



Time for a Swiss Digital Charter?

An ICT4Peace proposal

The time is ripe for industry together with civil society stakeholders to take the lead in shaping the regulatory framework of our digital future while ensuring the protection of collective and individual rights. What elements are needed to ensure the development of a prosperous and ethical digital economy in Switzerland?

COVID 19 has accelerated our transformation into a truly digital economy and society on multiple levels from consumer to service provider, online education to home office, health services, e-government, worker productivity, and the growing role of AI to name but a few. There are of course many challenges to be overcome in terms of the technical underpinnings of this transformation but also importantly relating to the values and norms of this landscape. At the same time we have to keep pace with new ideas growing out of this rapid digital ramp-up and remain aware of and become more

connected to international activities and efforts in the digital space in particular within the European Union.

The objectives of this project would be to:

- 1) Define the key elements needed for successful and prosperous digitalization including developing guidelines (a framework) based on entrepreneurship, free market, trust, rule of law and rights and responsibilities
- 2) Map existing initiatives, frameworks and identify best practices from other countries
- 3) Explore ways to deepen relations with, and knowledge exchange with the EU
- 4) Based on the above develop concrete proposals for alterations or additions to the existing Swiss regulatory framework

Importantly, this process could also feed into the development of a *Swiss Digital Charter* that would include key elements relating to cybersecurity, privacy, transparency, trust, blockchain, cryptocurrencies, AI, human resources, data ownership, data management, human rights, entrepreneurship, and fostering productive relationships with key stakeholders including civil society, government and law enforcement. This industry led *Swiss*

Digital Charter, if it finds resonance, could be exported becoming a leading piece of the international dialogue on these issues while at the same time creating positive momentum for Switzerland's digital space.

The first deliverable to explore the potential scope and outcomes of this project would be interviews with representative members of the Swiss digital Industry to ascertain their needs, priorities and challenges and potential interest in this idea. This could also include 1-2 half day workshop(s) organized online with approximately 6 experts from industry and civil society, ICT4Peace and invited guests, including Swiss digital economy movers and shakers.

The interviews and workshops could address and discuss inter alia the following questions (in no particular order):

- What are the key elements that need to be put in place to ensure the development of a prosperous Swiss digital economy? For industry ? With regards to privacy, trust? Rights and responsibilities? Law enforcement? International relations? Cybersecurity? Ethical AI?

- What challenges and hurdles are currently too high for companies operating in the Swiss digital sector?
- How to strengthen Swiss digital industry relations with the EU?
- What rules and regulations are needed to ensure a transparent, level playing field for business and stakeholders, that encourage the private sector while also protecting individuals and ensuring the ability to fight abuse and misuse?
- How to manage the need for legitimate privacy while not encouraging criminality? Finding the right balance between individual freedom and collective security.
- How to ethically manage the challenges and opportunities of AI, big data and the blockchain?
- What concrete measures are needed to ensure a continuous process of feedback between civil society, industry, government and law enforcement? What are the rights and responsibilities of each stakeholder?

- What challenges remain on managing cybersecurity and cybercrime?
 - Should a network of existing forensic cyber labs for cyber incidents fact finding be created in Switzerland ? Should Switzerland help build and co-lead an international network with the same purpose?
 - Should National and international Cyber Risk Assessments be done and if yes by whom ?

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