

## **THE INTERNET OF THINGS AND THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

The session will address the linkages between the Internet of Things (IoT) and the rights of the children. The Internet of Things is defined as “a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects, animals or people that are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.”<sup>(1)</sup> Millions of users all over the world, from all age ranges are provided with the opportunity to be connected to the Internet through objects. This happens not only via cars, watches and fridges but it also concerns the toy industry in a major way (2) as well as the manufacturers of others goods that may be widely used by children. Additionally, there are devices like cameras embodied in other objects used by children of all ages or in close proximity to them.

This evolution entails societal and economic challenges, and triggers questions around privacy and data collection among others. “...With multifunctional devices, going online does not need to be a conscious decision...”. (3) There is an obvious need to look at the implications of this, specifically with regards to children as recipients/users of these connected objects or as recipients/ users who will or may habitually be in close proximity to connected devices.

This triggers numerous unanswered questions regarding possible tensions between companies’ ability and desire to collect data from the devices and children’s rights, such as their right to privacy or to be protected from abuse and exploitation. Might those rights be compromised? How can we or should we deal with this as a society? How should our legal systems tackle these issues? Could manufacturers build-in security features to prevent their devices from being misused to violate the rights of the children? Do they have a legal or ethical obligation to do it?

Those will be some of the questions which will be explored by the speakers.

(1) Accessed 20 June

2016, <<http://internetofthingsagenda.techtarget.com/definition/Internet-of-Things-IoT>>

(2) Accessed 20 June 2016,

<<http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=7430049>>

(3) Jutta Croll, White Paper for the ICT Coalition for Children Online, published, Jan. 11th, 2016. Accessed 20 June

2016. <[http://www.ictcoalition.eu/gallery/100/REPORT\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.ictcoalition.eu/gallery/100/REPORT_WEB.pdf)>