

Dynamic Coalition on Data and Trust

Inaugural meeting, 5 November 2020

Q1. Key Policy Questions and related issues

- How did the domain Industry respond to the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Covid-19 trends in social media, and self regulatory responses.
- Covid-19 misinformation in the web environment.
- Covid-19 a perspective from the EURid Youth Committee on the dynamic coalition.
- What regulatory interventions have been successful in limiting the spread of Covid-19 misinformation online?

Q2. Summary of Issues Discussed

- Covid-19
- Misinformation
- Regulatory interventions to limit the spread of misinformation online
- Industry approaches to limiting the spread of misinformation online
- Data leakage and data breaches associated with covid-19 data
- Covid-19 related DNS abuse
- Existing procedures for sharing information on DNS abuse in crisis situations
- Measures taken by registrars to prevent the Spread of Covid-19 related misinformation
- Need for continued dialogue between community of registrars
- Movement of offline problems online
- Closing the digital divide
- Messaging services and online platforms as critical infrastructure
- Importance of encryption
- Encryption 'backdoors'
- Partnerships between tech companies and health authorities (International and domestic)
- Search engine optimisation and the spread of misinformation
- Third party links and misinformation
- How platforms are helping spread misinformation
- Advertising and misinformation
- Cybersecurity risks generated by working from home
- EU Code of Practice on Disinformation
- 1 Year review of EU Code of practice on Disinformation

Q3. Key Takeaways

- A number of domain name registries and registrars have been actively working to limit the spread of misinformation during covid-19
- EURid and Tucows reported that the quantity of new domain names registered during covid creating a risk of harm by spreading misinformation was relatively minimal (<1%).
- There is a need for reliable information to be shared between registrars regarding DNS abuse during crises.

- Partnerships between tech companies and public institutions (international and domestic) have been crucial to stemming the flow of misinformation during Covid-19
- Misinformation is not only spread by hostile actors, it can be spread by
- It is not just any sort of hostile actors that are spreading false information, different culprits such as algorithms and big data enabled tools that are optimized for junk news are also to blame. We have alternative media outlets that are doing very well over these social media algorithms and that are also having economic incentives. There is also a mainstream problem with misinformation. During the politics of post truth, political leadership both in authoritarian regimes, but also in democracies, is disseminating all sorts of conspiratorial or deceiving information.
- Traditional techniques for professional search engine optimisation are also being employed to spread misinformation such as boosting domain authority, backlinking, and markup and advertising.
- The EU Code of Practice on Disinformation has led to tangible progress in the major platforms approach to addressing disinformation, but this has been limited by the scope of the code and the fact that it only applies within the EU and to the major tech companies.

Q4. Policy Recommendations or Suggestions for the Way Forward

- Objective of the dynamic coalition is to explore multiple dimensions of data and trust from the perspective of a wide variety of stakeholders.
- There is a need to address the question of how to restore trust in the digital ecosystem.
- There is a need for reliable information to be shared between registrars regarding DNS abuse during crises.