SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONVERGENCE
COMPACT

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European Dialogue on Internet Governance - EuroDIG 2020 Report

European Commission

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HELLENIC FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN & FOREIGN POLICY

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media 21

UNIVERSIDADE CATOLICA PORTUGUESA

PSD
partnership for social development

it·forum

MEDIAFRAME

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BACKGROUD

EuroDIG 2020 Background

The European Dialogue on Internet Governance (EuroDIG) is an open multi-stakeholder platform to exchange views about the Internet and how it is governed. Created in 2008 by several organisations, government representatives and experts, it fosters dialogue and collaboration with the Internet community on public policy for the Internet. Every year Eurodig culminates in an annual conference that takes place in a different European city. Usually EuroDIG 'Messages' summarising the key ideas and proposals stemming from stakeholders' discussions are presented to the Internet Governance Forum. With a record of 1200 registrations from all over the globe, this first virtual EuroDIG 2020 made a record participation. (SOURCE: eurodig.org)

COMPACT Participants

- Bissera Zankova (M21F)
- Lukasz Porwol (NUIG)
- Tanja Pavleska (JSI)

Context

EuroDIG has been identified as a major platform for publishing COMPACT project results, especially in the area of Gender and Technology as well as to disseminate to our stakeholders our study on disinformation combating initiatives and internet standards and 5G. In particular the consortium agreed to target the prestigious Big Stage session with a theme dedicated to gender issues in a convergent society. In order to secure the place on the stage, COMPACT team had to not only convince the jury with relevant topic and content but also interesting mode of delivery. We decided to implement a TEDx-like novel, engaging presentation style. The successful proposal was set to provide a novel, media-convergent approach employing innovative futuristic approaches to communications. Moreover, we submitted our proposal for traditional workshop presentation that also has been accepted by EuroDIG review committee.

BIG STAGE CONTRIBUTION

COMPACT team proposed a unique, media-convergent approach combining a presentation in Virtual Reality with elements of drama and artistic elements of décor. Therefore, our approach combined in a unique way, research, digital communication media and arts. The presentation was prepared and delivered by Lukasz Porwol, Tanja Pavleska and Bissera Zankova. The applied methodology included virtual-avatars-mediated drama acting, using innovative, Open Source, cross-platform, highly-accessible, Virtual Reality technology - Mozilla Hubs[1] developed by Mozilla Foundation. That platform is a major free tool to allow social interactions in Virtual Reality by allowing both Immersive (using head mounted display) and on the screen VR. The original script was written by COMPACT team and has been derived from Gender Report research by Dr. Bissera Zankova and COMPACT research on emerging technology trends.

Figure 1: VR Presentation - 3 participants meeting in Virtual Reality using Mozilla Hubs Platform – in the background, original artistic décor

Due to COVID-19 pandemics, the event was held online (using ZOOM and YouTube platform) and recommended participants were invited to pre-record the presentations that were to be streamed live on the day of presentation. This development inspired the COMPACT team to further innovate on the initial idea, resulting in a VR drama presentation enriched with original Andy Warhol's "Ladies and Gentlemen"- style artistic elements (Figure 2) and futuristic music with lead-in introduction imitating

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[1] https://hubs.mozilla.com/

online ZOOM chat. The COMPACT team also contributed to the musical intermissions between sessions and delivered an original electronic music score "Ode to Unity" co-created exclusively with renowned pianist Artur Moon.

Figure 2: Original Artistic Decor prepared for Big Stage session - COMPACT team augmented with Andy Warhol's adopted style

Big Stage Presentation Scope

The COMPACT Big Stage presentation has been titled: "Gender in the immersive digital future – a new matriarchy?". The presentation has been intended to present COMPACT research and gender report results and put them in the context of near and far future of the next generation internet. Specifically, the presentation was focused on a Virtual Reality human (male and female) and Mother-AI debate about the emerging social changes in the digital society of the 21st century. Central to discussion were the increasingly technology-mediated gender relationships. The scene can be considered a technological adaptation and reinvention of the "first humans in paradise" trying to find their way in the new environment. The context of pandemics and human dependency on technology communication in times of limited mobility was also tackled in our presentation to better immerse the audience with explicit reference to the major challenge of the year 2020. To better engage audience we have prepared a dedicated teaser banner (Figure 3) that has been disseminated by the organisers ahead of big stage presentations. The original graphics also relate to the futuristic genre of our performance.

The COMPACT Big Stage presentation received a very positive feedback from both organisers and participants alike and often recalled as the most outstanding presentation of the event. COMPACT team agreed that the convergent, innovative format of the presentation could be replicated in the upcoming events. Specifically, we have received a feedback that the format created could be part of an educational series featuring the newly created character AI-Mother (played by Bissera Zankova). Therefore, we argue that the successful convergent approach to presentation indeed fulfilled the expectation and could become a model for engaging form of information dissemination and stakeholder engagement. The COMPACT team delivering the presentation agreed that this form should be replicated in some form in another COMPACT dissemination activity and that some research could follow.
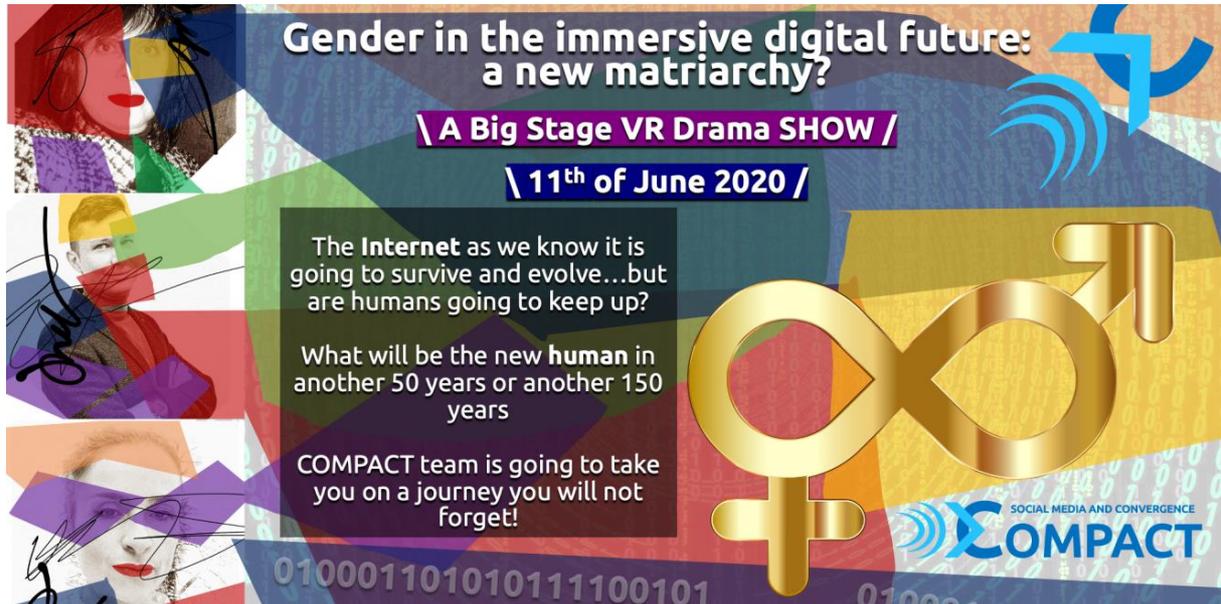
Figure 3: Big Stage Promo Banner

EurDIG full Big Stage session can be found here:
https://youtu.be/QSM1h9CNy8Q

COMPACT presentation can be found here:
https://youtu.be/V9NsXea8Kb0

More information and reading on the topic can be found on Eurodig 2020 wiki – Big Stage:
https://eurodigwiki.org/wiki/Gender_in_the_immersive_digital_future_%E2%80%93_a_new_matriarchy%3F_%E2%80%93_BigStage_2020

CLASSIC CONTRIBUTION

The second major contribution of the COMPACT team was the presentation in the Workshop Nr 6: Social media – opportunities, rights and responsibilities. Specifically, COMPACT results related to research work and analysis in the domain of disinformation, misinformation and malinformation online have been presented by Dr. Tanja Pavleska as part of the findings from WP2: Policies and regulatory frameworks.

COMPACT participation during the EuroDIG planning and preparatory procedure was coordinated by Dr. Bissera Zankova, Media 21 F, who was also a member of Plenary Nr 1, Workshop Nr 6 and Workshop Nr 11 organizing committees.

Involvement in the plenary 1 organising committee focused on 5G networks and investment enabled COMPACT to advertise its first comprehensive webinar dedicated to the 5G technology and its multifarious consequences among specialists and to invite EuroDIG experts to the event.

Workshop 6 Presentation

Original Session Teaser:
Thanks to the social media, everybody now can bypass traditional gatekeepers and – trading one's personal data for access – enjoy one's seemingly unfettered freedom of expression in the digital public space. But when does personal freedom end and personal responsibility begins? The WS6 session facilitated a discussion on the limitations and pitfalls of freedom of speech on the Internet.
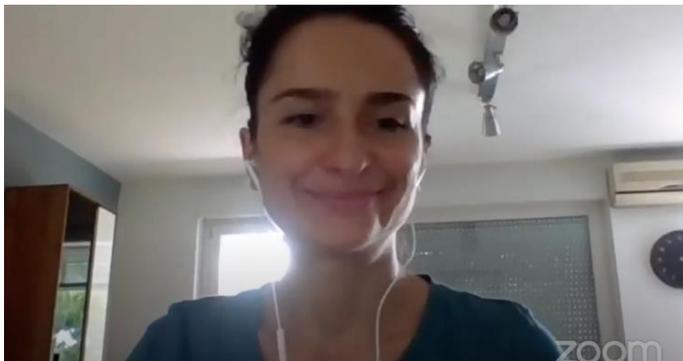

Figure 4: Dr. Tanja Pavleska presenting COMPACT findings in WS 06

Workshop Delivery: COMPACT presentation was the first presentation in the workshop that set the frameworks for exchange and discussion. It included important set of findings on disinformation combating initiatives run across Europe. Some of the key points presented referred to lack of multistakeholder cooperation and coordination between initiatives, as well as the issue of "lack of fact checking of the factcheckers". The necessity of true involvement of stakeholders in the fight against disinformation and conditions for better inclusion of the gender and digital rights activists were particularly stressed on.

The presentation by Dr. Tanja Pavleska received many constructive questions and was welcomed by the co-participants coming from the European Commission and industry – Facebook. Dr. Pavleska was invited to submit an article for the Better Internet for Kids newsletter. The article was titled "The Good,

the Bad and the Urgent: tackling information disorder"[2], where specific findings and recommendations relevant for the Internet safety were developed.

The workshop recording can be found here:
https://youtu.be/7d76NQKVq0c
More information and reading materials including COMPACT publications are available at the workshop wiki page:
https://eurodigwiki.org/wiki/Social_media_%E2%80%93_opportunities,_rights_and_responsibilities_%E2%80%93_WS_06_2020

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[2] https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/practice/awareness/article?id=6206859