressed by subsequent software updates;
- aggravated – insertion of malicious code or backdoors in sold devices and software; this category also includes cases where no appropriate security measures are in place;

In the latter case, the liability for their inclusion and usability rests with the manufacturer. Hence, its liability for aggravated errors should be unlimited in amount and appropriate to the amount of loss incurred by injured parties due to the very awareness and acceptance of the possibility that such a vulnerability could be used to cause harm. The current regulation of the so-called dangerous products based on Directive 85/374/EEC is limited to the B2C segment and does not include the category of aggravated errors.

For software, there are five groups of issues to consider:

- electronic devices and software are characterised by modularity – the product components are usually supplied by different parties, which makes it difficult to test their safety and most often precludes the effectiveness of claims against the manufacturer and its suppliers;
- in practice, software and devices are covered by a brief or no support period;
- device users are not necessarily their owners – e.g. medical devices may be lent to patients;
- with some exceptions, a buyer from any segment (B2C, B2B, B2A) cannot effectively verify the cyber security of all the devices and software it acquires, nor can it negotiate acquisition-related contracts;

- the absence of aggravated errors precludes vulnerability and the need for related research;

Current national and EU regulations do not guarantee effective and equal protection for users. EU regulations focus on B2C or narrow issues such as artificial intelligence or autonomous vehicles.

Worryingly, the latest EU initiatives:

- amendment to the Cyber Resilience Act [COM(2022) 495]

and

- draft of 28 September 2022 – Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on liability for defective products [COM(2022) 495],

only broaden consumer protection by introducing liability for the service provider, who may unknowingly use devices with defective software, but do not establish producer liability towards B2B and B2A buyers.

This makes it necessary to review and expand the existing regulations on liability for dangerous products to all groups of purchasers – at least with regard to the above-mentioned aggravated errors. Clear and effective liability rules are the only tool to force manufacturers to implement solutions that guarantee cyber security – from information confidentiality to the smooth operation of medical devices or public transport.

YOUTH TRACK

Session: **Youth IGF Poland Digital Summit**

Organiser:
NASK National Research Institute and Youth IGF Poland

Panel 1: The war is already happening on your phone. Disinformation. Threats and countermeasures.

In the world we live in, anything is possible if one only believes that it is. By not fact-checking, we become easily manipulated audiences who do exactly what the fake news creator wants.

In going down this path, we put ourselves at risk of losing our health, using harmful substances, and engaging in behaviours and actions that are not in our interest. However, we can question, verify, think and act according to the facts without harming ourselves or others. While this is the more difficult path, it is also a worthwhile one because having the ability to decide your own destiny and awareness of any risks is always a good thing.

The panel aimed to build awareness of disinformation. Apart from a theoretical introduction, the meeting included case studies based on real events. The audience was able to see examples of disinformation that targeted Poles online. The meeting was interactive, with the audience taking part in specially prepared tasks during its course.

Moderator and panellist
dr inż. **Rafał Prabucki**, Cyber Science

Panellists
Izabela Jarka, NASK National Research Institute
Aleksandra Wrona, NASK National Research Institute

Summary
Efforts are needed to build awareness of the threat of disinformation. Disinformation activities are increasing and taking the form of social engineering, affecting whole sections of society, including young people.

Conclusions:
1. Young people's awareness of online risks must be raised.
2. Disinformation is not merely a threat but also a weapon that can shape attitudes among people in certain communities.
3. Poland is being targeted by groups that carry out attacks based on disinformation.
4. Schools must urgently start teaching critical thinking.

Panel 2: "DawAI dane" – on health technologies and data management in the healthcare sector.

Topics discussed:
- digitisation offers hope for the development of healthcare and an opportunity for greater access to medical services;
- for artificial intelligence to develop as it should, it needs data in sufficient quantity and, above all, of good quality;
- challenges of health data management facing Poland;
- data-related regulations being prepared by the European Commission (including the European Health Data Space);
- potential solutions to improve the current state of healthcare digitisation in Poland;

The issue was presented from three different perspectives: medical, technological (based on the experience of data scientists) and legal.

Moderator and panellist
Marta Musidłowska, Youth IGF Poland, Instrat Foundation

Panellists

dr n. med. **Tomasz Imiela**, Regional Medical Chamber in Warsaw
Korneliusz Krysiak, National Institute of Telecommunications

Summary

The discussion took the form of a debate between 3 experts in different fields.

First, Marta Musidłowska outlined statistics on how Poles currently approach digitisation and the development of new technologies. She talked about the latest developments in MedTech and posited that for artificial intelligence to work safely for patients and support doctors, it needs to be “given data”.

Tomasz Imiela then discussed the state of digitisation in Polish healthcare and how doctors (both young and older) approach the issue of data management and digitisation in general.

Afterwards, Korneliusz Krysiak talked about the systems and databases in place in Polish healthcare and the challenges associated with them, including the shortcomings of digital documentation and the lack of full synchronisation with pharmaceutical systems.

Marta Musidłowska gave a legal perspective on the problems associated with the difficulty of defining what constitutes health data and what does not due to the varying governing law regarding sensitive data.

In the second part of the meeting, the panellists spoke about what they thought should change in the fields they deal with to capitalise on the full potential of new technologies in medicine.

Tomasz Imiela believes that an important aspect would be to employ qualified assistants to help doctors properly enter patient data into IT systems.

In turn, Korneliusz Krysiak pointed out that it is critical to establish the most unified standards for data collection, storage, anonymisation, security, mining and sharing.

Marta Musidłowska concluded the debate by pointing out that some of the demands raised during its course are already incorporated into the European Health Data Space project; this includes those concerning interoperability or data access, whether for doctors, state universities, research institutes or other parties.

The panel’s conclusions were closely related to the availability and quality of data to be used by artificial intelligence, as well as the openness of the medical community to changing the way patients are treated. Failure in this regard means that we will be unable to create a data-driven future in the healthcare sector, which will be crucial in the coming decades. We must examine the technologies that are currently being used by the healthcare sector more closely; however, we also need to convince and educate

doctors that capturing, processing and modelling healthcare data is beneficial for patients and doctors alike.

Once these two issues are resolved, we will be able to begin our journey, building cutting-edge MedTech solutions, using data and artificial intelligence to achieve our goals like building recommendation tools and medical software for the entire healthcare industry, which will undeniably bring about a better future for us, the patients.

Session: How does social media shape social attitudes in times of crisis, in particular the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine?

The panel examined the role of social media during the current geopolitical crises with a particular focus on disinformation.

Participants representing the public sector, as well as the tech sector and war refugee relief initiatives, discussed the role of the state in effective communication, the changing rules of social media in crises, the crisis activities that are directly present on social media, and the impact of all these elements in shaping public attitudes.

Organiser:
Startup Poland Foundation

Moderator
Marta Pawlak, Startup Poland

Panellists
Michał Kuczmierowski, Government Strategic Reserves Agency
Jakub Lang, OGDM: "Od Granicy Do Mieszkania" ("*From Border to Home" Foundation*)
Marcin Olender, Google
Victoria Umanska, Mama Vdoma Foundation

Summary
The session was opened with a statement that the fact that social media shapes social attitudes has been scientifically proven.

Part of the debate was dedicated to the role of the state in crises and the use of social media by the state. This area is subject to specific restrictions. To function efficiently, the state must have efficient communication.

According to Michal Kuczmierowski, Head of the Government Strategic Reserves Agency, a state in crisis needs efficient institutions and good communication.

Some also noted that crises are multifaceted and include an information layer, among other things. The Government Strategic Reserves Agency, for example, has set up a dedicated social media team to deal with the media aspect of crises.

The use of social media for pre-emptive communication and setting up vaccination points during the pandemic was cited as a positive example of the use of social media during a crisis.

Due to its significant reach, social media has been and continues to be used to organise refugee relief fundraisers.

The scope for misinformation on social media during crises is enormous. The World Health Organisation is calling on big technology companies to combat the disruption of information universality.

During the discussion, it was also argued that social media cannot be qualified as something good. Oftentimes, the quality of work is judged by such things as the quality of social media posts.

Besides, social media should not be glorified as a tool for providing help in crises. Many initiatives (spectacular fundraisers, in-kind donations for war refugees) have succeeded not thanks to social media, but primarily thanks to real-life contacts and the goodwill of donors. Here, social media was merely a tool to achieve the goal.

The panel also stressed that building and checking credibility is an indispensable part of using social media, especially during crises since the scope for misinformation increases during their course.

The session also dealt with fake news verification mechanisms, particularly website analysis, verification of sources provided in the news message, and comparing the message itself with information available on other websites.

Session: **Why do we need fact-checking?**

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

In a world of fake news and deepfakes, the ability to verify information authenticity is a fundamental skill for any responsible internet user. Fake news sows panic, and we have already experienced outright paralysis of the public and the induction of dangerous social behaviours on more than one occasion. We discussed the impact of fake news, as well as how to protect ourselves from it and what tools are available around the world to combat it, with practitioners, state officials and activists striving to ensure that media provide accurate information. The session focused on fact-checking, i.e. verifying the information available online, particularly on social media. To that end, the panellists reviewed the tools available for this purpose around the world.

The moderator asked the following questions:

- How should online information be verified – particularly from the point of view of young people?
- What regulations are imposed upon media and social media platforms in relation to the mandatory or optional verification of online information?
- Will we need a central organisation to verify information in the future?
- What danger do deepfakes pose today?
- How does fake news shape the image of regional and international politics?

- Web analytics – has the boundary of privacy and freedom of use of web users been crossed?

Organiser:
Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation

Moderator
Piotr Wasilewski, Co-Chair of the Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation

Panellists
Adam Andruszkiewicz, Secretary of State, Chancellery of the Prime Minister
Patryk Zakrzewski, Board Member at the "Demagog" Association, coordinator of Akademia Fact-Checkingu (*Fact-checking Academy*).
Izabela Jarka, NASK National Research Institute, NASK #WłączWeryfikację (*#EnableVerification*)
Adam Goleński, "Pan Detektyw" (*Detective*) fact-checking portal
Karolina Wieczerzak, Youth City Council of Rzeszów
Kamil Kobyliński, Digitisation and New Technologies Team of the Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation

Summary
Secretary of State Adam Andruszkiewicz discussed the evolving importance of fact-checking and assessed the impact of the Russian war in Ukraine on the need to verify information. He stated that while the concept of "fake news" is relatively new to the public space, this issue has long been present in international relations as a propaganda phenomenon. Further, he remarked that fake news has unfortunately become even more popular due to globalisation. The Russian Federation spreads false information on a daily basis to destabilise the actions of other states. Fake news attracts recipients with its emotionally charged messaging and is often intended to increase the appeal of the given content.

Patryk Zakrzewski talked about how to defend yourself against fake news. He pointed out that it is worth starting by diagnosing the problem of fake news and announced that he would expand upon Mr Andruszkiewicz's accurate diagnosis. He broke down fake news sources into the internal area, originating from niche media outlets, as well as national media. He also touched upon the importance of providing truthful climate information. The development of social media has had a major influence on the rise in fake news activity.

Izabela Jarka of NASK National Research Institute spoke about the main challenges faced by NASK's #EnableVerification fact-checking profile. She stated that disinformation is not limited to fake news alone – it also uses advanced audio-visual campaigns that are harder to detect by verification tools. NASK's #EnableVerification social media channels were already active during the pandemic, which brought with it a highly noticeable outpour of misinformation. Emotional messages attempting to deny Russia's aggressive actions were strongly evident in the early days of the war in Ukraine.

The task of the NASK National Research Institute is to carry out a multi-stage verification and submit detailed reports to serve as the basis for information campaigns implemented by such bodies as the Chancellery of the Prime Minister. Izabela Jarka pointed out that countering disinformation is set to become increasingly automated.

Piotr Wasilewski, the panel moderator, noted that emotionally charged fake news spreads much faster than true information. He asked how this could be countered.

In response, Kamil Kobyliński confirmed that fact-checking is currently losing against fake news in terms of speed. Fake news often reaches a larger audience than its refutation, so sometimes its effects are partly irreversible. He also pointed out that falsification of reality should be punished since such actions are illegal. Moreover, he addressed the evolution of the journalism profession and recommended an increased role for the National Broadcasting Council in the area of social media. Among his other suggestions was that educational activities like workshops and school visits by experts ought to play a greater role in countering disinformation.

Adam Goleński highlighted the need to verify information from a variety of sources and noted that the “Pan Detektyw” portal fact-checks statements by politicians, influencers and other figures influencing young people. He confirmed the aggressive use of fake news by the Russian propaganda machine, trying to pit Poles against Ukrainians. However, the responsible attitude of most Poles showed just how ineffective these Russian actions are.

Karolina Wieczerzak pointed out that many young people are unaware of how often they come across fake news on social media. By no means is this problem limited only to the elderly – quite the contrary. She also highlighted such issues as e-learning and emphasised the role of information and education campaigns for young people.

Secretary of State Adam Andruszkiewicz also spoke about the negative activism of those defending the Russian invasion of Ukraine, some of whom called for people to storm banks, petrol stations and shops. Indeed, the very same accounts had previously been involved in promoting anti-vaccine attitudes and then began attacking refugees from Ukraine. Mr Andruszkiewicz also stressed the importance of the gov.pl digital gateway, which has an ever-widening reach and clearly communicates verified government messages and confirmed information.

Izabela Jarka pointed to the existence of groups that aim to spread disinformation and divide society. In their messaging, the anti-vaccine groups have at some point transitioned to anti-Ukrainian activities. As an example, she cited the manipulation related to the murder in Warsaw’s Nowy Świat Street, where some social media users claimed that the perpetrators were Ukrainians despite having no evidence to support this.

At the end of the discussion, the participants commented on the need to quickly rectify fake news and automate fact-checking in light of the upcoming election campaign in Poland, an event that unfortunately is set to evoke strong emotions in the public.

Patryk Zakrzewski pointed out the difference between the need to regulate fake news and the threat of online censorship. In turn, Kamil Kobyliński gave a different perspective on this issue.

Session: The world wide web and ecology – what steps can we take to reduce CO_2 emissions caused by the use of the Internet?

Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

The period between 1980 and 2010, coinciding with the development of the Internet, saw a rapid increase in ozone depletion due to CO_2 pollution. Did the Internet play a key role in this phenomenon or was it due to other factors? Could the world wide web, something invisible to us, have a real negative impact on polluting the Earth? Or is it quite the opposite and the online services and remote work solutions make the Internet an environmentally friendly option? These and other questions were answered by experts representing communities with differing views on the issue.

Organiser:
Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation

Moderator

Wiktoria Nowocień, Chair of the Digitisation and New Technologies Team

Panellists

Kinga Niemiec, Advisor to the Secretary of State at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, in charge of digitisation
Agata Delmaczyńska, Green Officer, Environmental Educator
Jadwiga Mizerska, Vice-Chair of the Ecology, Climate, Energy and Environmental Protection Team of the Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation
Sylwia Łyskawka, Chair of the first term Youth Climate Council, Co-founder of Klimatyczny Dialog Młodzieżowy (*Youth Climate Dialogue*)
Agata Śmieja, Originator of the TOGETAIR 2020 Climate Summit, President of Fundacja Czyste Powietrze (*Clean Air Foundation*)

Summary

As it turns out, there is no obvious answer to the questions so posed. On the one hand, servers use huge amounts of energy, which in many countries is still generated by coal-fired power plans; on the other hand, technological advances have made it possible to handle most official matters without leaving home and without printing piles of documents.

It has been claimed that vast quantities of non-recyclable electronic equipment are needed to keep the Internet running. Every single action by Internet users has consequences for the climate.

Contrasting the Internet with environmental benefits, the main argument for its use was the reduction of emissions. In this regard, a comparison was made between letter and email communication. Mention was also made of the mObywatel (mCitizen) app, one of the biggest innovations of its kind in Europe, which allows users to purchase public transport tickets and hold in-app electronic student ID cards, personal ID cards, vaccination certificates, driving licences and vehicle registration cards, as well as enables many other functions that bring users increased convenience and help protect the environment at the same time.

Further, state-of-the-art devices like lights and TVs are equipped with electricity consumption sensors to turn off automatically when not in use. Notably, there was a noticeable decrease in emissions when employees transitioned to remote work during the pandemic.

With regard to Internet use by young people, it was noted that they lack any awareness of the impact this has on the Earth. Responding to the question of how we can reduce our environmental impact as individual users, some suggested digital hygiene, tidying up one's email inbox, if only by unsubscribing from newsletters, deleting old messages, and not leaving devices on standby mode.

Yet end users are only a fraction of the whole system. It was noted that it is large corporations and software that are responsible for the majority of pollution related to the world wide web.

Our actions should be based on raising awareness, putting pressure on tycoons and encouraging people to be eco-friendly online.

Session: Young Poland 4.0

The session's main theme was the following question: What does the image of today's young digital Poles look like?

Organiser:
ZIPSEE Digital Poland

Moderator
Błażej Prośniewski, Business Editorial Board of Radio Poland

Panellists
Piotr Mazurek, Secretary of State at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Government Plenipotentiary for Youth Policy
Michał Kanownik, President of ZIPSEE Digital Poland
Jakub Persjanow, Vice-Chair of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland
Marta Wojtas, Coordinator at Poradnia "Dziecko w Sieci" (*Child Online Unit*), Empowering Children Foundation

Summary
The debate started with the observation that according to current research young people are spending more and more time online, that the world wide web is their main source of information, knowledge and cultural content, and that hacking attacks, theft and misinformation are seen as major challenges from the perspective of Internet users. Still, more than 60% of young Poles declare that online life is not as important as "real life".

Thus, Secretary of State Piotr Mazurek was asked whether young Poles are being absorbed by digital reality. Mr Mazurek responded that a key challenge facing those working in the field of youth policy is to adapt communication tools to the expectations and functioning of young people (through the use of online tools). To give an example in this regard, he pointed to the Polish Government's online public consultations covering more than 60,000 young Poles. The Secretary of State also stressed the fundamental importance of taking care of digital security and promoting cyber security awareness as part of youth policy.

Michał Kanownik, President of ZIPSEE Digital Poland, was asked to comment on research indicating that the Internet remains primarily an entertainment and communication tool for

young Poles. He acknowledged that unfortunately the digital competencies of young people are still often limited to the use of streaming platforms and social media (and even then, only to a basic extent, e.g. without knowledge of tools for verifying the information obtained).

Mr Kanownik also stressed that the ongoing IT Fitness Test shows that young people lack the ability to creatively use the digital competencies they already possess and acquire every day.

In the course of the debate, a question was raised as to the homogeneity and overlap between the digital and real identities created by young people. Jakub Persjanow, Vice-Chair of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland, noted that the virtual world is now a permanent and inseparable part of everyday life for young people. He claimed that young people use online activity to highlight their qualities that they do not think are adequately exposed in reality. The virtual world often provides an outlet for behaviours and attitudes that are not fully carried out during offline interaction. Mr Persjanow emphasised that the virtual world is attractive to young people primarily because of the possibility of fully expressing themselves, usually in spaces that bring together people similar to them in terms of views, interests and beliefs (the so-called "bubbles"), where they often do not face criticism and different points of view.

Marta Wojtas, Coordinator at Poradnia "Dziecko w Sieci" (*Child Online Unit*), Empowering Children Foundation, gave a psychologist's perspective on the issue of digital identity. She believes that while young people often want their digital identity to become their defining one, this is impossible. She acknowledged that the consequences of the growing importance of the digital sphere in building relationships between young people include the decline or disappearance of certain social skills in face-to-face interactions. In this context, she noted that the Foundation saw a rise in the number of reports concerning such problems once the remote learning period caused by the pandemic ended and the children returned to school.

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Live stream recordings of individual thematic tracks (in Polish only):

Event opening and plenary debate – https://youtu.be/TeaB3qMjhpA

Technologies in the Service of Society – https://youtu.be/8cQskmEYBrc

Man on the Internet – https://youtu.be/nG-2s2HOmi4

Digital Legislation Forum – https://youtu.be/wJw11fEAsYM

Youth Track – https://youtu.be/bSQemhicEio

Summary speech – https://youtu.be/hNAhIdNeFuY

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Photo: Chancellery of the Prime Minister

For questions on IGF Poland, a national Internet governance initiative, please email IGFPolska@mc.gov.pl.

Feel free to contact us!