

IGF Coalition on Platform Responsibility

Annual Report

1. Background info about the Coalition

The main goal of the IGF Coalition on Platform Responsibility (hereinafter, the “Coalition”)¹ is to stimulate debate regarding what can be considered to be the responsible behaviour of platform providers. It started with the analysis of the application to digital platforms of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, progressing to the development of a set of recommendations on core dimensions of platform responsibility. In this sense, the Coalition aims at exploring the concept of “Platform Responsibility”, coined, and promoted by this very same DC in 2014². The concept aims at both highlighting the impact that private ordering regimes by platforms have on individuals’ fundamental rights, such as effective remedy (art. 2 ICCPR), privacy (art. 17 ICCPR), freedom of expression (art. 19 ICCPR) and others, and interrogating the moral, social and human rights responsibilities³ that platforms bear (or should bear) when setting up such regimes.

The Coalition has been contributing to the discussion of platform responsibility and developing tangible outcomes, such as the “Recommendations on Terms of Service and Human Rights”⁴ (hereinafter “the Recommendations”) presented at the 2015 IGF. In this sense, the Recommendations served as an inspiration for (and were annexed to) both the study on Terms of Service and Human Rights⁵, co-sponsored by the Council of Europe and FGV Law School, and the 2017 outcome of the Coalition – a volume entitled “Platform regulations: how platforms are regulated and how they regulate us”, featuring research by broad range of stakeholders⁶. It is also important to note that the “platform responsibility” approach and a conspicuous number of elements of the Recommendations can be found in the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Roles

¹ For further information on the Coalition, please visit the dedicated section of the Internet Governance Forum website, available at: <https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/content/dynamic-coalition-on-platform-responsibility-dcpr>.

² ⁵ See Belli, L., De Filippi, P., Zingales, N. (2014).

³ See the Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, John Ruggie, Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, UN Human Rights Council Document A/HRC/17/31, 21 March 2011. Available at: www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf.

⁴ See Belli L., De Filippi P. and Zingales N. (2015).

⁵ See Venturini et al. (2016).

⁶ See Belli and Zingales (2017).

and Responsibilities of Internet Intermediaries,⁷ and several Coalition outcomes have been recently quoted by the Council of Europe “Best Practices on Regulatory Mechanisms of Content Moderation.”⁸ Fostering this kind of multi-stakeholder and cross-institutional discussion is a core component of the vision behind the creation of the Coalition: to critically analyse challenging questions and collaborative develop potential solutions that, if deemed suitable and efficient, can inspire policymaking exercises.

2. Activities conducted in the past year

a. Activities within the IGF

The IGF 2021 session of the Coalition⁹ aimed at presenting the Platform Glossary, an outcome elaborated by the Coalition through a two year-long consultation process, while also prompting a multistakeholder discussion on platform interoperability, identified as one of the core issues to be analysed by the Coalition. The session brought together speakers from different backgrounds and countries. It was co-organised by Prof. Luca Belli and Yasmin Curzi (who was appointed as new co-coordinator of the Coalition, substituting Prof. Nicolo Zingales).

The session counted with a diverse group of stakeholders, demonstrating the Coalition Coordinators commitments to ensure regional, ethnic, sex, and gender inclusiveness in the Coalition sessions.

b. Activities beyond the IGF

Yasmin Curzi was appointed as new co-coordinator of the Coalition, substituting Prof. Nicolo Zingales. Her appointment aims at bringing new voices into the IGF debate on platform responsibility, while fostering gender balance at the coordination level of the Coalition, and creating new synergies with the Platform Governance Research Network, an international network of scholars analysing platforms governance issues, whit which Ms Curzi has stable cooperation.

c. Any outputs produced and/or research/studies conducted

The DCPR 2021’s output was the **Glossary of Platform Law and Policy Terms**¹⁰, a book providing detailed definitions and analyses of 100 relevant terms regarding digital platform policies and governance. The

⁷ See <http://bit.ly/CoEinternetintermediaries>.

⁸ See <https://rm.coe.int/content-moderation-en/1680a2cc18>

⁹ The 2021 session’s report is available at: <https://www.intgovforum.org/en/content/igf-2021-dcpr-platform-interoperability-understanding-a-complex-issue>

¹⁰ Available at: <https://bibliotecadigital.fgv.br/dspace/handle/10438/31365>

Glossary is a collaborative work, led by the Platform Glossary Working Group of the Coalition.¹¹ The open and participatory process and the multiple consultations phases have been organized in line with the Coalition's commitment to involve diverse stakeholders – also from outside academia – thus embracing a pluralistic and multifaceted approach towards the platform responsibility debate.

3. Updates on internal processes (e.g. DC meetings held during the year, new coordinators/members, updates to website/ mailing list)

To develop the main Coalition outcome of 2021, the Glossary of Platform Law and Policy Terms, the Coalition coordinators organized a working group¹². They also organized a call for inputs aiming at receiving additional comments and feedback – after the 2020 consultation phases – to facilitate the revision and improvement of the initial draft.

Regarding the Coalition's internal organization, Yasmin Curzi was nominated co-coordinator of the Coalition, alongside Prof. Luca Belli. Yasmin Curzi is a researcher at the CTS-FGV and Ph.D. candidate at IESP-UERJ. As a young Latin-American woman, her nomination also served to increase the Coalition's diversity and inclusiveness.

4. Priorities/objectives for the following year (short)

As its first activity for 2022, the DCPR is focusing on transforming the Glossary on Platform Law and Policy Terms into a Wiki-Community, with a Wikimedia package. Several Coalition stakeholders decided to cooperate in the elaboration of this initiative to allow the continuous improvement of the Glossary by the IGF Community and beyond. The website is currently under beta test by some Coalition members, with plans to be released between February and March 2022.

The Coalition work for the year 2022 will focus on platform interoperability and data portability, as these emerged as crucial issues to be further explored. Regulatory approaches and guidelines on these issues will be studied in 2022.

¹¹ The members of the working group are (in alphabetical order): Luca Belli, Vittorio Bertola, Yasmin Curzi de Mendonça, Giovanni De Gregorio, Rossana Ducato, Luã Fergus Oliveira da Cruz, Catalina Goanta, Tamara Gojkovic, Terri Harel, Cynthia Khoo, Stefan Kulk, Paddy Leerssen, Laila Neves Lorenzon, Chris Marsden, Enguerrand Marique, Michael Oghia, Milica Pesic, Courtney Radsch, Roxana Radu, Konstantinos Stylianou, Rolf H. Weber, Chris Wiersma, Monika Zalnierute and Nicolo Zingales.

¹² Available at: <https://bibliotecadigital.fgv.br/dspace/handle/10438/31365>