

Background Paper

60 Minute Panel Session 'Online Safety Technology: Towards a Global Market?'

The Online Safety Tech sector consists of companies whose products or services help online platforms deliver safer outcomes for users, for example through moderation or filtering. A dynamic and mature commercial market will reduce companies' costs of compliance with regulation, by ensuring that high quality Safety Tech products are available at appropriate price points.

The UK Online Harms White Paper interim consultation response committed to publish a full report into the potential of the UK Safety Tech sector. This report, the first of its kind anywhere in the world, will be published in May 2020. It will spotlight significant early-stage sector growth of this sector within the UK, including:

- The UK Safety Tech sector is valued at more than £500m, and is growing by 35% year on year.
- There are Safety Tech hubs in London, Leeds and Edinburgh - with 70+ Safety Tech organisations employing around 1700 FTE.
- The critical nature of international markets: more than half of UK 'safety tech' companies have an international presence.

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) provides an opportunity for different stakeholders to share experiences as well as learn from each other in order to encourage cooperation and invite a constructive debate on new challenges and effective solutions to combating online harms through the use of technology.

Online safety is a multifaceted problem with no single solution. It is a global issue, with many countries concerned about its potential harmful impact on security, health and societal cohesion. The tech solutions are also global in nature. The objective of this panel session is to discuss national responses, drawing on international examples and views from government, industry, civil society and academia, and encouraging cooperation and collaboration among partners.

Session overview and objectives

This session will consist of short presentations from each of the speakers, each focusing on a different policy angle. The discussion will then be opened to the floor. The session will focus on the following areas:

1. Defining 'online safety tech'

- How can technology be used to tackle online harms?
- Introduction to the sector definition used in the UK, and to the national and international market analysis published by the UK Government.
- To what extent does the UK experience this reflect the global sector?

2. Challenges and opportunities for growth

- What are the opportunities and challenges for growth on a global level?

3. Towards a global market?

- What might the next steps be to grow a global 'online safety tech' market, as we have done for fintech, cyber and EdTech?