IGF POLAND 2024

Final Report

IGF POLSKA

Warsaw, December 2024

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Internet Governance Forum Poland 2024

The Internet Governance Forum Poland 2024 (IGF Poland 2024) was another edition of Poland's Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which is part of an international UN initiative. IGF is a global platform for promoting an open, multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance.

This event brings together representatives from governments, the private sector, NGOs, academia and other groups involved in issues related to development, security and ethics in cyberspace, enabling the exchange of experiences and ideas on the challenges facing the global Internet community.

At the global level, IGF serves as an important platform for sharing experiences and best practices in Internet governance. Discussion participants identify global challenges related to the digital world and seek joint solutions to address these problems. At the national level, IGF serves as a forum that engages a diverse group of stakeholders, from governments to NGOs to technical experts. Such a model of cooperation fosters the creation of policies that take into account local needs and country-specific characteristics. In Poland, IGF plays an important role in promoting dialogue on regulating Internet access, protecting online privacy and fostering technological innovation.

In 2024, IGF Poland was held within the specific context of the digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2025. The conference provided a platform for discussing key issues related to Europe's digital future, emphasizing international cooperation, innovation and digital policies in the context of global challenges.

The event was co-organized by the Ministry of Digital Affairs and the Research and Academic Computer Network - National Research Institute (NASK), and the conference program involved all stakeholder groups, as recommended by the UN. Thanks to the broad participation of various communities, IGF Poland 2024 was an important step towards shaping a more sustainable, open and democratic Internet future, taking into account the specifics of Polish and European digital needs.

Program Board

The IGF Poland Program Board determines the thematic scope of the conference, monitors the call process, evaluates submissions and chooses sessions to be held at the event.

The Board is chaired by **Rafał Kownacki**, Chair of the Program Board of IGF Poland and Director of the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Digital Affairs.

Members of the Program Board of IGF Poland 2024

- **Hubert Cichocki**, President, Lukasiewicz Center
- **Michał Doligalski**, Director, Department of Innovation and Development, Ministry of Science and Higher Education
- **Dorota Głowacka**, Advocacy and Litigation Specialist, Panopticon Foundation
- **Krzysztof Izdebski**, Chief Officer for Advocacy and Development, Stefan Batory Foundation; Member of the OECD Innovative Citizen Participation Network
- **Jowita Michalska**, Founder and CEO, Digital University
- **Marta Mikliszańska**, Director Group Public Affairs & ESG, Allegro
- **Aleksandra Musielak**, Head of Digital Market Department, Polish Confederation Lewiatan
- **Radosław Nielek**, Director, NASK-PIB
- **Michał Nowakowski**, Section of Current Challenges of Artificial Intelligence, Polish Information Processing Society
- Professor **Aleksandra Przegalińska-Skierkowska**, Department of Management in Network Society, Kozminski University
- **Marianna Sidoroff**, Director, Department of Digital Economy, Ministry of Development and Technology
- **Bianka Siwińska**, President, Perspektywy Education Foundation

Scope

This year's IGF Poland featured an opening session and five expert sessions selected through an open call. The thematic panels referred to the digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2025.

The key issues discussed included:
- cybersecurity,
- artificial intelligence and other digital technologies,
- digital diplomacy and Internet governance,
- digital skills,
- digital economy.

Under the Presidency, Poland will build synergies, i.e. seek convergence between different digital areas and eliminate the phenomenon of silos in digital policy. This is especially true in the area of cyber security. The Polish Presidency will seek to further strengthen EU's resilience by developing a comprehensive and horizontal approach to cyber security.

The Polish presidency will also co-create conditions for the development of artificial intelligence. On the one hand, they will target the development of innovative AI applications, and on the other – to ensure that they are secure.

Digital external relations are also key, and should be nurtured, and new digital partnerships should be developed with non-EU countries sharing the same values and approaches to digital sector development.

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

IGF Poland 2024 Call for session proposals

Following the pattern of previous years, conference organizers issued a call for proposals for the organization of thematic sessions, and 61 applications were submitted. The call was completely open and anyone could submit their own proposal. As part of a social media promotion campaign, the Ministry of Digital Affairs encouraged NGOs, the scientific community, technical organizations, public administration and the private sector to submit proposals.

Due to logistical constraints, a limited number of substantive sessions could be held during the event, within the following subject areas:

- cybersecurity,
- artificial intelligence and other digital technologies,
- digital diplomacy and Internet governance,
- digital skills,
- digital economy.

From among the submissions, the Program Board also qualified one additional session, presenting the use of new technologies by local governments.

After the results of the call were announced, at the turn of October and November the Program Board decided, by circulation, to extend the conference and add one more substantive session. Thus, it decided to hold another session during the conference.

Agenda of the Event

IGF POLAND 2024 Warsaw, 28 November 2024 The Tides ul. Wioślarska 8 00-411 Warszawa AGENDA		ACTIVITIES INVOLVING YOUTH
from 8.15	PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION	
9.00 - 9.30	OPENING STATEMENTS YT streaming	
9.30 - 10.30	OPENING SESSION Digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in H1 2025. Ministry of Digital Affairs YT streaming	
10:30 - 10:45	BREAK	
10:45 -11:30	Equal competition framework from the EU perspective: The Draghi Report, the new European Commission, and the priorities of the Polish EU Presidency. (Chamber of the Electronic Economy) YT streaming	10:45 - 12:20 Youth Roundtable: Digital Challenges (NASK-PIB, Office of the Ombudsman for Children) /event by invitation only; side room/
11.30 -11.35	BREAK	
11.35 - 12:20	Cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection under conditions of hybrid warfare. (Ignacy Moscicki State Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów - Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer) YT streaming	
12.20 - 13:20	LUNCH BREAK	
13:20 - 14:05	Trusted Flaggers: New tool in the fight against illegal online content in Poland (NASK - PIB) YT streaming	
14.05 - 14.10	BREAK	
14.10 - 14:55	Are Polish youth ready for the challenges of the digital age? On the competencies of the future based on the results of the IT Fitness Test. (Digital Poland Association) YT streaming	
14.55 - 15.00	BREAK	
15.00 - 15:45	Artificial intelligence – how has it changed, how is it changing and how will it change Polish cities? (Kielce City Hall) YT streaming	
15.45 - 15:50	BREAK	
15.50 - 16.35	Threats and opportunities for media in the age of artificial intelligence – how AI affects the position of authors and media, and how to build a new ecosystem. (Union of Private Media Employers - Lewiatan) YT streaming	
16.35 - 16:40	BREAK	
16.40 - 17:25	Strategy and coordination to combat misinformation in Poland. Where are we now and what should we strive for? (Demagogue Association) YT streaming	
17.25 - 18.30	NETWORKIN RECEPTION	

Course of the conference

The IGF Poland 2024 was held **on 28 November 2024** at The Tides conference space **in Warsaw**.

The conference began with a session of opening speeches delivered by:

- **Krzysztof Gawkowski**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Digital Affairs, Government Plenipotentiary for Cybersecurity

- **Jowita Michalska**, member of the Program Board of IGF Poland 2024, Founder and CEO, Digital University

- **Krzysztof Silicki**, Director of Strategic Development of Cybersecurity at NASK, Member of the Governing Board of the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity ENISA

- **Małgorzata Kilian-Grzegorczyk**, President, Demagogue Association

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

Addressing his words to more than 400 participants who registered for the conference, Deputy Prime Minister **Krzysztof Gawkowski** said the following in his opening remarks:

"*This event proves that only through joint efforts – of government, business, science, technical organizations and civil society – can we create the Internet of the future: secure, open and innovative. This collaboration allows us to set new standards and respond to the challenges of the digital world in a responsible and sustainable manner*".

He also stressed that the IGF Poland is an event that is open and addressed to everyone, and referred to the great importance of sustainable development of the Internet and the entire digital space.

Immediately after the opening speeches, a debate was held on the digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2025. A detailed description of the discussion can be found later in the report.

The debate was followed by seven substantive sessions from the open call. The session abstracts are included below, following the chronology stated in the conference agenda.

Parallel to the thematic sessions, the first part of the day included a workshop called "Youth Roundtable: Digital Challenges". The workshop was organized by NASK – National Research Institute and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children.

The IGF Poland 2024 was held entirely in Polish. For streaming purposes, simultaneous English translation was provided only for the session of opening speeches and the debate on the digital priorities of the Polish Presidency.

Like every year, the format of the conference was multistakeholder and open. During the session, with active participation of the audience, the panelists discussed new proposals and solutions for responsible policies on the development of the Internet, new technologies and the digital space as a whole.

An exhibition zone was functioning throughout the conference, with stands by the Ministry of Digital Affairs and the Institute of Communications (joint stand internet.gov.pl) and NASK – National Research Institute.

Among the 426 registered participants at the conference there were representatives of public administration, both state and local, entrepreneurs, NGOs and technical organizations, academia and youth.

All sessions of the Summit were broadcast live on the channel of the Ministry of Digital Affairs on YouTube. Links to recordings of the conference are provided at the end of this report.

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

Session Reports

Digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in H1 2025.

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

The opening speeches session was followed by a debate on the "Digital Priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in H1 2025", organized by the Ministry of Digital Affairs and moderated by **Rafał Kownacki**, Director of the International Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Digital Affairs and Chair of the IGF Poland 2024 Program Board.

The panel included:

- **Rafał Rosiński**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Digital Affairs
- **Jolanta Jaworska**, Director Government and Regulatory Affairs, IBM Poland & Baltics & Ukraine; President of Lewiatan Digital Technology Employers' Association (ZPTC)
- **Izabela Albrycht**, Director, Cybersecurity Centre, AGH University of Science and Technology
- **Bianka Siwińska**, President, Perspektywy Education Foundation
- **Krzysztof Silicki**, Director of Strategic Development of Cybersecurity, NASK, Member of the Governing Board of the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA)
- **Małgorzata Krajewska**, Chair of the Telecommunications and Digitization Council of the Polish Confederation Lewiatan, Director of Public Policy and European Affairs, Orange Poland

As part of the session on the digital priorities of Poland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2025, speakers discussed key digital issues that will be at the heart of Poland's strategy for the European Union. The discussion covered topics such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital diplomacy, Internet governance, digital education and telecommunications infrastructure development.

Cybersecurity is a top priority of the Polish Presidency, especially in the context of the growing number of cyber-attacks at the state and individual level. A common goal of the EU will be to create and develop a cyber security strategy that will enable faster response to threats and improve cooperation among member states. One of the key measures Poland will promote is the creation of a European cybersecurity fund to finance prevention and corrective activities in cases of cyber-attacks.

One of the key tasks should be identifying the sectors that are particularly vulnerable to cyber threats, such as the research and education sector. Statistics show frequent attacks on these sectors, which need to be strengthened in terms of cyber resilience. In addition, Poland will strive to strengthen data protection and raise awareness among the public about the dangers related to cyberspace.

The second important area on which Poland will focus its efforts is the development of artificial intelligence and other new digital technologies. The Polish presidency will seek to promote ethical use of AI, with respect for human rights, and support innovation in new technologies that have the potential to contribute to EU's economic growth. An important goal will also be to introduce digital education, especially in the area of artificial intelligence, to enable young people to develop competence in this area.

From a long-term perspective, the speakers noted that quantum technology would also become increasingly important, and that introducing it into education - starting at the elementary school level – is necessary so that younger generations can develop the skills necessary for work in this area.

Faced with the global challenges of regulating digital space, Poland intends to promote the principles of freedom, openness and network neutrality at the international level. An important goal will be to strengthen EU's leadership role in Internet governance, especially in organizations such as the UN and ICANN.

The Polish Presidency will also support a multi-stakeholder approach that involves all stakeholders in the regulatory processes and Internet governance.

Against the backdrop of the increasing risk of cyber threats, the speakers stressed the need to strengthen cooperation among EU member states on critical infrastructure protection. Mention was made of the 2017 Blueprint, which recommends the creation of an EU-level cooperation system capable of responding to large-scale incidents and emergencies. Faced with the challenges of the war in Ukraine, it is becoming necessary to create mechanisms for cooperation in case of crises that may affect the EU in the future. In the area of infrastructure protection, it is key to remove silos and build synergies.

Another important topic was the future of the telecommunications market. Mentioned was made of the criticality of telecommunications infrastructure for the development of the e-economy, education and other digital services.The problem is the lack of adequate investment in telecommunications infrastructure, caused, among others, by the low prices of services that have been liberalized in the EU.

The discussion pointed to the need to create a resilience fund for telecommunications infrastructure to ensure its continuity, including in the context of threats such as hybrid attacks on land infrastructure.

In the context of telecommunications regulations, attention was paid to the need for wise and flexible policies that support infrastructure development without creating new barriers.

An example of a good approach is the proposal to establish a working group on telecommunications infrastructure security, which would deal with both onshore and offshore infrastructure.

Speakers also touched on digital regulation in the EU, noting the challenges of implementation. First of all, it was noted that the diversity of approaches across member states can lead to silo-like structures, which are barriers to technology development.

In particular, uniform implementation of regulations is needed so that entrepreneurs can operate in a predictable legal environment.

In his report, Mario Draghi pointed to the need to simplify regulations, especially those affecting small businesses and startups, which are facing an excess of regulations.

In turn, speakers suggested that Poland should work to harmonize regulations in the EU and cooperate to make the Union a leader in digitization and innovation.

Reference was also made to a report by Sauli Niinistö, commissioned by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell. The report points to the need to adopt new standards for Europe's civilian and military preparedness, including in the area of critical infrastructure. It also includes recommendations for strengthening the resilience of infrastructure, including telecommunications infrastructure, to attacks. According to the report, digital development and cyber security must be treated as an integral part of the national and European security strategy, which is a key element in the context of today's threats.

The discussion of the digital priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union emphasized the importance of international cooperation, especially in the areas of cyber security, artificial intelligence, digital education and critical infrastructure protection. Moreover, with the growing influence of new technologies, such as AI and quantum technologies, it is necessary to develop appropriate educational programs to prepare younger generations for the challenges of the digital future.

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

Equal competition framework from the EU perspective: the Draghi Report, the new European Commission, and the priorities of the Polish EU Presidency.

Organizer
Chamber of the Electronic Economy

Moderator
- attorney-at-law **Bartosz Skowroński**, Antitrust Coordinator, Chamber of Electronic Economy

Speakers
- **Patrycja Sass-Staniszewska**, President, Chamber of the Electronic Economy
- attorney-at-law **Witold Chomiczewski**, Attorney for Legislation, Chamber of Electronic Economy
- **Kamil Mirowski**, Senior Public Affairs Manager, Zalando
- **Marta Mikliszańska**, Head of Public Affairs and ESG, Allegro

The object of the discussion was to learn the positions of the panelists on the EU perspective for equalizing competitive opportunities for Polish entrepreneurs with entrepreneurs from outside the European Union, taking into account, in particular, the plans of the new European Commission, the conclusions of the Draghi Report.

The panelists sought to determine what the priorities of the Polish Presidency in the European Union should be in the scope of equalizing the legal and competitive framework for Polish (EU) entrepreneurs in competition with non-EU e-entrepreneurs.

At the same time, the purpose of the discussion was to determine what actions should be taken by the Polish public administration in cooperation with European Union institutions, in order to strengthen the competitiveness of Polish enterprises.

As part of the discussion, the participants formulated the following postulates for the Polish Presidency of the EU Council regarding the digital sector:
1. ensuring that EU regulations also apply to non-EU e-entrepreneurs and include mechanisms that do not allow non-EU e-entrepreneurs to gain undue competitive advantage;
2. introducing mechanisms that allow for effective enforcement of EU regulations against non-EU e-entrepreneurs (this is both about the practical possibility of conducting proceedings and enforcing the final decision);

3. basing the new term of EU institutions and bodies on the active use of modern legal instruments, such as, among others, DSA, DMA, GPSR, and possibly correcting inefficiencies in the system;

4. reviewing e-commerce regulations to remove inconsistencies and administrative barriers and so-called regulatory overlaps;
5. introducing control mechanisms that will be adapted to the current business model, i.e. "direct to consumer".
6. constantly and closely monitoring the availability of state aid in non-EU countries from which e-entrepreneurs offer their goods or services to the EU market.
7. abolishing the de minimis customs threshold (150 euros), which, with the direct-to-consumer model, allows non-EU e-entrepreneurs retailing to EU consumers to unjustifiably develop a competitive advantage.
8. limiting the number of new regulations and, if necessary, preceding this action with detailed risk analyses;

Cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection under conditions of hybrid warfare

The aim of the session was to present the latest research results and analysis in the field of cyber security issues and critical infrastructure protection.

The session was devoted to a debate on threats to Poland's cyber security in the context of critical infrastructure protection amid rising cyber threats, as well as identified hybrid attacks on institutions and enterprises in Poland.

Organizer
Ignacy Moscicki State Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów, Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer

Moderators
- **Sławomir Gromadzki**, Ph.D., Director, Center for Innovation and Technology Transfer of the Ignacy Moscicki National Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów
- **Dolores Gracja Piwek**, PhD, assistant professor, Institute of Civil Aviation Management at the Faculty of Management and Command, War Studies University

Speakers
- **Robert Janczewski**, PhD, Marine Cybersecurity Centre, Heroes of Westerplatte Polish Naval Academy, professor at the Ignacy Moscicki State Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów.
- Lt. Col. **Kamila Kreis-Tomczak**, PhD, Operational Command of the Armed Forces, lecturer at the War Studies University, expert on information security
- **Janusz Janiszewski**, former president of the Polish Air Navigation Services Agency (PAŻP), chair of the A6 Alliance Steering Board
- **Rafał Zgorzelski**, PhD, former member of the Management Board of Polskie Koleje Państwowe S.A., PKP Group, chair of the IT Policy Council of the PKP Group and PKP PLK
- **Sandra Zagroba-Zbrzeska**, PhD, lecturer at the Ignacy Moscicki State Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów

photo: Ignacy Moscicki State Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów

The session presented the results of the research and formulated conclusions from the analysis of cyber-attacks carried out within the European Union after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, including positions on the area of ICT security, cybersecurity and cyber threats.

The first part of the session presented the main theses on the threats to Poland's cyber security from the experience of the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine and related hybrid attacks in cyberspace.

In the subsequent stages of the discussion, panelists took up the debate on key issues concerning:

➢ threats against the state critical infrastructure - a case study of hybrid attacks in cyberspace;
➢ preparation of the state and identification of needs in this regard to maintain the sovereignty of the country's airspace, with particular attention to securing the critical infrastructure of air navigation services;
➢ cyber threats in logistics processes, in rail, sea and road transport;
➢ cyber threats targeting the country's strategic industries, i.e. energy, defense industry, water resources, transportation;
➢ the level of information security of the state in the protection of classified information;
➢ social security in the context of hybrid threats, information, misinformation and intelligence activities;

A further result of the issues taken up will be development of a scientific monograph by a research team consisting of the session moderators and panelists.

Trusted Flaggers: New tool in the fight against illegal online content in Poland

Organizer
NASK PIB

Moderator
- **Maciej Groń**, attorney-at-law, NASK PIB

Speakers
- **Martyna Różycka**, manager, Dyżurnet.pl NASK PIB
- **Łukasz Wojtasik**, coordinator of the Child in the Web program, Empowering Children Foundation
- **Teresa Wierzbowska**, President, Management Board of the Signal Association
- **Kamila Brylak**, University of Wrocław
- **Marta Soszyńska**, Office of Electronic Communications
- **Marta Brzoza**, Vice President, Board of the Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

The panel was held as part of a session organized by NASK with the participation of representatives of the Office of Electronic Communications, the Empowering Children Foundation, the Signal Association, the Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications and the University of Wrocław, with an active role of the IGF audience. It was dedicated to analyzing the need to establish Trusted Flaggers as one of the key elements of the system for fighting illegal content in the EU. The discussion focused on the potential of these entities to combat illegal content, such as hate speech, child sexual abuse content, misinformation or so-called digital piracy. The participants also considered their role in building public trust in online content regulation systems and in protecting freedom of expression.

Key aspects of the topic included:
1. **Effectiveness in eliminating illegal content**: Trusted Flaggers are to act as intermediaries between online platforms, law enforcement agencies and other institutions, enabling the rapid identification and removal of illegal content.
2. **Building public trust**: the system of Trusted Flaggers can strengthen the perception that online security efforts are transparent and respectful of citizens' rights.
3. **Protecting freedom of expression**: the system is designed to provide a balance between eliminating illegal content and avoiding excessive censorship.
4. **International Cooperation**: Trusted Flaggers will enable the exchange of experience with EU countries that have already implemented similar mechanisms.

Maciej Groń presented the context and significance of Trusted Flaggers for the legal system. He highlighted challenges, such as the need to regulate the role of Trusted Flaggers, technological issues, and public concerns over potential restrictions on freedom of expression.

Martyna Rozycka stressed that efficiency requires cooperation with the private sector and advanced analytical tools. She also pointed out that Trusted Flaggers can contribute to a more efficient response to user requests.

Łukasz Wojtasik focused on protecting the youngest Internet users. He stressed the dangers of children accessing illegal content and the role of digital education in countering such phenomena.

Teresa Wierzbowska addressed the issue of digital piracy and the economic impact of illegal content distribution. She stressed that Trusted Flaggers can play an important role in protecting intellectual property

Kamila Brylak discussed, among others, the need for a clear and transparent legislative framework to safeguard the interests of both users and content providers.

Marta Soszyńska presented the status of the work and the direction of the amendments to the Act on Electronic Services.

Marta Brzoza provided a technology industry perspective. She stressed the importance of self-regulation and cooperation between the IT sector and Trusted Flaggers in developing tools to support the elimination of illegal content.

Key findings and recommendations:
1. **Legislation**: The panelists unanimously pointed to the need for appropriate legislation to precisely define the role, powers and responsibility of Trusted Flaggers.
2. **Transparency and education**: an important element of the Trusted Flaggers system is transparency of its operations and provision to the public of information on the procedures for reporting and deleting content.
3. **Technology as support**: tools based on AI and machine learning can significantly speed up the process of identifying illegal content.
4. **International exchange of experience**: we should benefit from the good practices of EU countries that have already introduced Trusted Flaggers.
5. **Balance between freedom of speech and security**: it is important that the solutions introduced do not unduly restrict freedom of speech and users' rights.

Are Polish youth ready for the challenges of the digital age? On the competencies of the future based on the results of the IT Fitness Test

The digital revolution brings about a tremendous amount of social change. These changes affect all spheres of social life and the economy. The importance of young people's digital competence in the labor market and in everyday life is steadily increasing. The results of the IT Fitness Test, an annual survey of Polish students' digital competencies, suggest that we are facing major challenges. The youth in Poland are struggling to operate basic digital tools and are not at all confidently navigating the world of social media.
During the session, we looked at the results of a nationwide survey of students' and teachers' digital skills. The guests discussed how education in Poland must change to prepare new generations for the challenges of the digital age.

Organizer
Digital Poland Association

Moderator
- **Krzysztof Kiryczuk**, journalist, Radio Zet; teacher, LXXV Sobieski High School in Warsaw

Speakers
- **Michał Kanownik**, President, Digital Poland Association
- **Tomasz Kulasa**, Director, Department of Innovation and Development, Ministry of National Education
- **Beata Galas**, Founder, SafeDots
- **Radosław Potrac**, Teacher of the Year 2023

The session began with a presentation of the results of this year's edition of the IT Fitness Test, an all-Polish free digital competency test aimed primarily at elementary and secondary school students and teachers. – This year's edition of the IT Fitness Test in Poland was solved by 43,978 people, who achieved an average score of 46% in elementary schools and 36% in secondary schools, which marks a significant drop in performance at this level of education. This is a huge surprise that should be alarming among educators and authorities", noted Michał Kanownik, president of the Digital Poland Association.

According to the speakers, the problem is still largely due to hardware shortages in Polish schools and concerns not only computers and advanced multimedia and educational tools, but also basic network infrastructure.

In recent years, elementary schools have become much better equipped for technology. This translates into elementary school students' achievements in the area of digital competence.

However, such equipment is still lacking in secondary schools", said Michał Kanownik, president of the Digital Poland Association. He also alluded to another problem, pressing according to participants, of inadequate preparation of teaching staff to impart knowledge and skills related to digital issues.

Another challenge is to provide teachers not only with the tools, but also with the knowledge necessary to educate young people, Michał Kanownik pointed out.

Referring to the data presented, the speakers pointed to the need for a regular survey of the level of digital competence in Poland and were optimistic about the growing number of male and female students participating in the survey each year. They also pointed out the potential reasons for the troubling results – the 2024 IT Fitness Test gave us a larger study group. The picture of digital competence may have been affected, of course, by an overloaded core curriculum and overworked teachers. The pandemic has not made us all experts in teaching in the digital world.
 For example, if teachers do not get dedicated time for this in the curriculum, they will not be able to teach young people about digital security", commented Radosław Potrac, Teacher of the Year 2023.

The meeting also pointed out the need to take into account the current level of skills of Polish youth in the creation of the core curriculum, paying particular attention to the areas in which students perform worst.

The results of this year's IT Fitness Test will be submitted to the Educational Research Institute, which is working on the graduate profile. These results can therefore be taken into account when planning the content of the core curriculum", commented Tomasz Kulasa, director of the Department of Innovation and Development at the Ministry of National Education.

Beata Galas, founder of SafeDots, drew the attention of the speakers and the audience to the complex nature of the challenge of raising digital competencies and the need for cross-sector cooperation in this area. It is important that the IT Fitness Test results be analyzed by people from different sectors. It is only close cross-sector cooperation among authorities, schools and technology companies that will allow us to effectively equip young people with the competencies necessary for the future. We must not forget the role of parents, who are the first line of building children's digital skills", Beata Galas mentioned.

Conclusions from the discussion:
- ➢ The level of competence of Polish youth is low. Their knowledge of digital office tools is particularly alarming.
- ➢ Further regular tests of the level of digital competence is essential to effectively conduct digital education.
- ➢ Poland is still facing the problem of equipment shortages in schools
- ➢ Teachers are reluctant to explore their digital competencies and often lack the knowledge and skills necessary to educate their pupils.

> The core curriculum should be created on the basis of the current level of the skills of young people, with particular attention to the areas in which we observe the greatest competence gaps.

> The public and private sectors should work closely together to respond to the challenge of low level of digital competency of young people in Poland.

Artificial intelligence – how has it changed, how is it changing and how will it change Polish cities?

The panel was dedicated to artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on Polish cities. It brought together experts and practitioners involved in digital transformation in Polish local governments.

photo: Ministry of Digital Affairs

Organizer
Kielce City Hall

Moderator
- **Bartosz Dominiak**, Director General, Ministry of Digital Affairs, former local government official and smart city expert

Speakers
- **Robert Bednarski**, Director for Smart City, Wrocław City Hall
- **Szymon Ciupa**, Smart City and geoinformation expert, author of a blog on smart cities www.smartcity-expert.eu, sector advisor to cities on smart cities at the Association of Polish Cities

- **Anna Dwurnik**, Director, City Development Office, Kielce City Hall
- **Małgorzata Michalska**, director, Center for Urban Innovation – Urban Lab, Rzeszów City Hall
- **Wojciech Łachowski**, manager and coordinator of research and development projects, RMiR Institute for Urban and Regional Development; head of the IRMiR Urban Data Integrator
- **Ewelina Włoch**, head, Department of Digital Affairs and New Technologies, Rybnik City Hall

The panel began with an introduction by Wojciech Łachowski, who gave a presentation on the current state of AI use in Polish local governments. He stressed that while artificial intelligence is already present in many solutions, in most cities it is still in the pilot stage. The participants then discussed practical examples of how AI is being used in their cities.

Robert Bednarski presented a system implemented in Wrocław for analyzing parking space occupancy, based on data from parking meters and subscriptions, which allows residents to plan parking more effectively.

Ewelina Włoch talked about the use of AI drones in Rybnik to monitor air quality and the city's spatial information system, which integrates data from various areas.

Anna Dwurnik shared the experience of Kielce, where a system of automatic generation of a report on the condition of the municipality is being piloted, significantly reducing the time and resources required for preparing this document.

Małgorzata Michalska pointed to implementation of a virtual assistant in Rzeszów, which improves communication with residents, allowing them to quickly obtain information at any time of day or night. She also stressed the importance of the Security Center in analyzing and responding to the threats, based on AI data.

In turn, Szymon Ciupa discussed the nationwide perspective, noting the challenges posed by a lack of staff competencies, the financial constraints and the need for data-driven decision-making.

The panel stressed that AI can not only support local governments in everyday tasks, such as transportation management and data analysis, but also in ensuring more effective communication with residents.

At the same time, the participants noted the need to build confidence in technology, develop the competencies of employees, and invest in education and appropriate technological facilities.

The conference was an excellent opportunity to share experiences and ideas that contribute to the transformation of Polish cities to make them smarter and more sustainable.

Threats and opportunities for media in the age of artificial intelligence – how AI affects the position of authors and media, and how to build a new ecosystem

Artificial intelligence is redefining the way the media operates and the way citizens use information sources, and this is only the beginning of changes in the market. The proliferation of challenges is forcing to organize and regulate not only copyright issues with regard to AI, but also the credibility of media messages and the role of the media in building an informed society. Attempts to organize this issue are emerging at the European level (AI Act), but also at the national one. This action comes at the time of the Polish presidency, which prompts to reflect extensively on the topic.
 Despite the discussions that have begun on the relationship between copyright law and AI, there are still many issues left unaddressed that deserve to be discussed and put into frameworks.

Organizer

Union of Private Media Employers (Lewiatan)

Moderator
- **Sylwia Czubkowska**, journalist

Speakers
- **Teresa Wierzbowska**, President, Management Board, Union of Private Media Employers (Lewiatan)
- **Paweł Czajkowski**, Legal and Public Policy Director, Agora
- **Paweł Nowacki**, journalist, expert
- **Iga Małobęcka-Szwast**, PhD, expert, University of Warsaw

Key areas to be discussed during the panel:

➢ **Changing the way we consume information**
The participants noted that with the digital transformation affecting every sector, and the media sector in particular, the way we consume information is also changing.
 With the increasing use of modern phones with multimedia features, the line between traditional media and social media platforms is often seemingly blurred from the user's perspective, causing confusion in the transmission of information.
 They noted that the places from which users get their daily information are not always the places that guarantee journalistic integrity and diligence. The question was raised of the risks posed by the phenomenon of misinformation and fake information, which is increasingly influencing public opinion. The symptom of so-called "information fatigue" was noted among users, which manifests itself in their departure from information streams that were previously considered commonplace.

➢ **Media independence from external distributors and suppliers**
The speakers noted that in the media environment, there is a fear of becoming dependent on providers of artificial intelligence tools, just like on the providers of large online platforms.
 It was noted that some editors are developing their own internal tools based on artificial intelligence. The importance of drawing conclusions and learning from the above processes was emphasized.

➢ **Artificial intelligence as a tool in the work of journalists**
The discussion touched on the use of artificial intelligence-based tools to increase work efficiency. At the same time, panelists stressed how, in the age of artificial intelligence, it is an even more important fundamental task of journalists to verify information. Concerns of many editorial teams about using artificial intelligence for content creation were identified, due to legal risks, such as potential litigation, in particular in terms of copyright infringement.

➢ **The role of the journalistic community**
It was pointed out that the media play an important role in serving the civil society, especially by providing information to ensure a properly functioning democratic state system. The panelists also raised the issue of information distribution within a circuit that uses generative artificial intelligence. As a result, there may be a redistribution of errors that can occur when using artificial intelligence tools. They stressed the need for professional journalists to ensure, among others, that published information is verified.

➢ **Leveling the playing field**
It was noted that in the age of artificial intelligence, Polish business entities are operating in a diverse business environment.
 The participants cited the example of licensed entities, which are subject to applicable national regulations, while having to compete with entities under another jurisdiction.

The panelists pointed out the need to define the rules based on which providers of artificial intelligence tools, as well as providers of online platforms such as search engines, can use the content created by other entities.

> ### The need for effective regulation

The panelists cited emerging market fears of regulation and artificial bureaucratization while emphasizing the need to level the playing field for different sized technology businesses. Scattered regulation of artificial intelligence may hinder the rights of the authors and entities to the content of their activities.
 The discussion addressed the European Artificial Intelligence Act and the amendment to the Polish Act on Copyright and Related Rights in conjunction with the Directive on Copyright and Related Rights in the Digital Single Market.

 The panelists noted that providers of general-purpose artificial intelligence models should respect copyrights, and therefore implement copyright policies that allow rights holders to effectively use the so-called "opt-out mechanism" so that they can effectively license their content and negotiate with large technology companies for due compensation.
 The problem was indicated of informed consent of creators and entities with rights to content that are not provided by the aforementioned opt-out mechanism.

In the process of regulation, it is important to take into account issues such as charging for the use of content, as well as reporting and transparency on the part of artificial intelligence-based tool providers.
 It noted that if legal action is taken in connection with unauthorized use of works, then issues arise of jurisdiction, securing evidence, and valuing the resulting damage.
 Media, creators, and the creative industry in the broadest sense are faced with the problem of a system favoring unauthorized activities that allows entities to operate in an unregulated manner, with no actual consequences.

Key findings:
> Clear and effective AI regulations are needed to ensure a level playing field for businesses;
> In the aftermath of the enactment of regulations, the process of their implementation is important, which involves trust in the state and legal culture, which can be positively influenced by providing not only the ability to obtain information about the violation of the rights of authors and content rights holders, but also the ability to effectively enforce their rights;

> The panelists called on regulators involved in the digital transformation related to artificial intelligence to cooperate in enforcing regulations;
> It is necessary for the state to defend fair competition between large technology companies and local business entities;
> In the process of applying tools based on artificial intelligence, the human factor - such as a journalist verifying the veracity of information - still remains crucial.

Artificial intelligence is becoming one of the cornerstones of digital transformation - not only from the perspective of business entities, but also from the that of the individual human being.
 The panel demonstrated the need for a coordinated approach to artificial intelligence tools that takes into account the needs of different sized businesses, as well as different market sectors. According to the panel's organizers, the Ministry of Digital Affairs has a key role in shaping policies that will be able to ensure effective regulations and their effective implementation to build a fairly competitive economy.

Strategy and coordination to combat misinformation in Poland. Where are we now and what should we strive for?

Poland's strategy to combat misinformation is a key element in building information security and public trust. Currently, Poland is at the stage of developing tools and structures for monitoring and countering misinformation, but still lacks a single, central institution that would be responsible for coordinating these activities. The purpose of the discussion was to analyze current activity of the state, assess the effectiveness of cooperation between the government and the private sector, and discuss the role of educating the public on how to recognize fake news.

Organizer
Demagogue Association

Moderator
- **Małgorzata Kilian-Grzegorczyk**, President, Demagogue Association

Speakers
- **Konrad Adamowicz**, chief, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Misinformation Countermeasures Team.
- **Nikola Bochyńska**, editor-in-chief, CyberDefence24.pl
- **Piotr Mieczkowski**, managing director, Digital Poland Foundation
- **Filip Szulik-Szarecki**, project manager, Keyboard Warriors initiative

The discussion moderator, Małgorzata Kilian-Grzegorczyk, began the panel by referring to the government's 2024 digitization strategy, which 30 times listed misinformation among the phenomena causing harm to Polish society.
 Among the phenomena that damage mental health, weaken ties and polarize public debate, the ministry pointed to rampant misinformation. To counter it, the strategy mainly proposes education and coordination of institutions already fighting false information.

Referring to the strategy and effectiveness of combating misinformation in Poland, the discussion began with Filip Szulik-Szarecki presenting the perspective of a factchecking organization. He drew attention to education, which is not enough - we should adopt tougher measures in the context of digital platform accountability in terms of content

moderation, among others.

Meanwhile, Piotr Mieczkowski pointed to the potential of the activities of fact-checking organizations, and the lack of financial resources to support their activities. The strategy did not include information detailing how it will be possible to fund educational and fact-checking activities, or from what sources. He noted the good diagnosis included in the strategy, which indicates the lack of a coordinator for the area of countering misinformation in Poland
The last area that has been missing is media education, is media and digital skills certification, so that we can know the level of those skills in the society.

Konrad Adamowicz presented the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs related to the fight against misinformation and drew attention to the growing threats in the context of the upcoming presidential elections in Poland. He also pointed to combating historical misinformation as an important area of the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The representative of the ministry also pointed to the lack of a coordinator and the silo-like nature of state institutions in the area. In response, the Foreign Ministry pointed to initiation of various forums and information-sharing groups at the ministry, where representatives of state institutions meet, as one of the measures it is taking.

Referring to the digitization strategy, Nikola Bochyńska pointed out that there is no specific information on who would be the coordinator of activities to combat misinformation in Poland, indicating that it could be either an already existing institution working in the scope of combating misinformation or a completely new entity. The editor-in-chief also pointed out that in the area of financing, no specific measures and sources of funding for activities were indicated, which institutions they will go to, and whether the strategy envisions what portion of these funds will go to NGOs.
She also pointed out that NGOs are a community that has been active for years and is ready to cooperate.

The main recommendations and conclusions are the need for a clearly defined coordinating entity for the digitization strategy in the context of countering misinformation| in Poland, ensuring adequate funding for institutions and organizations involved in the fight against misinformation, strengthening cooperation between the public sector, the private sector and civil society, developing educational programs aimed at various social groups and promoting reliable journalism
and responsible use of social media.

The panel concluded with a discussion with the participation of the audience, which addressed, among others, the role of social media in the spread of misinformation and the need to ensure transparency in public sector activities.

Side Event

Workshop entitled "Youth Roundtable: Digital Challenges"

photo: NASK - National Research Institute

The workshop "Youth Roundtable: Digital Challenges", organized by NASK - National Research Institute and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children as part of the Internet Governance Forum Poland (IGF) conference, provided an opportunity for young people to present their perspective on the challenges of the digital world.

Drawing on the European Digital Services Act (DSA), participants jointly developed recommendations to improve the ethics, security and friendliness of the digital environment. The following recommendations express only the views of the author(s) and should not be considered the same as the official position of the Organizers.

One of the key topics covered during the workshop was the issue of misinformation. The young people noted the need to build social resilience through education and to facilitate the process of reporting suspicious content. They Indicated that workshops should be held in schools to teach young people to recognize manipulation and use the available tools to assess the credibility of content.

The introduction of technologies that tag artificial intelligence-generated content on social media was also an important request.

Protecting the privacy and image of young users was another important area of discussion. The recommendations emphasized the need for effective mechanisms to restrict access to social media platforms by children under 13. It was pointed out that both young people and parents should be provided with comprehensive education on cyber security. It was also suggested that influencers should be involved in promoting the principles of image protection, which could raise awareness among the younger people. In addition, improving mechanisms for reporting privacy violations on social media platforms would be key to improving user security.

Another important issue was the difficulty of understanding the regulations of social media platforms. The youth pointed out that these regulations are often written in an overly complicated manner, making their content incomprehensible to the average user. It was recommended to create simpler versions of regulations using plain language and visuals, such as infographics or short videos.
 Users should also be able to use tools based on artificial intelligence that could translate intricate sections of terms and conditions and facilitate cookie management.

The youth also discussed the impact of social media on mental health. They stressed the need to reduce the time children spend on these platforms, among others by limiting smartphone use in schools, but also suggested alternative activities instead. They also suggested developing algorithms to promote content that supports mental health and digital balance, which could encourage users to take breaks from social media or engage in offline activities. They also noted the need to fund research on the impact of social media on mental health and the inclusion of this issue in the curriculum.

In the context of artificial intelligence and algorithmic transparency, the youth advocated tagging AI-generated content with invisible watermarks that could be detected by social media systems. Also important is the transparency of AI chatbots, which should clearly indicate the sources used for generating responses. Educational campaigns on how algorithms work, especially those targeting seniors, could raise awareness of the society about the applications and limitations of artificial intelligence.

In conclusion, the workshop "Youth Roundtable: Digital Challenges" showed the deep awareness among young people about contemporary digital issues and their involvement in creating concrete proposals for action. The recommendations developed can provide valuable input to future regulations and policies, supporting a more ethical, safe and responsible use of the digital world.

Footage from the Conference

A recording of the entire conference in Polish:
IGF POLAND 2024 DIGITAL SUMMIT – 28 November 9:00 a.m. – 5:25 p.m.

A recording of the session of opening speeches and the opening debate (with simultaneous translation into English):

INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM POLAND 2024 – OPENING SESSION 28 November from 9:00 to 10:30 CET (English interpretation)

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Contact us

Questions about IGF Poland initiative can be directed to IGFPolska@cyfra.gov.pl

Feel free to contact us!