



III International Conference

Tangible and Intangible Impact of Information and Communication in the Digital Age

In the framework of the UNESCO Information for All Programme

and XI International IT Forum

17-18 June 2021

Khanty-Mansiysk, Russian Federation

Concept Paper

Background

Two international conferences on Tangible and Intangible Impact of Information and Communication in the Digital Age were successfully held in Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia, in 2018 and 2019 with the support of the Russian Government and UNESCO within the framework of the UNESCO Information for All Intergovernmental Programme. Conference debates resulted in the adoption of two final documents – the Ugra Declaration on Information and Communication in the Digital Age (2018) and the Ugra Resolution on Information and Communication in the Digital Age.

The analysis of current processes and phenomena which are described by various professional communities brought the participants of both conferences – scientists, politicians, public figures and media specialists from over 50 countries – to the conclusion that:

- 1) Rapid and persistent changes in the information and communication field have become one of the most vivid and comprehensive features of the modern era;
- 2) The development of artificial intelligence and machine learning, big data analytics and cloud computing, embedded systems and devices, the Internet of things, augmented and virtual reality, blockchain, etc. fosters the shift towards a new technological paradigm;
- 3) Dynamic technological change and the new opportunities it offers are accompanied by the exacerbation of the existing and the emergence of new political, economic and social problems;
- 4) The approaching future brings both positive expectations of scientific and technological progress and distinctly perceived threats.

The following socio-cultural problems are among the most noticeable:

- Oversupply of information, resulting in its devaluation and loss of trust to professional media;
- Monopolization in the field of communication, information and digital technologies;
- The transformation of the Internet from a space for the free exchange of ideas into a tool for supervision and management, with Internet companies turning into digital giants, moving from digital platforms to digital ecosystems and annexing not only cyberspace, but also real sector industries;
- Enhancement of universal connectivity and human inclusion in cyber-physical systems;
- A massive decrease in the level of critical thinking and the emergence of waves of information epidemics of national and global levels;
- Post-truth in its heyday, with public perception shaped more by means of addressing feelings and personal opinion rather than actual facts, with fakes, clickbaits, hypes and other tools introduced to form post-reality in the political and media culture;
- Changing the system of values – with the new normal, new ethics putting personal free will and freedom of choice under question;
- Traditional cultural regulators of social relations and processes being displaced by automated social algorithms;
- Blurring the borders between the real and the digital world, wide spread of simplified virtual mockups and simulacra;
- Mass collection of data for managing people's behavior, formation of an appropriate economic imperative to direct the development for business, society and states;
- Increasing the level of conflict in society (between individuals and groups) and between states.

It is emphasized that due to the extremely high rate of changes the society does not have time to interpret and thoroughly understand them, nor to respond progressively. Most studies focus on the receding reality; those trying to describe and analyse the current state-of-the-art and to forecast possible development lines and their consequences follow out-of-date models and approaches

Conference Goals and Objectives

In this context, the Third International Conference on Tangible and Intangible Impact of Information and Communication in the Digital Age is aimed at further investigating the following phenomena at a new level:

- Global, regional and local socio-cultural transformations fueled by the development of artificial intelligence and machine learning, big data analytics and cloud computing, embedded systems and devices, the Internet of things, augmented and virtual reality, blockchain, etc.;

- The impact of changes in the field of information and communication on states and societies, pivotal infrastructure assets, public institutions, on the social structure and stratification, on individuals and specific communities, on the structure and nature of employment, specifically in the field of creative industries, on public consciousness and other structural and functional characteristics of modern societies;
- socio-cultural and political consequences of the oversupply of information, devaluation and discredit of professional media, replacement of traditional cultural regulators of public relations and processes by automated “social algorithms”, blurring the boundaries between the real and the digital world, wide spread of simplified virtual mockups and simulacra, introduction of tools for shaping "post-reality" to political and media culture;
- issues of striking a balance between freedom of expression in the digital environment and information and psychological security.

The conference will put a special focus on the following topics and subjects:

1. The emerging model of “surveillance capitalism”
 - The essence of “surveillance capitalism”: towards a targeted change in mass behavior?
 - Asymmetry of knowledge: what do we know and what do “they” know about us? Who (or what) makes the decisions?
 - Monopolies and the state in the context of "surveillance capitalism": competition or integration?
2. The revolution of values: New interpretation of rights and freedoms
 - The right to personal privacy, privacy of personal and family secrets, privacy of correspondence and telephone conversations – shall we forget those?
 - Do we have the right to choose our future, the individual and collective right to make decisions?
 - Life after the pandemic: the consequences of the global moving online, the emergence of systems of "clean zones" with international exchange of medical information and data on movement and segregation based on such data.
3. Digital technologies and society
 - Social and psychological dimensions of the impact of digital platforms online and in the real world.
 - Denial of consciousness and free will: A fashionable scientific concept or an ideological basis for "surveillance capitalism"?
 - New skills and lifestyles: From digital minimalism to new awareness.
 - Creative industries and personal self-realization: Are they new forms of innovative economy?

In addition to these and other problems, phenomena and trends that have clearly manifested themselves in the last decade, conference participants are also invited to discuss those processes

that are less evident, but might significantly impact the socio-cultural landscape in the nearest future.

The Third Conference will put a greater emphasis on the socio-cultural and philosophical aspects of the impact of AI technologies on humans and society.

The Conference is aimed at:

- Contributing to the accomplishment of international and national policies in the field of building the information society and knowledge societies and to the development of appropriate recommendations;
- Assisting in reducing the gap between the pace of development in the field of information, communication and related technologies and the ability of science and the society to comprehend the changing reality and thus influence the vector and nature of progress;
- Ensuring the contribution of the Russian Federation and the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Area – Ugra to the implementation of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Information for All Programme;
- Ensuring the contribution of the Information for All Programme to UNESCO's activities.

While preparing and holding this conference, the organizers will strive to pursue the interdisciplinary approaches to the problems and topics that have been employed at previous major international conferences held within the framework of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Information for All Programme in South Africa (Cape Town, 2018), Russian Federation (Khanty-Mansiysk, 2018 and 2019; Moscow, 2020), Brazil (Brasilia, 2019), China (Macau, 2019), Argentina (Buenos Aires, 2020), India (Hyderabad, 2019, 2020 and 2021).

Conference Format

The conference will be held online, with live webcast and the recording of conference events available on the International IT forum Channel and / or in YouTube.

Conference Conveners

- Government of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Area – Ugra
- Russian UNESCO IFAP Committee
- Interregional Library Cooperation Centre
- UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education

With the support of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, the Permanent Delegation of the Russian Federation to UNESCO and the Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO Information for All Programme.

Conference Participants

Specialists in the field of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, political science, psychology and neurosciences, communication and information, writers, media specialists, politicians, government officials, representatives of scientific, educational and cultural organizations, as well as civil society institutions and business are invited to join the conference.

The event is expected to gather about 100 experts from 35-40 countries representing intergovernmental, international, regional and national non-governmental organizations, universities and research centres, government bodies and institutions working in the field of information and communication, science, culture and education.

Invitations are sent to National Commissions for UNESCO and Permanent Delegations to UNESCO of all Member States of the Intergovernmental Council of the UNESCO Information for All Programme, as well as to recognized international experts in their personal capacity.

Working Languages

Russian and English (simultaneous interpretation).

Venue

Khanty-Mansiysk, Russian Federation.

Live webcast will be available on the International IT forum Channel and / or in YouTube.

Terms of Participation

Applications should be submitted to the Organizing Committee **by e-mail ifap@ifapcom.ru** no later than 5 May 2021.

Applicants approved by the Organizing Committee will be sent a personal invitation and detailed information on the participation.

No registration fee is charged.

Presentations and Reports

Participants willing to make a presentation (duration: max. 15 minutes) should submit an abstract (up to 3600 characters) in Russian or in English (.doc or .rtf format) to the Conference Organizing Committee **by e-mail ifap@ifapcom.ru before 5 May 2021.**

In case the abstract gains approval by the Programme Committee, the full text of the presentation (no more than 18,000 characters) should be submitted in Russian or in English **by e-mail ifap@ifapcom.ru before 20 May 2021.**

The conference follow-ups will include elaborating and adopting a final document and publishing conference proceedings in Russian and in English.

Contact Information

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Links:

<http://www.ifapcom.ru/en/news/1685/?returnto=0&n=1>

http://mcbs.ru/files/2019/Urga_Resolution_English.pdf

<http://www.ifapcom.ru/en/news/1649/?returnto=0&n=1>

http://www.ifapcom.ru/files/2018/hmao/itogdoc/Itogovyi_dokument_Ugra_angl.pdf

<http://www.ifapcom.ru/en>

<http://www.ifapcom.ru/ru>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khanty-Mansiysk>

<https://www.google.ru/search?q=khanty->

[https://www.google.ru/search?q=khanty-](https://www.google.ru/search?q=khanty-mansiysk&newwindow=1&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjetKv6-)

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CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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