GLOBAL CITIZENS' DIALOGUE

We, the Internet

REPORT: ANALYSIS OF THE GLOBAL CITIZENS DIALOGUE ON THE FUTURE OF INTERNET IN ARGENTINA

Project "We The Internet"

by Eileen Cejas, Ignacio Chebaia and Andrés Crisafulli

November 2020

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE "WE THE INTERNET ARGENTINA" TEAM

Eileen Cejas is a criminal lawyer of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). Since 2014 she is involved in Internet Governance issues. Currently she is the Regional Engagement Director – Latin America and the Caribbean for the Youth SIG (Youth Observatory); and Steering Committee member of the Youth Coalition on Internet Governance (YCIG). She works as sole practitioner, with a strong emphasis in gender matters. Activist for feminist Internet.

Ignacio Isas Chebaia holds a BA in Communications Sciences of the National University of Tucumán. His areas of work include journalism, advertisement, photography, digital tools, institutional communications, radio, copywriting, social media, data science and graphic design. He has wide experience in several public and private institutions in copywriting, communications responsible in organizations and community manager. He worked several years as press adviser for the Legislature of the Province of Tucumán.

Andrés Crisafulli holds an honorary BA in International Relationship and he is a researcher at the National University of Villa María (Province of Córdoba) and at the Research and Formation in Public Administration Institute of the National University of Córdoba in topics related to the application of technologies, citizen participation, globalization and governance processes. He works as assistant teacher in the subjects "Introduction to Politic Science" and "Foundations of Political Science" of the National University of Cordoba; and "Regional Integration Law" of the University Century XXI. He writes for magazines related to communications sector like azureazure. Andrés is an active member of the ISOC Chapter Argentina, member of several SIGs, Red Nuestra Córdoba, among others.

Argentina for the first time in history had a national event in which citizens from all the provinces expressed their opinions in several topics related to the Internet. It was a profound experience to create a new deliberative scenario in order to express the concerns and challenges that the people of this country have on the Internet.

Missions Publiques is an organization of high impact that has several projects related to citizen participation in several topics. One of the projects "We, The Internet", consists of one or two days of meetings and reflection among persons on different issues related to the Internet. These citizens are not required to have previous knowledge on the topics, but the goal is that they would be able to discuss freely from the "focus group" structure, i.e they have their discussions in small groups with the presence of a neutral facilitator who guides the deliberation, making sure that everyone can express their opinions. This experience, as we said above, is totally innovative as usually we find events designed with panelists of experts in the topic without any possibility of exchange among participants.

Locally, the event was boosted by Youth SIG (Youth Observatory), an international organization led by Young people on Internet Governance topics. This organization represented in Argentina by Eileen Cejas, has done several international activities, including this year the YouthLACIGF #5, the most important annual event for youth of the region about Internet Governance (IG).

In 2020, the conditions for carrying out the project were very particular, as it was at the peak of the pandemic during the months prior to the event, the organisation had to be rethought and carried out in a completely virtual format[1]. Among the most notable changes, the times of each session were modified, new adapted communication resources were made and the tables were redesigned. In addition, due to the regulations in force at the time of the Argentine dialogue, it was not possible to organize an event spread over some cities in Argentina and in small groups, as each province had a different epidemiological situation, and therefore restrictions on the mobilization of the team and participants.
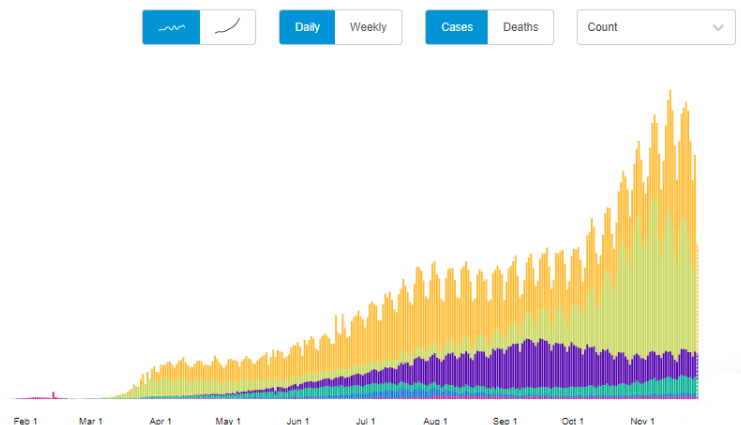
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[1] Argentine Government. Executive Order 792/2020 of National Executive Power. The possible cities that we first considered were Villa María (Province of Córdoba), San Miguel de Tucumán (Province of Tucumán), City of Buenos Aires (CABA) and San Isidro (Province of Buenos Aires). https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/235931/20201012

COVID 19 cases curve graph from the beginning of the pandemic. By the time the event was being planned and considered as a face-to-face event, the curve was rising. Source: WHO https://covid19.who.int/

The implementation of several recruitment strategies is noteworthy in order to convene approximately 120 citizens interested in attending (under Missions Publiques standards). For their registration, the Eventbrite platform was used in order to organise them between chosen shifts (morning or afternoon) and to assign them the pseudo-code so that the participants could complete the questionnaires designed for each session anonymously. The results of these questionnaires are reflected in the Sphinx[2] platform.

2) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From a post- linguistic turn perspective, we analyze at least two basic policy ideas. As hierarchy, bureaucracy, delegation of power to the sovereign, central government, State as monopoly of the use of legitimate power of force in a territory and, in the meantime, the search for power over that State (Weber), rationality and conservation of institutions. And another vision by many called "broad" or "social", characterised by belonging to a community, where "language provides a model of association that shows how rules can be learned" (Pitkin, 291, 1984). An idea of participatory and democratic politics, rather than hierarchical. Focused on the public and on action, and capable of questioning the established order. Where justice is built to the extent that individuals intervene in its foundation (Forst, 36, 2014).

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[2] The Sphinx platform was selected by Missions Publiques to make the results of the dialogues in each of the 70+ cities in the world accessible in real time. The overall results will be available on the Missions Publiques website by the end of November 2020 (estimated date).

From this second position, we believe in the need to generate political communication channels adapted to an unprecedented historical complexity, where technology is the recurrent factor. In that way, the challenge is not only to talk about the novelty of ICTs as a problem but also as a tool for interaction.

This is why we believe that the experience of the Global Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of the Internet is aligned with this policy vision. Thus it becomes a communicational and pluralistic dispositive of connection in equity and freedom (Foucault, 1969). It allows us to strengthen our common identity, to value individual subjectivity and to boost collective action.

3) DIGITAL COOPERATION AND THE CREATION OF THE GLOBAL CITIZENS' DIALOGUE ON THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

DIGITAL COOPERATION

By 2018, the UN Secretary-General has appointed the High Panel on Digital Cooperation to work on "digital cooperation", which is defined as *"the ways in which we work together to address the social, ethical, legal and economic implications of digital technologies so as to maximize their benefits and minimize their impacts"[3].* This digital cooperation was approached on the model of multilateralism also including stakeholders, taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals 2030[4] and possible models of digital cooperation.

In June 2020, Missions Publiques held the "Global Stakeholders Dialogue", in which stakeholders[5] from over 70 countries discussed the three models of digital cooperation over two days[6]. From that discussion, most of the participants suggested the implementation of the IGF Plus model, among other relevant points. The recommendations of this event were shared

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[3] "The Age of Digital Interdependence : Report of the Secretary-General's HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON DIGITAL COOPERATION" (2019) https://digitalcooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HLP-on-Digital-Cooperation-Report-Executive-Summary-ENG.pdf
[4] United Nations (2015). Sustainable Development Goals 2030 https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/
[5] The multi-stakeholder model refers to the participation and/or consideration of the approaches of all actors that matter in a system.
[6] United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation (2019). For further information, see the interactive infographic realised by Geneva Internet Platform https://dig.watch/processes/hlp

with the High Level Panel for Digital Cooperation, from which the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation[7] was drawn up. Based on this, measures to improve global digital cooperation are mentioned, including coordination between the different stakeholders, so that the recommendations made can be taken into account by the necessary and appropriate bodies.

Missions Publiques' "We The Internet"[8] project began in 2018 with pilot workshops in more than 12 countries around the world exploring the issues that are considered as most important from citizens. In 2019 it was developed and enhanced with a series of 5 workshops, one on each continent, which looked at misinformation and digital identity. The results were presented at the 2019 Global Internet Governance Forum.

HISTORY OF CONNECTION AMONG MISSIONS PUBLIQUES AND ARGENTINA

Everything began when Eileen Cejas attended the IGF2019 as the Internet Society's IGF Youth Ambassador (cohort 2019)[9], a program organised by the Internet Society in which 30 young people from around the world are chosen to attend the global IGF, with extensive preparation over several months on Internet governance issues with top-notch experts.

During the "Collaborative Leadership Exchange" (CLX) session organised by the Internet Society and invited speakers, Eileen had a conversation with Missions Publiques' representative Antoine Vergne, Director of Strategic Partnership. He presented the Global Citizens Dialogue and the experience of citizens' deliberation[10]: in 2019 they had made a version with 5 cities involved in the process: Kigali (Rwanda), Manheim (Germany), Tokio

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[7] United Nations General Assembly (2020). Roadmap for Digital Cooperation: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, Report of the UN Secretary-General. https://undocs.org/A/74/821

[8] Missions Publiques (2020). More information about the Project We The Internet https://missionspubliques.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/WTI_leaflet-web.pdf

[9] The Internet Society's IGF Youth Ambassadors programme is organised annually by the Internet Society, involving young people from around the world to be selected for the annual cohort, receiving intensive training in Internet governance. The selected young people from the programme are mentored and travel to the Global IGF. More information is available at https://www.internetsociety.org/policy-programs/igf-youth-ambassadors/ambassadors/2019/

[10] "A **citizens' dialogue: how does it work?"** Explanatory video of Missions Publiques on the dynamics of a citizen's dialogue https://youtu.be/-E9MMZWLuco

(Japan), São Paulo (Brazil) and Bangladesh (Rohingya refugee camp). This process was explained in more detail at an IGF2019 Open Forum[11].

After the IGF2019, Eileen Cejas contacted Missions Publiques with the intention of requesting representation from Argentina. After a personal interview in February 2020, her application was accepted. Since then, Eileen Cejas received an extensive training of several months by the team of Missions Publiques in order to be able to execute an event of such magnitude in our country. By August, our group was officially formed, and Eileen Cejas became Missions Publiques' National Strategic Partner for Argentina.

GENESIS OF THE ARGENTINIAN WORKING GROUP

The team, composed by Eileen Cejas, Ignacio Isas Chebaia and Andrés Crisafulli, emerged after attending the Argentine School of Internet Governance (ARGENSIG) on October 1, 2 and 3, 2018 as fellows at the Argentine Foreign Affairs Ministry. There, they acquired knowledge on the latest development of the most important issues related to the Internet, which were led by some of the most important specialists in the local Internet Governance ecosystem. Panels related to the future of mobile Internet in Argentina; the Internet ecosystem; Artificial Intelligence among other areas[12] were included.

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[11] Open Forum 2019 de Missions Publiques **"IGF 2019-Day 3- Convention Hall-I-C- OF28-Internet Governance with and for citizens"** November 28, 2019 https://youtu.be/aXrs0S1VHOk

[12] Namely: Hernán Eduardo Colombo - Mobile Internet. Current services and future perspectives; Laura Kaplan - Internet Governance & LACNIC; Nestor Bruno - Internet and its infrastructure. Regulation, actors and scenarios for current and future development; Rodrigo de la Parra - Internet and its ICANN Ecosystem; León Felipe Sánchez Ambía - Introduction to the ICANN MMPI; Pablo Lazaro - National Strategy to Combat Cybercrime; Anabel Cisneros - Gender Initiatives 2018; Valerio Adrián Anacleto - Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work and Industry; Graciela Guzman - Internet and its impact on the future of work; Ana Laura Diedrichs - Artificial Intelligence; among others.

Photograph of the ARGENSIG 2018. Photo credit: ARGENSIG

After having finished their participation in this school, we maintained a close bond through different communication channels and programmed trips. Together we participated and collaborated in various courses, workshops and activities. In this way, we built a professional and affective relationship that strengthened our own criteria as specialists, researchers and socially committed persons.

4) DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL CITIZENS DIALOGUE ON THE FUTURE OF INTERNET IN ARGENTINA

For the Argentinean event, we made a research for facilitators from a list of advanced students and graduates from the National University of Córdoba and the National University of Tucumán respectively, including relevant stakeholders in the country such as Andrés Piazza, Javier Palleros, Anabel Cisneros, Franco Giandana, among others. The facilitators were in charge of the groups' activities in the virtual rooms of the Zoom platform, and the development of a fluid dynamic of citizen participation.

As for the moderators, they were in charge of supervising the work of the facilitators and assisting citizens with the technical parts of the platform.

As part of our impact strategy, we developed a plan that covers most of the national territory, with a strong presence in the cities of Buenos Aires, Resistencia, Mendoza, Córdoba, Santa Fe, Rosario and Tucumán.

The team's meetings were held through virtual platforms due to the presence of COVID19 and the restrictions related to preventive and obligatory social isolation decreed in March 2020; in addition to the geographical distance between team members. The meetings varied in length, ranging from approximately one meeting per week to four times a week, closer to the event.

Regarding the presence in electronic media, the event had its own website https://wetheinternet.com.ar/ and social media in Spanish language; in addition to the existing networks of the organization Youth SIG (Youth Observatory) that also shared the information in the existing channels.

Our national coordinator worked actively with other national coordinators in Latin America in order to translate the materials sent by Missions Publiques into Spanish (including videos and documentation). This coalition of translations has been very important to meet the goals assigned by Missions Publiques in due time.

The Argentine team analysed a long list of national *stakeholders*, among which we looked for those with a professional profile and close to citizen participation. Among the guest panelists for the national session on "Internet Content, Freedom of Expression and Prior Censorship" we had the presence of Professor Colombres Garmendia on social networks from a gender perspective; and a digital content creator Pablo Sosa who shared his personal experiences on social media platforms, in order to examine the impact of community rules of social network platforms on freedom of expression on the Internet.

5) DATA ANALYSIS

PROFILE OF THE ARGENTINE PARTICIPANT

When outlining a profile of an Argentinean participant, we were able to notice that he/she is a participant with a fairly critical attitude to the circumstances and self-critical of his/her own context. The Argentinean participant may come from various occupations, and is generally an informed person of the international context, especially Europe and the United States.

This was the conformation of the participants in the Argentine event:
-In terms of age range, 34.4% of the participants were 25 years old; 30.2% were between 25 and 34 years old; 18.8% were between 35 and 44 years old; 8.3% were between 45 and 54 years old; 4.2% were between 55 and 64 years old; and 4.2% were 65 years old and over.
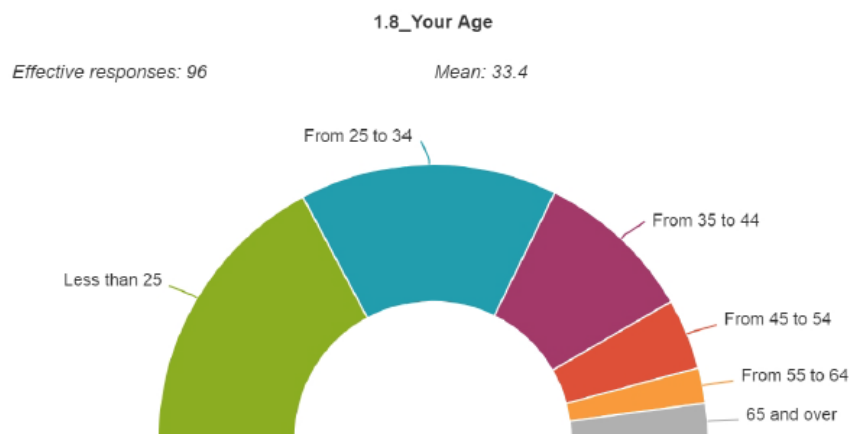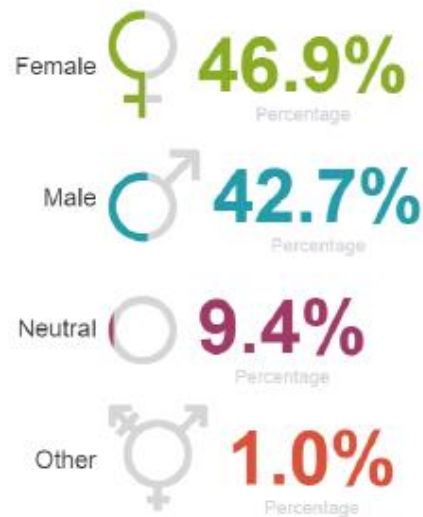

Chart corresponding to the age of the participants. Graph extracted from the Sphinx platform.

- On the gender composition: 46.9% were women; 42.7% were men; 9.4% were considered neutral; and 1.0% as others.

1.9_Your Gender

Response rate: 44.4%

Female ♀ **46.9%**
Percentage

Male ♂ **42.7%**
Percentage

Neutral ○ **9.4%**
Percentage

Other ⚧ **1.0%**
Percentage

Chart related to gender representativeness. Extracted from the Sphinx platform.

-Most participants were connected using a computer (91.2%) and the remaining percent was connected using a mobile phone (8.8%).

- Occupation of the participants: 40.6% (student); 16.7% (employee of semi-professional tasks: teacher, office work, etc.); 12.5% (self-employed); 5.2% (boss); 5.2% (manual work: driver, industry, etc.); 5.2% (unemployed); 5.2% (other); 4.2% (retired); 3.1% (housewife); 2.1% (agriculture, fishing).
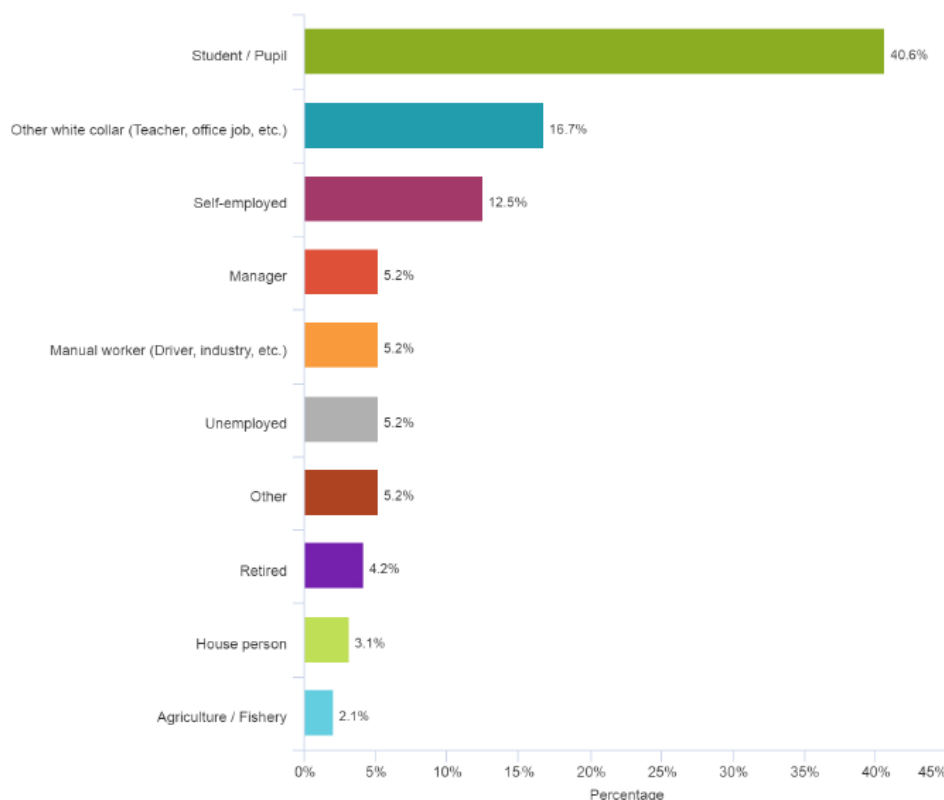
Chart on the different occupations of the participants. From the Sphinx platform.

As for the individual questionnaires, we can highlight some questions where the evolution curve of the opinions expressed is shown. For that matter, we chose to analyse 6 questions that match in questionnaires 1 and/or 2; in relation to the last questionnaire. These questions will be explained in further detail in the sections related to each session:

➢ *What is the Internet for you?* (question 1.6 vs. question 12.1)

In the first questionnaire, 46.2% of the participants considered that *"the Internet is as much an opportunity as a threat"* followed by *"more an opportunity than a threat"* (37.5%). When we asked the same question in the last questionnaire, there was a change in the order: the percentage of participants who considered *"Internet more an opportunity than a threat"* was 67.3%, while the consideration of *"Internet is equally an opportunity as a threat"* was 24.0%.

➢ *How would you describe your level of confidence in …? By "confidence" we mean that you can trust in someone or something would behave as expected …* (question 2.2 vs question 12.2)

When we look at the confidence levels in the second questionnaire, we observed that most participants considered the Internet as a whole to be *"somewhat confident"*, with the same pattern being repeated when analysing the points relating to the infrastructure layer, the protocol layer and the application layer.

The perception became more pessimistic when we made the same question in the last questionnaire: 27.9% considered the Internet as a whole to be *"not very confident"*, with the same pattern being repeated in the three layers mentioned above.

➢ *How much do you know about the following terms?* (question 1.3 vs question 12.4)

When we asked participants about their level of knowledge of certain terms, in the first questionnaire participants said that they *"knew something about the topics"*; compared to the results of the last questionnaire in which they said that they *"knew very well about the topics".*

➢ *Please estimate how many people are connected to the Internet in your country* (question 1.4 vs question 12.7)

The answer to this question has been interesting: at the beginning, 36.6% of the participants said that about 75% of the Argentine population is connected to the Internet; and in the last questionnaire the percentage increased to 83.7%. Although it should be noted that connectivity in Argentina has increased in recent years, there is still a large portion of the Argentine population that does not have access to the Internet or that its access is limited (depending on the socio-economic level).

➢ *Please estimate how many people are connected to the Internet globally* (question 1.5 vs question 12.8)

At first, 41.3% of participants support the hypothesis that about 50% of the world's population is connected; and by the last questionnaire most of them believed that 75% of the world's population is connected.

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Both in the previous question and this one, it is remarkable how people's perception changed, despite the fact that at first they had a much more accurate response to the official statistics regarding connectivity from UIT[13] and CABASE.

➢ *How would you describe the Internet?* (question 1.7 vs question 12.5)

In the first questionnaire the vast majority agreed to consider the Internet as a place for entertainment and social interaction; a basic human right; a source for commerce, industry and economic development; a place that can be dangerous and potentially harmful; a source for scientific development, research and knowledge; a tool for political activity; a place where people's privacy is compromised; a place for freedom and opportunity: these categories averaged 80% agreed or strongly agreed; however on the statement *"a safe space"* opinions were divided: 47% considered it is a safe space and 57% considered it is not a safe space. The trend continued in the last questionnaire.

From the collective questionnaires, we were able to establish as a profile of the participants that most of them said at the **beginning of the event** that as potential negative scenarios in which dialogue would take place: not being able to express themselves; that there would be dispute and not a deliberation; and that the issues would be difficult to understand. On the other hand, they stated as positive scenarios the possibility of sharing points of view with other participants; talking about different topics and learning about new ones; and that it could be a collaborative experience.

By **the end of the event** the comments of the participants can be organised into 3 categories:

-**HUMAN FACTOR**:
This refers to the participants who attended and took their time to exchange opinions and discuss in a constructive manner. It was the value they brought to the event from human affection.

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[13] ITU is the specialized organism of the United Nations for the information and communications technologies -ICTs.
CABASE is a non-profit Association which brings together the main Internet operators and providers in Argentina, as well as many technology companies that make up the Internet ecosystem in Argentina.

As evidence thereof, we selected some comments from citizens:

- ❏ *"The well willingness of everyone"*;
- ❏ *"That it would be productive to exchange different criteria"*;
- ❏ *"the collaboration between all"*;
- ❏ *"All the people who participated. Many!"*
- ❏ *"The diversity of people participating from all over the country from different professions and age groups."*

-**FACTOR IN ADDRESSING THE THEMES OF THE DIALOGUE**.

The event took place in two days marked by different themes, from data and privacy to Artificial Intelligence. Therefore, we have selected some comments from the citizens about the topics of the event:

- ❏ *"About the licentiousness that can be had in defaming someone very quickly. I wasn't aware of that."*
- ❏ *"the way to regulate the various online expressions"*;
- ❏ *"knowing what was going on with our data"*;
- ❏ *"The censorship on the net, the way to communicate the opinions, there is really a lot of hatred"*;
- ❏ *"the interferences of the Internet, AI, governments and controls"*

-**ORGANIZATIONAL FACTOR**:

This refers to the logistics' aspects of the event (including the previous stage of information to citizens, registration, management of the Dialogue platform, preparation of the content) and during the Dialogue itself between 17 and 18 October. We would like to remark some of the comments made by the citizens:

- ❏ *"The very good organisation… maybe for the next event we shall spread it more because it is very beneficial to exchange ideas with others!"*
- ❏ *"The topics, the way of peaceful dialogue and the good organisation"*;
- ❏ *"That is a dialogue and not a lecture by specialists as all the other events are"*;
- ❏ *"I really liked the way the facilitators dealt with the topics."*
- ❏ *"the way the content was presented"*

In this session we talked about the Internet and we were able to obtain significant data. For the majority of the participants, around 75% of the Argentinean population is connected to the Internet **(according to CABASE[14] statistics, the penetration of landline and mobile Internet access in homes is 63.8%)** so the participants had a fairly close approximation to the statistics reported, and they also estimated that around 50% of the world is connected to the Internet, which concur with the content presented on the video assigned for the session.

It is also worth noting the national statistics on Internet access in Argentina from the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Argentina[15] : it is estimated that there are 7,500,000 landline points in homes connected to the Internet. In addition, 31,300,000 Argentines are connected to the Internet via mobile phones.

It is more than 39,000,000 Internet connections in our country, or more than 86% of the population.
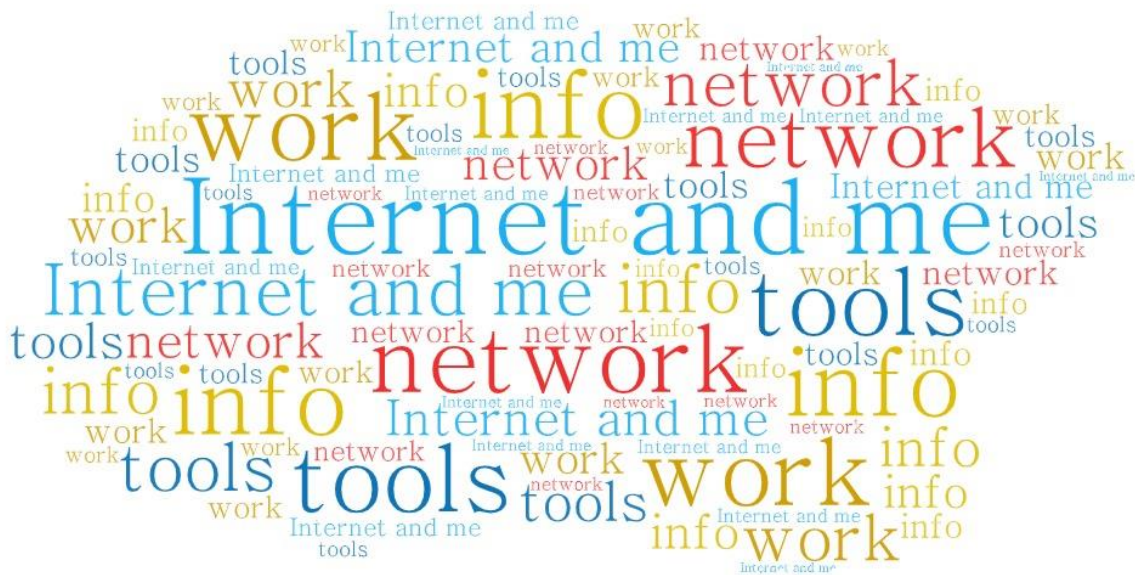
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[14] JAIMOVICH, Desirée (2018). "The conexions in Argentina are slow and expensive" Infobae newspaper. https://www.infobae.com/tecno/2018/08/30/las-conexiones-de-internet-en-argentina-son-lentas-y-caras/ . For further information, see Desirée Jaimovich, "Internet X- ray in Argentina: more people are connected, but speed is a challenge" https://www.infobae.com/america/tecno/2019/05/17/como-esta-el-acceso-y-la-calidad-de-internet-en-la-argentina/
[15] INDEC (2020). Report "Access to Internet" Second quarter 2020 of 09/09/2020 of the National Institute of Statistic and Censuses of Argentina.

Graphic 1 Access to Internet by landline and mobile. January 2016- March 2020

Graphic: Access to Internet by landline and mobile phones. January 2016-March 2020.
INDEC, Report "Access to Internet" Second quarter 2020.

Word cloud related to the questionnaire #2, in which we asked
participants what Internet means to them

In this graph we can see in a visual way the participants' perceptions about the Internet. Some stand out over others. The Internet as a tool, as a network are the most frequent ones.

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When we asked participants about their level of confidence in the issues related to this session, 50% of citizens responded that they trust the Internet as a whole, while 30% do not know or are not sure.

On the question related to data infrastructure network there was an increase in trust, reaching 60%.

In terms of information exchange protocols, trust falls to 37%. This factor, which we will describe more in detail later, is attributed to the lack of knowledge of the implications of these protocols. The level of undecided response is 30%, which we consider as high.

Regarding the services used on the Internet, such as the WWW and mobile applications, the confidence level can be considered high (44%).

From these data obtained, we remark that the level of confidence in the Internet as a whole and in its infrastructure is very high for Argentine citizens. It is lower the level of confidence on usages and applications.

Next, we inquired participants about the level of trust in the stakeholders involved somehow in the regulation of the Internet.
According to the information obtained, we have split it into two categories that show the discussion during the Dialogue: "Trust" and "Mistrust".

➢ **Trust**
Confidence is over 50% in: The United Nations, the Research and Academic community, the Technical community, Regional International Organizations (especially MERCOSUR and the OAS were highlighted during the Dialogue)[16], and Civil Society organizations.

➢ **Mistrust**
Trust is less than 50% in: Citizens, National government, Private sector companies, and Local governments.

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[16] The **Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)** is a South American trade bloc composed by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The **Organisation of American States (OAS)** is composed by all countries in the Americas and it looks for peace and security in the continent.

About the question of who should be involved in Internet regulation, the answer was similar to the level of trust in the actors involved. However, we noticed **that 60% of the citizens believe they should be involved in decision-making processes**.

At the current and previous question, it is noteworthy that there is discontent with the current conditions of citizen participation regarding Internet regulation (due citizens' trust is less than 50%).

About the mistrust in the Internet we obtained these answers:

❏ *"My participation in the IG and its knowledge motivates my responses."*

❏ *"Less trust, especially, due to conflicts such as Cambridge Analytica and Facebook, and other massive data leaks that put a risk the safety of internet users.";*

❏ *"Because of the lack of knowledge about my data's usage."*

❏ *"There is a lot of leakage of personal information."*

In favour of trust in the Internet we find instead:

❏ *"Over the years and life experiences, I understand which content and how to consume it, share, sell, etc. Trying to be always critical of the data I have in front of me."*

❏ *"Because of the ease of obtaining the service and the mutation of the crimes, which are very common on the Internet, beyond the difficulty to localize the criminal."*

COVID-19 Pandemic

Comments about the coronavirus were present throughout the Dialogue, from the first moment the virtual event began, to the questionnaires which include aspects related to the pandemic.

In the "Internet and Me" session, citizens were asked if the Internet had helped them during COVID 19 or if it had made the situation worse, and the results have been overwhelming in **75% with a positive note.**

Furthermore, due to the current situation, the different uses of the Internet have increased: in the use of e-commerce by 70%; in teleworking and remote education tools by 80%; in entertainment 55%, (which was already high before the pandemic); and in the use in information and communication matters by 75%.

Regarding the projection of the future of the Internet in 2025, the response of citizens included two different faces: on the one hand, they fear control and the restriction of privacy for the most part; and on the other hand, they are hopeful that the Internet will help to improve accessibility and work.

SESSION 3: MY DATA, YOUR DATA, OUR DATA

The third session included data on its agenda, inviting reflection on the different types of data and ways to categorise them[17] ('data as a resource'; 'data as work/contribution', 'data as a human right' and 'data as infrastructure').

- The **data model** is understood **as a resource** because they can be produced, extracted, sold, bought and exploited, i.e they could belong to a person or company. This produced data is part of our digital identity.
- The **data as work/contribution** model argues that the creation of data can come from human labour, which should be compensated. However, this distinction does not say much about the right to control the data about you.
- The **data as personal reflection/human right** model emphasizes the importance of deciding on data privacy, so rights are fundamental. This means that rights cannot be sold no matter what price is offered.
- Finally, the **data as infrastructure** model focuses on the use of that data for the public good, as the centrepiece of the infrastructure. In this case, data management is central to the functioning of society or the economy.

On the question related to the effect of the Internet on their privacy and anonymity, there were different types of perceptions: most of the participants were aware that privacy has diminished when using the Internet

- ❏ *"I think it's easier that others get your personal data these days. I think any app I use already knows my data, both personal and public";*
- ❏ *"It is very difficult to remain anonymous on the Internet. We leave footprints when we navigate"*

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[17] Note: this categorization was carried out by Missions Publiques in order to chart the different ways of understanding the data.
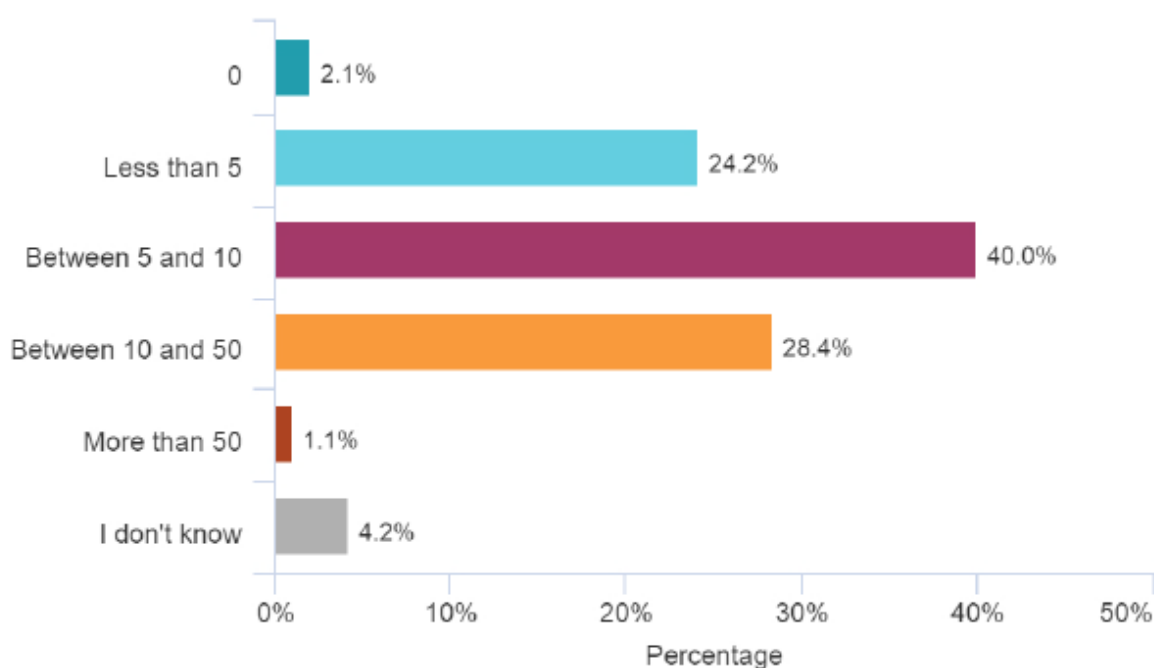
However, there were participants who explained more in detail that the users themselves provide data.

❏ *"There are a lot of actions that provide data from our personal lives that we don't always choose to share, but nevertheless there are available."*

3.1_How many accounts do you have on the internet (including smartphone apps)?

Effective responses: 95   *Response rate: 44.6%*

The graph alludes to the question "How many accounts do citizens have on the Internet? From Sphinx.

When citizens were asked if they had issues to receive official documentation because they did not have an online profile, 77% did not have issues to receive it, while 23% stated that they had issues, and finally 18% said they didn't know.

In addition, we would like to mention the digital transformation programme carried out between 2016 and 2019 by the Ministry of Modernisation of the Nation, which shows interesting data on this matter[18]. It increased the number of possible online procedures from 3% to 12%, as

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[18] At this point it refers to the plan "Gobierno Abierto and País Digital" (Open Government and Digital Country, in Spanish). These programs can be found under the Public Innovation Secretary of the National State of Argentina.

well as the fact that 39% of private companies stated the importance of digitalising their mechanisms. The Dell Technologies' report on the digitalization of Argentina gives us an approximation of these data.[19]

30% of citizens perceive that the Internet has decreased privacy and anonymity levels, on the opposite 50% perceive that these parameters have increased. Regarding these insights we got answers like:

❏ *"With the application that requests access due COVID."*
❏ *"Today there are fewer possibilities to participate anonymously on the Internet and privacy is increasingly affected because platforms or states have the ability to know your movements on the Internet."*
❏ *"Privacy has decreased with the Internet over time since Internet usage has grown, so the anonymity that at the beginning was high, has decreased over time."*

After the "My Data, Your Data, Our Data" session, in which we discussed how data is collected and what it is used for, we obtained feedback from citizens saying that 55% improved their understanding of the subject, being more aware of the use of their information online. 20% stated that their understanding of this issue, which they considered to be high, had decreased, due to the complexity involved. While 18% declare their knowledge on this subject has not changed.

When citizens were asked their opinions about the use of their data online, the majority of them agreed that they do not know how their data is handled: for instance, a. someone may obtain their information without their consent, b. companies use their data so as to send them personalised advertising, and c. they do not have complete control over the information shared.

On the other hand, they disagreed on how the information is stored and the consequent risk of exposure by private companies and governments. They differ about the security provided when they are requested to upload their data.

Regarding data collection living in society, generally citizens agreed that: companies and organizations collect information (75%); that being connected on the Internet puts privacy at risk (73%); the information provided can be used against the user himself/herself (73%).

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[19] Dell Technologies (2020). "Measuring digital transformation progress around the world". https://www.delltechnologies.com/en-us/perspectives/digital-transformation-index.htm#overlay=/en-us/collaterals/unauth/briefs-handouts/solutions/dt-index-2020-executive-summary.pdf

On the other hand, they disagree the statements that said: *"you are properly informed about the risks of providing such data"* (73%); and that *"companies offer a free service in exchange for your data"* (60%).

One note we would like to highlight is that only 40% believe that the users should have total control over their data, even if they want to sell it. Although, if we link their responses to the partial and collective decision making process about the data, the number rises to 72%. Similarly, 60% believe that this power should not be left to those in charge of collecting them.

In addition, 50% of citizens believe that data collection in society is *equally an opportunity and a threat*. The remaining citizens think in a different way, 23% believe it is *more of an opportunity* and 23% believe it is *more of a threat.*

COVID-19 Pandemic

We found out that most Argentines citizens are willing to give their data, at the expense of privacy, to the pandemic, with only 20% disapproval of companies sharing data actions for public health policies. However, the remaining of the aspects have more than 40% disapproval on behalf of the citizens, i.e the usage of online data to follow people's actions, whether by private companies, the state, family, work or other citizens, is not well accepted by Argentine citizens.

Looking at these responses, we reviewed a CONICET's report on the effects for and against preventive and compulsory social isolation. The study indicates that one of the negative sides of isolation was the repercussion in socialisation, affecting with greater impact in early and advanced age persons. Likewise, the importance of the Internet in daily life has been highlighted in recent months, with the connectivity increasement.[20]

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[20] CONICET (2020). "Assessment of the social impact of the isolation measures laid down by the PEN" March 2020 drawn up by the Social Sciences Commission of the COVID-19 Coronavirus Unit

https://www.conicet.gov.ar/wp-content/uploads/Informe_Final_Covid-Cs.Sociales-1.pdf

Matching with the participants' responses, we found out that a large number of Argentines are indeed willing to hand over their freedoms and control of their data if it helps to deal with the pandemic.[21]

During the session divided in two parts, participants were introduced to the terms "fake news", "misinformation", "public sphere (in traditional sense)" and "Digital Public Sphere".

Then the attendees thought through the measures that could be implemented to fight against these problems, from different *stakeholders' action points* (public bodies, private sector, civil society, etc.).

The Public Sphere is a place that brings together individuals who discuss issues of general interest. It is the space for the spread of opinions which also allows the individual to be informed and form his/her opinion. The appearance of the Internet has profoundly changed this Public Sphere: it created the "Digital Public Sphere". Moreover, there has been an increase in access and production of information, which makes it difficult to verify the veracity of the information.

In addition, several participants pointed out the importance of having mechanisms to report content related to misinformation and fake news; others stressed the importance of freedom of expression. They also said everyone should check the veracity of the information *"being able to identify each user who is responsible for their publications"*; and the relevance of bringing capacity building trainings on data to the Argentine population: *"In schools and universities there should be subjects that teach you how to use data on the Internet in a correct way"*; *"with the commitment of the stakeholders involved"*.

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[21] JAIMOVICH, Desirée (2018). Infobae "More than half of Argentines are willing to offer their personal data if they obtain a benefit in return". https://www.infobae.com/tecno/2018/05/30/mas-de-la-mitad-de-los-argentinos-estan-dispuestos-a-ofrecer-sus-datos-personales-si-obtienen-beneficios-a-cambio/

Cloud of words on participants' quotes related to the public digital sphere

In relation to the Digital Public Sphere, the discussion in the session has been very enriching, giving disinformation, freedom of expression and the stakeholders involved.

Argentine citizens agreed that exposure to disinformation is high (60%) both in their country and in the world; however they do not believe they are highly exposed to disinformation (35%). Similar figures are repeated as to whether disinformation is a problem or not: they affirm that it is a problem at the country and world level (71% percent). But they believed that disinformation only affects them in 55 % percent.

Regarding the behavior of citizens in the Digital Public Sphere, certain parameters have been weighed up, which allow us to understand the activity they say they have online.

About reading news, 92% read online once a day or once a week, while only less than 1% state that they never read on the Internet; on the other hand 70% stated that they read offline news once a day or once a week, while 10% of participants never read offline.
63% stated that they make comments on the posts they read online once a day or once a week, and 20% of citizens do it rarely or never;
In relation to entertainment content (such as memes), 59% said they do it once a day or once a week, and only 6% do it rarely or never.

About political content, 57% stated they read once a day or once a week, and 21% have never done so. Finally, when we asked about publishing neutral content, 93% said they have done it at least once, while 7% considered they have never done it. It is important to mention there are currently several resources available to citizens to check the veracity of the news (e.g. Chequeado, Confiar, etc.), including the official guidelines from the national government. [22]

When it comes to freedom of expression, according to the data obtained we discovered that 55% of citizens thought that there should be no limits to this freedom or that it should be limited in the digital context. 32% were convinced that some kind of control should be exercised over regarding this right, and 21% had no clear opinion on the matter. In this regard, the Freedom of the Net[23] report on the status of freedom of expression on the Internet in Argentina, explains that the level of freedom of expression on the Internet in the country is at 71 points out of 100, which is why it is considered "free".

About participant's opinions on anonymity online, we have found conflicting views. Around 40% believed that it should be possible to act in total anonymity, or at a higher level than is currently possible, while another 40% thought that there should be fewer possibilities of access without identification, or none at all. Finally, 20% reckoned that the current level of anonymity is correct and should not be changed.

When citizens were asked who should be in charge of decision-making processes regarding the Internet, the balance leans mostly in favour of: the Academic community, Citizens, the Technical Community, Regional Organisations (MERCOSUR and OAS were mentioned), Civil Society organisations, the United Nations and National Governments. In contrast, the majority of the participants disagreed on local Governments and Private companies being part of the decision-making process.

Some comments that we would like to emphasize from this session:
- ❏ *"Create transparence bodies in which citizens can report certain content."*

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[22] Justice and Human Rights Ministry (2020) "How can I recognize fake news?" from the Program "Con vos en la web" (With you in the web) https://www.argentina.gob.ar/justicia/convosenlaweb/situaciones/como-reconozco-una-noticia-falsa

[23] FREEDOM HOUSE ORG (2020). Freedom of the Net, Report on the status of freedom in Internet 2020 https://freedomhouse.org/country/argentina/freedom-net/2020

- ❏ *"Give rewards to people who provide good content, for example with a logo in their publication."*
- ❏ *"In schools and universities there should be subjects that teach you how to use data on the Internet in a correct way"*
- ❏ *"Perhaps citizen self-regulation, following a panopticon and big brother model, could work."*

This session had two options to be addressed: in a long way or in a brief way: in the case of Argentina we opted for the brief modality in order to encourage active participation avoiding the fatigue of the participants. In this session, the participants were introduced to the concepts of *machine learning* ('automatic learning') and Artificial Intelligence (AI); where they reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of its implementation, taking into account the current and future panorama.

AI can be described as "a technique that allows computer systems to imitate any type of intelligence". In simple words, this means that a machine is capable of solving specific problems. Today, AI systems can only solve very well complex problems.

Automatic Learning (AL) is a particular type of AI. AL refers to algorithms and techniques that learn by themselves when dealing with data, observations and interactions with the surrounding world. This means that AI algorithms can develop their own rules, by constructing a statistical representation of the environment provided to them. This feature allows us to use computers for new tasks that otherwise would have been too complicated or even impossible to code manually.

On the participants' *feedback*, there were mixed opinions that perceived artificial intelligence as beneficial or as a threat. Some participants stated:
- ❏ *"Very good session. A topic to think about and discuss always having humans as the centre!"*
- ❏ *"Human rights and ethics should be supreme law before AI"*
- ❏ *"I am afraid of it because humans have never created a technology that has not become a weapon."*

❏ *"We are not prepared for this kind of technology, they will leave us human out"*
❏ *"If robots think by themselves it is dangerous, that is very scary"*
❏ *"I do not have a clear opinion on AI and ethics experts."*

In relation to the question: *How important is it for artificial intelligence to be guided by human values (putting human welfare at the centre versus efficiency or profit)?* 82.2 % of the participants replied that it is important or very important. This led to a discussion on the necessity to regulate the limits of this technology' usage. Especially related to justice and artistic production content. Several participants expressed their concerns that automation will end up resolving social conflicts from a rational way but not from a holistic point of view.

In response to the question: *Should the following organisations be required to hire ethics specialists to advise them on important decisions involving AI?* **The majority gave a vote of confidence that the academic and technical sectors would take care of this. Local governments and the private sector did not receive much acceptance of the participants.**

When citizens were asked about their opinion of A.I, 50% responded that it is more of an opportunity than a threat. **This gives us an understanding that there is a positive assessment of 78% of A.I, while only 13% of the participants considered it to be more of a threat than an opportunity**.

When we asked them about the specific issues that A.I. is part of, they replied that it is both an opportunity and a threat in relation to possible discrimination around marginalised communities. However, 60% believed that AI will decrease discrimination in the long term.

In the field of employment, more than half of the participants expressed that AI will create more jobs than destroy them. However, in the short term, more than half of the citizens believed that this change will affect manual workers and the economy.

Regarding the use of data for the common good, more than half of the participants stated it is a positive thing, but only in proportion 65/45 believed it so, therefore we cannot conclude that there is great confidence in the current system of data backup.

There was great consensus that AI is a support and a complement of human activity, and 75% agreed on this. Similarly, 80% believed that it is all right to invest in topics related to the advancement of science and technology in relation to AI.

82% expressed that AI should be entirely or to some extent human-directed. If we look in more detail, this result is consistent with the viewpoint from those who believe it is more of an opportunity than a threat.

When citizens were asked: '*who should be part of the decision making process regarding AI'*, the response was almost identical to the question '*who should make decisions regarding the Internet'.* The most important stakeholders to participants were the United Nations, regional organisations (MERCOSUR and OAS), national governments, citizens, civil society organisations, the academic community and the technical community; but they agreed that the participation of private companies and local governments is not so important.

From this session we highlight some comments:

❏ *"I am afraid this technology becomes a weapon against us"*
❏ *"human rights are before AI"*
❏ *"I like the idea of me working less"*
❏ *"Ethics are fundamental. Human rights should be protected."*
❏ *"We are not prepared for this kind of technology, we have never been prepared for new technologies"*
❏ *"Very good exposure and exchange of comments! I didn't know about the economic benefits that AI could bring."*
❏ *"I think it's a fascinating world coming."*
❏ *"I think we should make laws about it."*

SESSION 7: CONTENT IN INTERNET, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND CENSORSHIP IN INTERNET

This session was designed by the team of We The Internet Argentina, from which the participants had a theoretical introduction by Professor Colombres Garmendia and some slides related to the right to freedom of expression, with the presentation of a digital content creator who shared experiences related to censorship in the networks and the algorithms that censor content considered as "not appropriate" by the social network platforms, taking into account that each platform handles its own "Community Guidelines".

One of the fundamental issues addressed during the session was the Argentine regulatory system. Many of the participants were unaware of this and they appreciated the necessity to strengthen the legal structure in order to guarantee two fundamental principles: transparency and privacy.

In our legislation, there are several regulations related to the right to freedom of expression, including article 14 of the National Constitution and the Argentine Digital Law.[24]

Some of the relevant issues mentioned were: the right and freedom to express one's thought; the right and freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds. Participating freely is essential to a democratic society: a well-informed society is a free society. This right is exercised offline and online. Traditional media and social networks play a very important role in this regard. *"The media play an indispensable role as actors in the development of the information society and are considered to be an important contributor to freedom of expression and plurality of information"*. (Argentine Digital Law)

Professor María José Colombres Garmendia[25] was invited to the national session to talk about freedom of expression on the Internet, hate speech[26] and bullying in the context of the Digital Public Sphere. She also told us about her experience teaching virtually and the similarities and differences with the sessions of the Global Citizens' Dialogue on the Future of the Internet, as she participated in both days of the event.

She talked about different types of hate speech: people who express their hatred, through the networks, on the Internet. She wondered *which the limit is. It does represent freedom of expression but it could also be hate speech. How far is it legal to express an opinion? How would it be possible to realise when it is better to stop it? When the opinion of a person should be limited?*

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[24] INFOLEG web, Law number 27.078 http://servicios.infoleg.gob.ar/infolegInternet/anexos/235000-239999/239771/norma.htm
[25] PhD. María José Colombres Garmendia is a Professor of Philosophy graduated from the National University of Tucumán, and a graduate of the Chair of Sociology at the FFyL UNT. She is a PhD. student of the Doctorate in Humanities at the UNT. Member of the Institute of Epistemology at the National University of Tucumán and the Network of Women Philosophers of Latin America (UNESCO) and researcher on the research projects "Language, knowledge and the world" and "Feminist philosophy of language". María José Colombres Garmendia is in charge of 400 students.
[26] Hate speech are those expressions that seek to disseminate, promote, justify and incite racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism, ethnocentrism, against religious groups, gender, sexual orientation, sexism and misogyny.

According to Professor Colombres, we should follow at least three criteria to analyse the possibility of tolerating or censoring a discourse:

1) Take into account the tone and content of the message.

2) The intention of the person issuing it.

3) The context in which the message occurs.
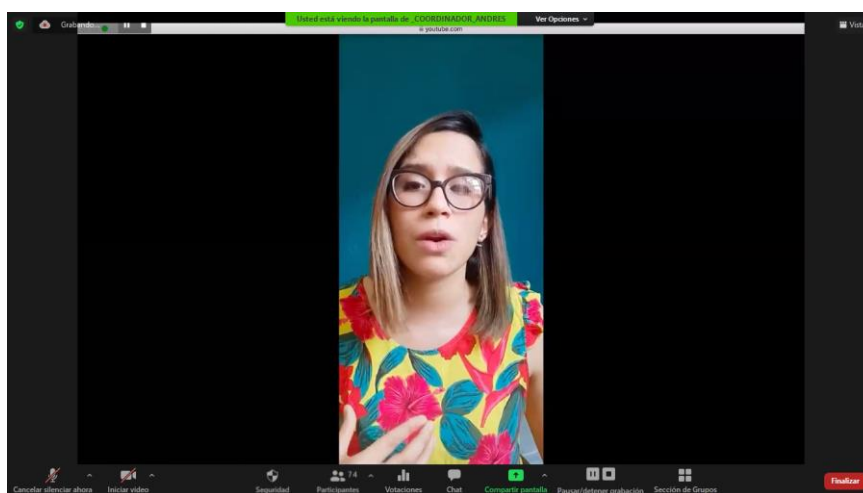
Prof. María José Colombres Garmendia speaking about hate speech

Access the video here https://youtu.be/N2TTYNNWDVk

Pablo Sosa ("Cerita Negra" on social media)[27] was also invited to talk about his experience with content moderation and censorship on social media networks.

He has a critical perspective on social media networks such as Instagram, for arbitrarily censoring content and not evaluating digital content creators' appeals after users reported his content, therefore his accounts got removed by the platform.

The idea to talk about some "taboos" on the Internet was highly appreciated by the participants. Moreover, the ability of sharing the experience of real people who are also part of the online world. Some citizens also expressed: *"the importance of strengthening the understanding of*

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[27] Pablo Sosa, or "Cerita Negra" as he identifies himself on the Internet, is Argentinian content producer who creates pornographic videos for adults on different platforms. Cerita Negra is the number one channel in Argentina in the Gay Amateur category of the XVideos porn site. He has 60,000 followers on Twitter, the social media platform where he prefers to promote his content, where he found less limitations to his expression.

social and cultural manifestations that do not harm the integrity of third parties and are safeguards of the individual freedoms that each individual has".
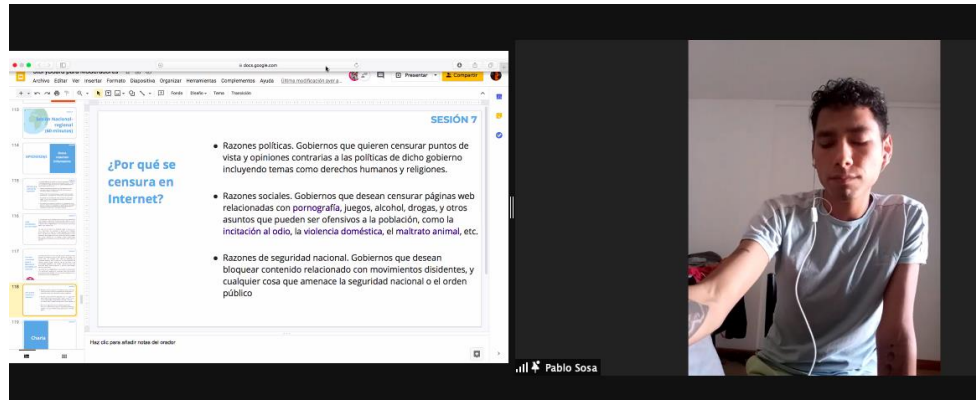
Pablo Sosa in his broadcast during the national session.

Finally, we wrapped up this part of the session with a series of images taken from different social media networks in which the participants had to decide whether the content should be censored, marked as "sensitive material" or whether it should remain as published; taking a look at these images from the point of view of a content moderator[28]. During the round of interventions, the participants reflected on hate speech, freedom of expression and censorship; taking into account the possible consequences of the decision taken.

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[28]MOTYKA, Jakub (2019). A "content moderator" is a worker hired by a social media platform to moderate content uploaded to social networks, who has to distinguish between content that can be objectionable and content that cannot. More information in Computer Today, "The Facebook 'liquidators': making a living watching pornography, terrorism and drugs". https://computerhoy.com/reportajes/industria/liquidadores-facebook-ganarte-vida-viendo-pornografia-terrorismo-drogas-441457

These images were shown to the participants as a trigger for the debate on

content moderation "From the eyes of a moderator"

Among the conclusions reached by the citizens, the common ground during the discussion was that **one of the concrete impacts of hate speech is the dehumanization of people, mistrust in society and the increase of intolerant movements that rises**. **It was also stated that preventing hate on the internet does not mean limiting freedom of expression or banning it.** In this way: **"freedom of expression should help us to communicate and express ourselves freely, but in no way should we attack or disrespect others".**

There was consensus among the best tools to combat this is education. Teaching to identify, and deal with messages like these, so that they do not negatively affect personal development and coexistence between citizens.

Some participants recommended blocking people who spread hate speech and not sharing them with peers or friends.
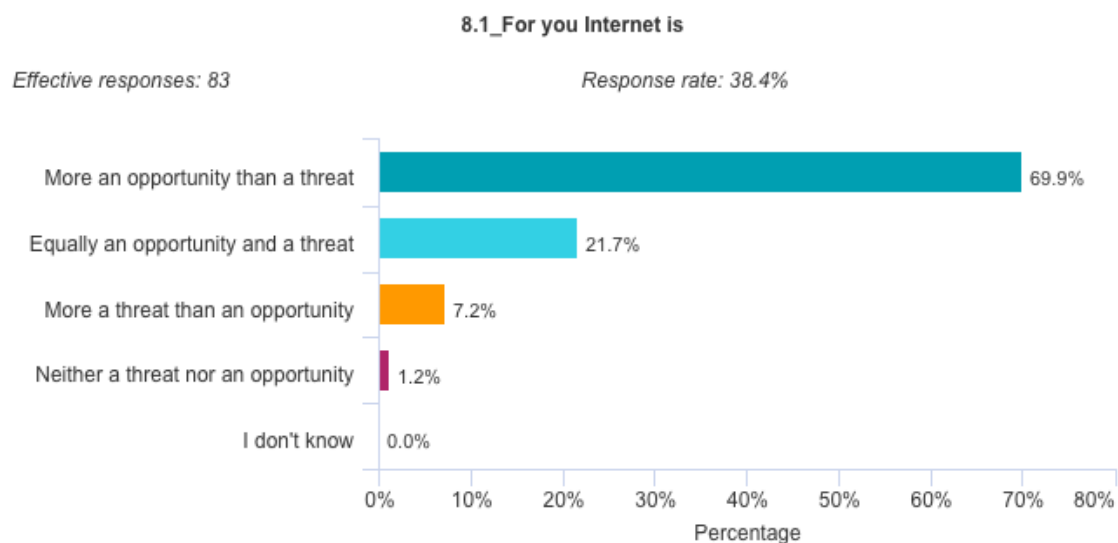
In this last session, citizens were given an introduction to Internet Governance, reviewing who the '*stakeholders*' are and how decisions are made on the Internet: at national, regional and global levels. The participants reflected upon the different levels of decision-making processes and whether they should play a role in this process or not, together with the United Nations, Intergovernmental Organisations, Governments (national, local), Civil society, the Research community, the Technical community and the Private sector.[29]

One of the first surprises we found among the participant's responses on the topic 'the future of the Internet' is that 70% believed *it will be more of an opportunity than a threat*, i.e, a large portion of citizens predicted a positive future in the use and development of the Internet. However, only half of the citizens felt that they can trust the Internet as a whole. There was even less confidence (approximately 30%) regarding the lines and cables that allow data to flow (infrastructure) and the services that run on the Internet: applications such as the World Wide Web, telephone or Mail.

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[29] *Authors' note: the differentiation of stakeholders used for the Dialogue is not that in its classic sense, as the aim was to facilitate citizens' understanding of a complex issue in a short period of time. However, it should be noted that the following are understood as 'stakeholders': Governments, Civil Society, Private Sector, Technical Community (within which the Academy sometimes adheres), and Intergovernmental Organisations.*

8.1_For you Internet is

Effective responses: 83   Response rate: 38.4%

Response	Percentage
More an opportunity than a threat	69.9%
Equally an opportunity and a threat	21.7%
More a threat than an opportunity	7.2%
Neither a threat nor an opportunity	1.2%
I don't know	0.0%

Chart on citizens' interpretation of the "Internet", taken

from the questionnaires made at the event

In relation to the stakeholders involved in the regulation, usage and decision policy making of the Internet, there was a clear tendency to legitimise citizens and academic participation in this process. And a greater mistrust (reaching more than 40%) of local governments, which matched with the results obtained in the session on Artificial Intelligence.

Finally, citizens appreciated their in-depth learning of issues related to disinformation, hate speech, *fake news* and Internet governance. This shows the effectiveness of citizens deliberation on these issues and the necessity of more spaces where citizens can discuss on equal footing about them

In this final stage of the dialogue, almost all of the citizens (with values reaching 92 or 95%) felt they acquired basic or in depth knowledge about most of the topics developed in the event.

6) CONCLUSION

The first Global Citizen's Dialogue on the Future of the Internet in Argentina has been a great experience for both participants and team in terms of organisation. It was the first time in Argentina that a citizen's deliberation was held, which was highly valued by the participants of the event: in our country, events related to Internet issues are usually held as top-down processes in which those who lead the event are the panelists and/or experts of the events and the participants take a passive role in the debate of the topics presented. At our event, the participants have been able to *"own the podium"*, that is, be the protagonists and discuss among peers on Internet Governance issues that impact their lives.

It is also worth noting that this is the first time that the concept of "Internet Governance" has been presented to ordinary citizens, especially those who had no previous knowledge of the issues unless they are linked to them by their study or profession. In this way, it was an opportunity to "democratise" the debate and ensure that the conversation is not dominated exclusively by experts in the field.

We believe that in the future this dynamic of citizen participation should be replicated in other spaces, whether it be for debate on budget issues, the environment, etc. It is also important to highlight the importance of well informed citizens, and the conscious that decision making is part of a process; and that in our country there are not enough spaces for citizens' capacity building training on issues related to the Internet, a situation that should be changed in the near future.

The citizens have had a very satisfactory experience as they were able to express themselves freely on the different issues put on the table: they have learned not only about privacy and the impact of COVID 19 in terms of information management, but also about the challenges that A.I. brings (and will bring) with it, since this issue is still not widely discussed in the country. The fact that there was a national topic included was highly celebrated by the participants, as it increased the time to develop their points of view and enrich their personal experiences by exchanging opinions with participants' idiosyncrasy and lifestyles.

As we mentioned, most of the participants have focused their concerns on the issues of data privacy, digital identity and the importance of them being aware of their existence and being able to discuss them.

Finally, the next steps for next year include strengthening the relationship with the government area related to Internet matters and citizen participation; including more stakeholders, increasing the participation of more provinces, and getting citizens into the decision making process.