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Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)

Contents

Letter to Delegates

Dear Delegates,

Welcome! We look forward to meeting you all at the conference and, hopefully, helping to make your experience of MUN a fabulous one. Throughout this committee, you will be discussing one of the main challenges we face in technology today: how our attention is being shaped by its developments. The issue is particularly prominent due to its fast-paced growth and the myriad of perspectives that make it difficult for an international consensus to be reached.

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) is a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It plays an essential role in analysing how science, technology, and innovation drive sustainable development and addressing the challenges of leveraging these tools for global progress.

We will be covering an important and timely topic: "Regulation of Attention Economy". With the internet and social media growing every year, the question of how to understand and prepare for the changes in the way our lives work is essential. International collaboration and thinking outside the box will certainly be required to help establish ideas for governance across social media, e-commerce and other aspects of the attention economy.

We are looking forward to your ideas and insights on these topics, and we hope that you can pass an impactful resolution. We are sure everyone will have a great time and participate to the best of their ability, even if this is your first conference!

Sincerely,

SHSID OGMUN team

Introduction to the Committee

The Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) was established in 1992, as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This was 13 years after the formation of the Commission's predecessor, an Intergovernmental Committee founded at the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development in Vienna in 1979. The purpose of the CSTD is to carry out high-level analysis of central emerging questions of science and technology that influence national and international development, and to supply the General Assembly and ECOSOC with appropriate and well-informed policy suggestions as well as resolutions. The Commission meets for one week per year, which since 1994 has been in Geneva, Switzerland.

The 43 CSTD member states are elected on rotation by ECOSOC members, with 4-year terms each. At any given time, there are: 11 member states from Africa; nine member states from Asia and the Pacific; eight member states from South America and the Caribbean; five member states from Eastern Europe; and ten member states selected from a pool of Western European states and the USA. Each member state selects experts with a background in STEM to represent their position, ensuring complex academic debate. The Commission is led by a Chair and four Vice Chairs, who are elected each session. Most recently, the Chair was a representative of Gambia, supported by Vice Chairs from Hungary, Peru, the Philippines, and Portugal. As well as facilitating intergovernmental collaboration, the CSTD also provides a space to foster international collaborations in academia and business. Their goal is the advancement of global knowledge and use of new technology to help meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17.

Since 200,6 the CSTD has been mandated by ECOSOC to provide continued review and follow-up from the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), continuing to monitor and put pressure to close the digital divide with a focus on capacity development. In the wake of WSIS, CSTD has been mandated to review and improve the UN Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to improve cooperation and wider stakeholder involvement.

Regulation of the Attention Economy

Statement of the Problem

At its most basic definition, economics pertains to the distribution of resources in society. Usually, this refers to money or things of monetary value. The phrase 'attention economy' refers to an economy in which time and attention are being competed for rather than money. The term 'attention economy' was coined by psychologist and economist Herbert A. Simon, who argued that in the face of unlimited information (now provided by the internet), attention is the limiting factor on what humans can do. Put simply, the scarcity of attention has made it the prime commodity being competed for by companies. In 1997, theoretical physicist Michael Goldhaber declared that the global economy was shifting from a material-based economy to an attention-based economy, illustrating his point with the many emerging professions which work with information rather than physical goods.[1]

These hypotheses, posited in the early days of the internet, seem to have been confirmed as digital technologies have developed. Highly influential global companies, such as Google and Meta (formerly Facebook), offer services which are apparently free, but which economists have argued are being paid for with our attention. If we spend time on social media and see ads, our attention becomes a valuable commodity for these companies that receive ad revenue from other companies. Tech companies also profit in the monetary economy by monopolising the attention economy through ad networks, cookies, and page views. The global internet advertising market size was valued at $499.95 billion in 2025 and is projected to reach $1,329.88 billion by 2033.[2] In this sense, the attention economy merely forms one branch of the wider monetary economy, yet it also raises new and urgent questions due to the pervasive nature of social media in the modern world. The current global social network penetration rate is estimated to be

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[1] Berkeley Economic Review, 'Paying Attention: The Attention Economy', Berkeley Economic Review (n.d.) https://econreview.berkeley.edu/paying-attention-the-attention-economy/
[2] Grand View Research, 'Online Advertising Market Size & Share Report' (n.d.) https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/online-advertising-market-report

around 59%, equivalent to 4.62 billion people.[3] Of those users, the average daily social media usage of internet users worldwide amounted to 147 minutes per day.[4] It is estimated that 2.87 billion people use one of Meta's core products (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, or Messenger) daily.[5]

Social media enables easier communication and access to information, and it is important to recognise these benefits. In recent years, however, various concerns have been raised about the global social impact of social media. These concerns include:

1) **Online privacy** – The online behaviour of social media users is tracked by social media companies, and some believe this to be an infringement of the human right to privacy (Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

2) **Anti-trust concerns** – The social media industry is inarguably dominated by Meta Platforms Inc. Three out of the five most used social media platforms are all owned by Meta Platforms, and this has raised concerns about the influence that this gives a single company in people's lives.

3) **Misinformation** – A hotly debated issue, many in the global community have raised concerns about the harmful spread of misinformation. In April 2022, representatives from Ukraine, Japan, Latvia, Poland, the UK, and the US officially sponsored a General Assembly resolution aimed at tackling misinformation on a global scale. During the coronavirus pandemic, studies undertaken by the Carnegie Institute of Technology suggested that up to 45% of Tweets about coronavirus were posted by bots spreading false information.[6]

4) **Increased polarisation** – Many have argued that social media algorithms designed to keep people's attention occasionally do so by presenting incrementally more extreme or aggravating content. A study led by Yale University concluded that: "Social media's incentives are changing the tone of our political conversations

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[3] Hootsuite, 'Digital Trends Q3 Update' (n.d.) https://www.hootsuite.com/en-GB/resources/digital-trends-q3-update

[4] Statista, 'Daily Social Media Usage Worldwide' (n.d.) https://www.statista.com/statistics/433871/daily-social-media-usage-worldwide/

[5] Statista, 'Facebook Product Daily Active Users' (n.d.) https://www.statista.com/statistics/1092227/facebook-product-dau/

[6] Center for Humane Technology, 'Ledger of Harms' (n.d.) https://ledger.humanetech.com/

online... This is the first evidence that some people learn to express more outrage over time because they are rewarded by the basic design of social media."[7]

5) **Radicalisation and related violent extremism** – According to the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), there has been a sizeable increase in the number of attacks carried out by actors with far-right, white nationalist, or anti-Muslim beliefs in both Western Europe and North America in the past two decades, with "social media playing a crucial role in dissemination of xenophobic speech and incitement to violence."[8] The department has also voiced a concern that extremist groups today have unprecedented access to the general public through the internet, which allows for more efficient and effective recruitment, incitement and propaganda, as well as the purchase of weapons and unregulated money transfers.

6) **Public health and well-being** – An emerging field of research suggests that despite its benefits, social media has been linked to developmental delays in adolescents, reduced capacity for memory and focus, feelings of stress and addiction, as well as social isolation.[9] Given its prevalence in today's world, the public health impact of social media could be huge, and the full impacts of its effects may not yet be known. Tristan Harris, cofounder and president of the Centre for Humane Technology, argues that the 'attention economy' business model perpetuated by the biggest tech companies is doing "irreparable harm to society"[10] and calls for regulation and reform.

7) **The Substitution Effect -** One concern voiced by academics has been termed 'the substitution effect', whereby time spent using social media and other sites designed to keep our attention drains time which could be spent in tackling the world's many challenges. It's extremely difficult to produce accurate data on global time expenditure on social media, but it could be productive to research rates in the country you are representing to get an idea of the impact this could have.

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[7] CORDIS, 'Trending Science: Social Media Making Us Angrier, Study Reveals' (n.d.) https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/430608-trending-science-social-media-making-us-angrier-study-reveals

[8] United Nations, 'A New Era of Conflict and Violence' (n.d.) https://www.un.org/en/un75/new-era-conflict-and-violence

[9] Center for Humane Technology, 'Ledger of Harms' (n.d.) https://ledger.humanetech.com/

[10] MIT Technology Review, 'Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the Attention Economy Reform Debate' (10 January 2021) https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/01/10/1015934/facebook-twitter-youtube-big-tech-attention-economy-reform/,

Your task as representatives is to research and assess your country's position on these issues and, as a committee, come up with a resolution regarding their regulation. You should think about where you believe responsibility lies for regulation and to balance concerns about excessive social media use with questions of global connectivity and information.

History of the Problem

Discussion of the attention economy is relatively new. Since tech companies have been collecting data from their users, the primary concern in relation to human rights has been data protection and the right to privacy. This is related to the issue of the attention economy because the attention economy relies on continually collecting more data from users so that it can get better at capturing attention and influencing user behaviour.[11] This, in turn, seeks to keep users on the app for longer and longer amounts of time, as well as getting users to recommend sites to other potential users.

As mentioned, the attention economy impacts the digital economy more broadly – the latter is an extremely fast-growing market, and it relies heavily on users spending time online. Therefore, there are many financial incentives to encourage data collection and the continuation of the cycle above. Governments often have to balance economic concerns when they are discussing the regulation of the attention economy, particularly in those states which are trying to grow their presence and participation in digital economies. There are definite gains to participating in the digital economy, including the growth of e-commerce, easier access to services and goods, and the increase in access to international markets.

However, in recent years, research on the effects of social media on health and well-being has increased and concerned some academics.[12] These include, but are not limited to,

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[11] Center for Humane Technology, The Attention Economy Issue Guide (2021)
https://assets.website-files.com/5f0e1294f002b15080e1f2ff/612f8e3fa20df8374659a774_1%20-%20The%20Attention%20Economy%20Issue%20Guide.pdf
[12] Jonathan Haidt, 'Testimony before the United States Senate Judiciary Committee' (2023)
https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Haidt%20Testiadolescentsmony.pdf

increase in mental health issues in adloescents (such as mood disorders and self-harm)[13] No comprehensive internet regulations have been passed since 1996. Even tech companies have conceded that updated internet regulations are essential, despite the fact that they could face reduced revenue.[14]

Regarding the United Nations, there has been limited success in facilitating debate on internet regulation. In 2001, the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force was established by ECOSOC and is now an internationally recognised forum where ICT professionals and the development community can interact and move ahead with ICT-for-development. The United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) is a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, established in 1992. The CSTD meets annually to discuss pertinent issues affecting science, technology, and development. The Secretary-General of the UN plays a crucial role in convening the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which remains the most active UN-related body in the pursuit of internet regulation and rollout.

Between 2016 and 2018, the CSTD instated a working group on enhanced cooperation on public policy issues pertaining to the internet (commonly referred to as the WGEC). The failure and termination of the WGEC in 2018 is a testament to the challenge presented by attempting to reach an international consensus on what internet regulation should look like.

In April 2022, the EU, together with the US and other international partners, proposed a Declaration for the Future of the Internet in order to, in their words, "devise a positive agenda and shared vision for the future of the global Internet".[15] This proposal is non-binding, but it is still one of the most ambitious undertakings in relation to internet governance. However, the declaration has faced criticism from some countries, including India and Russia, who disagree with some of the stances the declaration takes on government oversight and individual state responsibility. More recently, the Global Digital

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Meta, 'Regulations' (n.d.) https://about.facebook.com/regulations/
[15] European Commission, 'Digital Services Act: Commission Welcomes Political Agreement' (Press Release IP/22/2695, 2022) https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_22_2695v

Compact was established by the UN, an all-encompassing international initiative (which we revisit in more detail in the Relevant UN Actions section).

Current Situation

From Tim Wu's *Blind Spot: The Attention Economy and the Law* (2019)

> "Human attention, valuable and limited in supply, is a resource. It has become commonplace, especially in the media and technology industries, to speak of an "attention economy" and of competition in "attention markets" (...). Firms like Facebook and Google, which have emerged as two of the most important firms in the global economy, depend nearly exclusively on attention markets as a business model.
>
> Yet despite the well-recognised commercial importance of attention markets, antitrust and consumer protection authorities have struggled when they encounter the attention economy. Antitrust agencies, tasked with assessing the effects of mergers and controlling anticompetitive behaviour, seem to lack a way to understand the market dynamics when the firms offer "free products" that are actually competing for attention. Meanwhile, those tasked with consumer protection have no good paradigm for dealing with attentional intrusions stemming from non-consensual, intrusive advertising or debates over the use of telephones on airlines..." (p.771)

The Need for Regulation

Currently, the international community is faced with a conundrum. The internet is an international entity by nature. At the same time, regulations are either lacking or contradictory across different countries, but there is not currently any sign of sufficient international cooperation to formulate new solutions or agreements. The most recent development in the form of the Declaration on the Future of the Internet is promising to an extent, but it also highlights the global divisions which remain a barrier to anything more comprehensive.

Tech companies, think tanks and governments have all called for internet regulation over a variety of issues. At a recent meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), remarks

were concluded with a consensus highlighting the importance of the rule of law and global cooperation to ensure a safe cyberspace. On the agenda of the meeting were issues as various as hate speech, cybersecurity, ethics, the spread of disinformation, data protection, internet regulation and digital rights. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressed the Forum on the first day of proceedings, saying that technology should be harnessed to "empower rather than overpower" and urged more efforts to turn digital risks into opportunities. One of the key concerns of the forum, and more generally in the international internet policy community, was the issues facing young people. With over 71 per cent of global youth with online access today,[16] issues such as the digital divide, the need for increased education on digital skills and literacy, hate speech, and new technology's impact on future employment opportunities are more important than ever.

On top of these already pressing risks, the growing issue of an unregulated attention economy is beginning to worry experts regarding the global economy and its social impact. A particular concern centres around the fact that social media companies use advanced algorithms to keep people engaged and using sites for longer. Philosophical questions concerning freedom of choice are challenged by technologies which are literally designed to unconsciously manipulate the user. Until relatively recently, societies could adapt to new technologies in slow motion – they could study their effects and determine how to regulate them over a span of decades. But the growing speed and breadth of change, powered by the increasing availability of powerful yet low-cost new technologies, make regulatory change at such a slow pace unsustainable.

More recently, governments have been particularly worried about how the attention economy shapes children and young people.

N.B. Given the breadth of 'Regulating the Attention Economy' as a topic, it is your task as a committee to define the parameters of your discussion, as well as to pursue a substantive resolution on your agreed-upon topics.

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[16] International Telecommunication Union, 'Facts and Figures 2024: Youth Internet Use' (2024) https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/2024/11/10/ff24-youth-internet-use/

Relevant UN Actions

Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation on Public Policy Issues Pertaining to the Internet (2016-18) – In 2015, the General Assembly in its resolution 70/125 requested the Chair of the Commission for Science and Technology for Development, through the Economic and Social Council, to establish a working group to develop recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda, with the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders. This group replaced an earlier iteration of the same name, which ran during the two years prior. The CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation (WGEC) held five meetings between September 2016 and January 2018. The complexity and political sensitivity of the topic did not allow the working group to agree on a set of recommendations.[17]

Internet Governance Forum – Established as part of the Tunis Agenda (2005). This is the most active body associated with the UN, currently working on matters pertaining to internet and social media regulation and rollout. The headline of the 2025 annual meeting was "Building Digital Governance Together". One of the main achievements of the IGF has been to support the creation of the Caribbean Internet Governance policy framework, and its efforts in centring parliamentary and legislative initiatives regarding the internet and digital technologies.

Global Digital Compact (GDC) - Adopted in 2024, this is a non-binding document which sets out a global framework for digital cooperation and governance of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence. It is part of the UN's Pact for the Future, which was adopted in 2024[18]. The compact has a variety of key aspects, including recognising the digital technologies as global public goods, thinking about data protection in digital technology development, and bridging digital divides. This compact is particularly interesting as it was adopted by all UN members states, providing some common points for further international regulation and discussion on the question of digital governance. This is very relevant to the question of the attention economy, as it

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[17] UNCTAD, 'Commission on Science and Technology for Development (2016–2018)' (n.d.) https://unctad.org/topic/commission-on-science-and-technolooutgy-for-development/wgec-2016-2018

[18] UN News, 'Global Digital Cooperation Developments' (2024) https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/09/1154671

can provide a potential pathway for bridging some of the differences across member states.

Bloc Positions

N.B. Stances on internet regulation tend to vary on a country-by-country basis, rather than on the basis of regional trends. As such, the following contains some information on national laws but primarily focuses on the few regional trends which can be observed. Researching further into the country you represent and its ideological allies is essential.

African States

The primary concern for the African States bloc is currently improving internet penetration and access to technology across the continent. In Western, Central and Eastern Africa, a key concern around internet regulation is currently the continuation of online radicalisation by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and ISIL.[19] As a continent, Africa sees the lowest average amount of time spent using social media globally. This means concerns about the 'substitution effect' may be less relevant than for, say, the US or Western Europe (other than as a form of 'future-proofing' internet regulation). Countries including Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe have all recently updated their data protection laws in recognition of new threats facing digital privacy.[20]

Asia-Pacific States

China is currently the world leader in AI development, partly because it also leads the world in commercial and security.[21] China also possesses a different technological space,

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[19] United Nations Development Programme, Social Media in Africa (n.d.)
https://www.undp.org/africa/publications/social-media-africa
[20] Baker McKenzie, 'Data Security and Privacy Laws Across Africa' (April 2022)
https://www.bakermckenzie.com/en/newsroom/2022/04/data-security-and-privacy-laws-across-africa
[21] SpringerLink, 'Chapter on Digital Governance' (n.d.)
https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-3-030-8614have4-5.pdf

with Chinese social media platforms being the most used in the region. The country's fast technological development and approach emphasising strong digital governance by the state has marked some of the divisions between the US-China in the digital age. In other words, China and the US hold diverging views on internet regulation, and most other UN member states identify strongly with one or the other. Simultaneously, China also operates a 'minor mode' programme, limiting screen time and content for under-18s, which is aligned with initiatives across Europe and other Western countries (see below).

Latin American and Caribbean States

Most recently, Brazil has approved digital regulation for children [22] and teenagers accessing the internet. This follows the country's establishment of a civil-rights-based framework for the internet[23] in 2015. This showcases a trend in Latin America to try and establish guidelines for the use of internet, social media, and e-commerce across the region. In 2024, the new eLAC (Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean) was approved, emphasising "action and concrete projects." This initiative, known as eLAC2026, has three pillars, and one of them is digital governance–this accompanies the several government looking to increase their legislation on digital technologies, such as Colombia's potential 2026 AI law, Barbado's 2019 Data Protection Act, among others. The region focuses on balancing economic development using technology while being mindful of the concerns surrounding the attention economy.

Eastern European States, Western European and other States (inc. USA, Canada)

The European Union and the US have been at the forefront of the push for increased regulation of social media and the internet more generally. This includes successfully negotiating a Declaration for the Future of the Internet in 2021/2022, which has since been signed by over 60 countries. Australia recently banned social media for children below the age of 16, and similar initiatives are underway in France, Denmark, and other countries. This concern for the wellbeing of children and young people online, while recognising

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[22] Global Policy Watch, 'Brazil Adopts Law Protecting Minors Online' (2025)
https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2025/10/brazil-adopts-law-protecting-minors-online/
[23] Electronic Frontier Foundation, 'Marco Civil and the Devil in the Detail' (February 2015)
https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2015/02/marco-civil-devil-detail

their particular vulnerability, still does not fully address the issue when it comes to over-18s. It is also avoidable, with difficulties in implementation across the board.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

Here are some discussion points you may want to consider during your research and the progression of the committee. Please note that these discussion points are only meant to serve as a starting point for your debate and should not in any way limit your debate.

● How should the "Attention Economy" be defined in regulatory terms?
  Delegates should consider what elements are most significant:
  o Is it defined by data extraction?
  o By algorithmic amplification?
  o By monetisation of user engagement?
  o By psychological design features that maximise time-on-platform?

● How can privacy concerns be balanced with security and governance concerns?
  Delegates may explore:
  o The tension between surveillance for national security and the protection of individual privacy.
  o Data retention requirements versus encryption rights.
  o Whether cross-border data flows should be regulated or localised.

● What impact could it have on society if more and more time is absorbed by social media?
  This invites exploration of:
  o Mental health outcomes.
  o Misinformation.
  o Polarisation and radicalisation.
  o Productivity and labour impacts.

● How can governance strategies be successfully implemented at the international level, taking into account the varying degrees of digital participation across countries?

Delegates should examine:

- o The digital divide between high-connectivity states and developing countries.
- o Differences in regulatory capacity.
- o The risk that global standards may disadvantage low-income or low-infrastructure states.

● What accountability mechanisms could ensure compliance?

Delegates may consider:

- o Financial penalties.
- o Cross-border regulatory cooperation.
- o International certification frameworks.
- o Independent auditing systems.

● How should progress in regulating the attention economy be measured?

Delegates may consider:

- o Reduction in misinformation spread.
- o Improved user privacy metrics.
- o Decreased harmful content exposure.
- o Digital literacy rates.
- o Transparency benchmarks.

Proposed Solutions

In addressing the regulation of the attention economy, delegates are encouraged to consider a multi-layered and cooperative approach that balances innovation, human rights, economic growth, and state sovereignty. The following proposals outline possible avenues for discussion and negotiation.

1. Establishing a Shared International Definition

A foundational step may involve agreeing upon a working definition of the "attention economy" within the framework of the United Nations. Such a definition could encompass:

- Business models that monetise user engagement and behavioural data.
- Algorithmic systemsare designed to maximise time spent on digital platforms.
- The commodification of personal data and online behavioural patterns.
- A shared definition would reduce regulatory fragmentation and facilitate harmonised policy development across Member States.

2. Developing International Guidelines for Platform Accountability

Building upon principles in the Global Digital Compact, Member States could negotiate non-binding or soft-law standards addressing:

- Algorithmic transparency and explainability.
- Independent auditing of recommender systems.
- Clear labelling of targeted advertising and sponsored content.
- Risk assessments regarding misinformation, disinformation, and harmful content.

These guidelines could be discussed through multistakeholder platforms such as the Internet Governance Forum to ensure inclusive participation.

3. Balancing Privacy and Security

Delegates may consider frameworks that protect user data while addressing legitimate national security concerns. Possible measures include:

- Privacy-by-design requirements for digital platforms.
- Transparent oversight mechanisms for data access by public authorities.
- Cross-border agreements regulating lawful data requests.

Existing models, such as the General Data Protection Regulation, may provide reference points while allowing flexibility for differing national contexts.

4. Addressing the Societal and Public Health Impacts

Recognising excessive engagement and digital harm as emerging public health concerns, Member States could:

- Fund independent research into the psychological and social impacts of prolonged social media use.
- Promote digital literacy and media education programs.
- Encourage time-use transparency tools and user controls on platforms.

Collaboration with agencies such as the World Health Organisation may help frame digital well-being as a global health priority.

5. Reducing the Global Digital Divide

Given varying levels of digital participation, governance strategies must be adaptable. Proposed actions include:

- Capacity-building initiatives for developing countries to strengthen regulatory institutions.
- Investment in digital infrastructure and equitable internet access.

- Knowledge-sharing platforms for best practices in digital governance.

Such efforts align with commitments outlined in the Pact for the Future.

6. Strengthening Multistakeholder Cooperation

The attention economy is largely driven by private technology corporations. Therefore, solutions may require structured cooperation between:

- Governments
- Technology companies
- Academic institutions
- Civil society organisations

Public–private partnerships could facilitate responsible innovation while preserving economic dynamism.

7. Creating Accountability and Monitoring Mechanisms

Delegates may explore the creation of:

- Voluntary reporting frameworks for digital platforms.
- Periodic UN reviews on digital governance commitments.
- Independent oversight bodies or advisory panels.

Monitoring progress could involve measurable indicators such as transparency benchmarks, digital literacy rates, reductions in harmful content exposure, and improvements in user privacy protections.

Suggestions for Further Research

Blind Spot: The Attention Economy and the Law (article by Tim Wu)

The 'Ledger of Harm' compiled by Human Tech contains well-referenced statistics on the potential harm caused by social media:

The Centre for Humane Technology's guide to the attention economy

International Chamber of Commerce's Response to the Declaration for the Future of the Internet

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