



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Addressing Ethical challenges of the Information Society

Andrejs Vasiljevs
Dr.Sc.comp., Tilde
UNESCO IFAP Bureau
andrejs@tilde.com





Hammer nails

Break objects

Keep a pile of paper in place

Conduct electricity

Kill someone



“Long before Nagasaki and the public awareness of the atomic bomb, it had occurred to me that we were here in the presence of another social potentiality of unheard-of importance for good and for evil.”

Norbert Wiener, 1948



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Some examples of ethical questions

- Is it wrong for a system operator to disclose the content of system users' email to the third parties?
- Should individuals have the freedom to post discriminatory, degrading and defamatory messages on the Internet?
- Is it wrong for companies to use data-mining techniques to generate consumer profiles based on purchasing behavior, and should they be allowed to do so?
- Should governments design policies to overcome the digital divide between skilled and unskilled computer users?



Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Role of Computer Ethics

- A typical problem in computer ethics arises because there is a **policy vacuum** about how computer technology should be used.
- Computer provide us with **new capabilities** and these in turn give us **new choices** for action.
- Often either no policies for conduct in these situations exist or existing **policies seem inadequate**.
- A central task of computer ethics is to determine what we should do in such cases, that is, **formulate policies** to guide our actions.

(Moor, 1985)



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Core Values in Computer Ethics

- *Life*
- *Health*
- *Happiness*
- *Security*
- *Resources*
- *Opportunities*
- *Knowledge*

(Moor, 1998)



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Key ethical issues of Information Society

Privacy PAPA (Mason, 1986)

What information about one's self or one's associations must a person reveal to others, under what conditions and with what safeguards? What things can people keep to themselves and not be forced to reveal to others?

Accuracy

Who is responsible for the authenticity, fidelity and accuracy of information? Similarly, who is to be held accountable for errors in information and how is the injured party to be made whole?

Property

Who owns information? What are the just and fair prices for its exchange? Who owns the channels, especially the airways, through which information is transmitted? How should access to this scarce resource be allocated?

Accessibility

What information does a person or an organization have a right or a



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Ethical issues in the information society

- Freedom of speech and expression
- Abuses of free speech, hate speech, online harassment
- Digital divide
- Identity, privacy and personal protection
- Monitoring and surveillance
- Cyber-attacks and cyber-wars
- Ownership, intellectual property, copyright, plagiarism, fair sharing and use, voluntary collaboration
- Virtual realities, artificial agents
- etc.

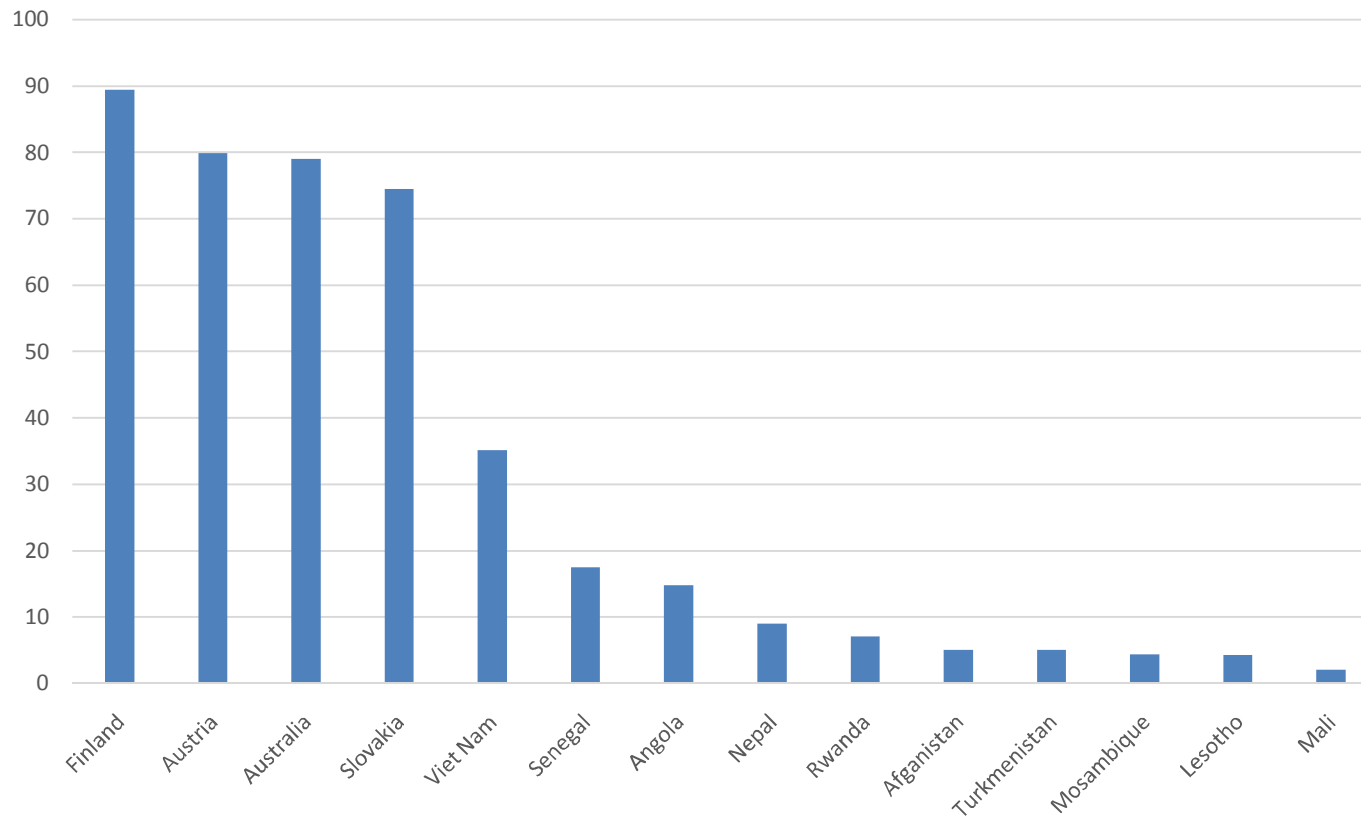


Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

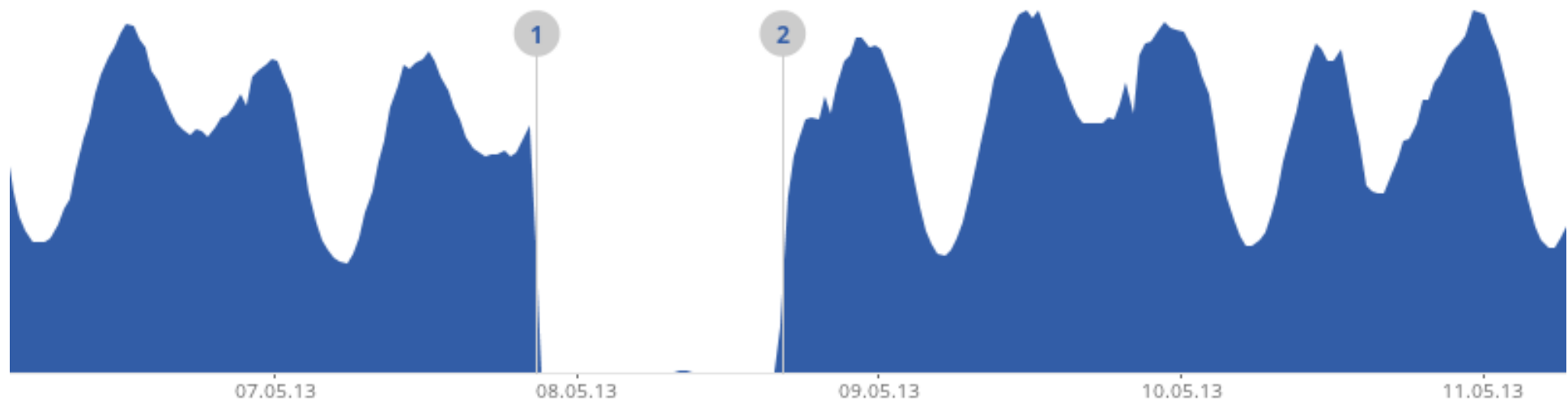
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Internet users per 100 population



2011, Source: [Millennium Development Goals Database](#)



Web monitor: ‘Syria has largely disappeared from the Internet’

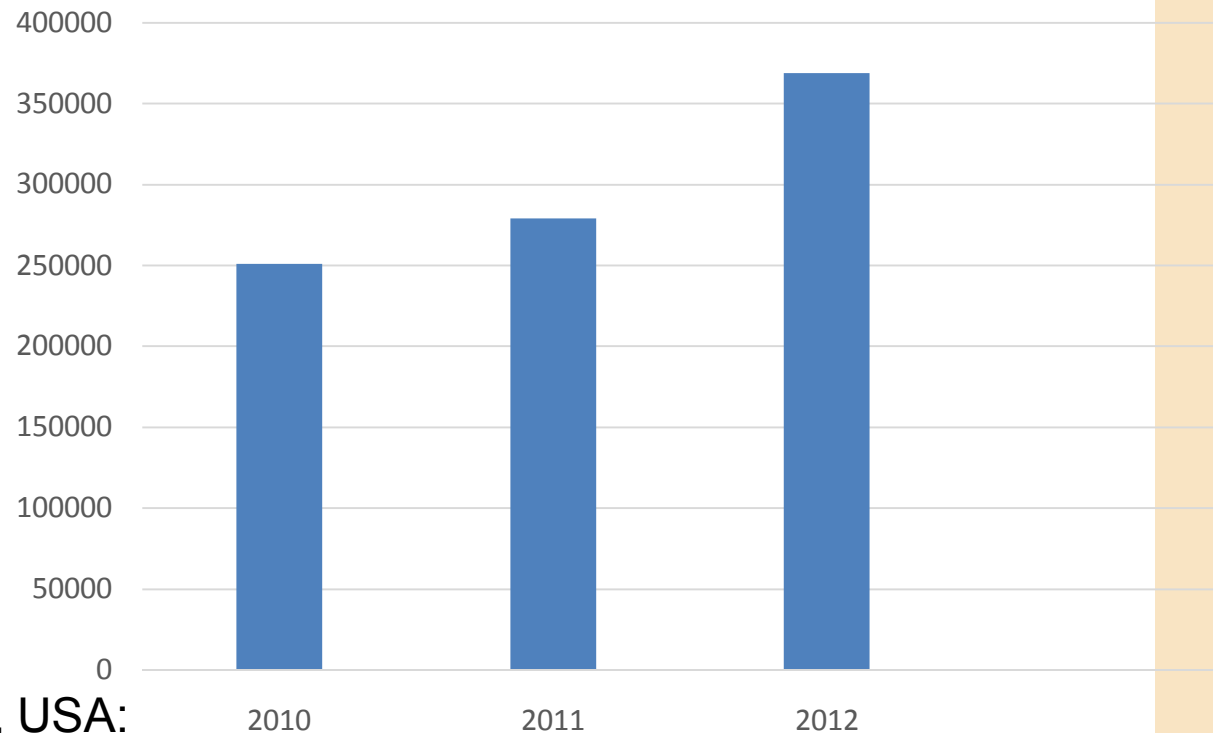


Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Identity Theft



Reported incidents, USA:
CY-2010 = 251,089
CY-2011 = 279,226
CY-2012 = 369,132

Source: [US Federal Trade Commission](#)

The Telegraph

How three women took on sexist Facebook and won

It took just one week for three women to force Facebook to finally block photos which celebrate rape and other brutal acts of violence against women. How did they do it and who are they?



You reported Offensive Humor at its Best's photo for containing hate speech or symbols.

Photo not removed

Thanks for your report. We reviewed the photo you reported, but found it doesn't violate Facebook's Community Standard on hate speech, which includes posts or photos that attack a person based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or medical condition.

“My computer was arrested before I was.”

Comment by Syrian activist Karim Taymour, who had been caught and arrested by means of online surveillance.

During interrogation he was shown a stack of hundreds of pages of printouts of his Skype chats and files downloaded remotely from his computer hard drive. His torturers clearly knew as much as if they had been with him in his room, or more precisely, in his computer

Source: [Reporters without Borders](#)



- PRISMA
- SORM (Система Оперативно-Розыскных Мероприятий)
- Other surveillance systems



“I feel like that now, knowing that persons I don't know can paw through all my thoughts and hopes and plans”

Pamela Jones, founder of Groklaw, technology and law blog, on the decision to close it

“What I do know is it's not possible to be fully human if you are being surveilled 24/7.”

Pamela Jones, founder of Groklaw, technology and law blog, on the decision to close it



Cases of the loss of public data in UK

Date	Department	Number of records lost	Narrative	
2008	September	Service Personnel and Veterans Agency	50,500	Three USB portable hard drives with details of staff are allegedly stolen from a high security facility at RAF Innsworth, including sensitive information about the private lives of senior staff.
2008	September	Insolvency Service	400	Names, addresses and bank details of up to 400 directors of 122 firms were lost when four laptops were stolen from a Manchester premises.
2008	September	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust	200	Memory stick with details of patients found in a public park.
2008	October	Ministry of Defence	1,700,000	Hard drive being held by contractor EDS is found to be missing.
2008	November	Department for Work and Pensions	n/a	USB memory stick, apparently encrypted and containing passwords for an old version of the Government Gateway, a website giving access to millions of records of personal data.
2008	August	Home Office	84,000	PA Consulting lost an unencrypted memory stick containing details high risk, prolific and other offenders.
2008	August	Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust	21,000	A manager's unencrypted laptop holding patient addresses and treatment details is stolen from his car whilst on holiday in Edinburgh
2007	November	City and Hackney Teaching Primary Care Trust	160,000	"Heavily encrypted" disks containing details of children are lost by couriers. The loss prompted the agency to implement hard drive and USB memory stick encryption systems across all PCs.
2007	November	Foreign and Commonwealth Office	50,000	Details of visa applicants were made available on an FCO website.
2007	November	HM Revenue and Customs	25,000,000	Two CDs containing details of the families of child benefits claimants went missing in the post.
2007	May	Driving Standards Agency	3,000,000	Hard disk with details of candidates for the driving theory test was lost in a premises in Iowa by subcontractors.
2007	May	Foreign and Commonwealth Office	50	Details of individuals made public after "unauthorised disclosure by a contractor"
2007	July	Ministry of Justice	5,000	Hard disk with details of HM Prison Service staff is lost on the premises of EDS.
2007	December	Department for Work and Pensions	45,000	West Yorkshire benefit claimants' in data lost.
2007	December	Department for Work and Pensions	000s	CDs with personal data found at the home of a former contractor.



"The idea that government will pass a law which means that there'd be a record kept of every website you visit, who you communicate with on social media sites, that's not going to happen.[..]

I think that is not either necessary, workable, nor proportionate, so it's not going to happen."

Comments on London's LBC radio by UK Deputy PM Nick Clegg on the proposed UK online surveillance program

[Source](#)



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013





Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

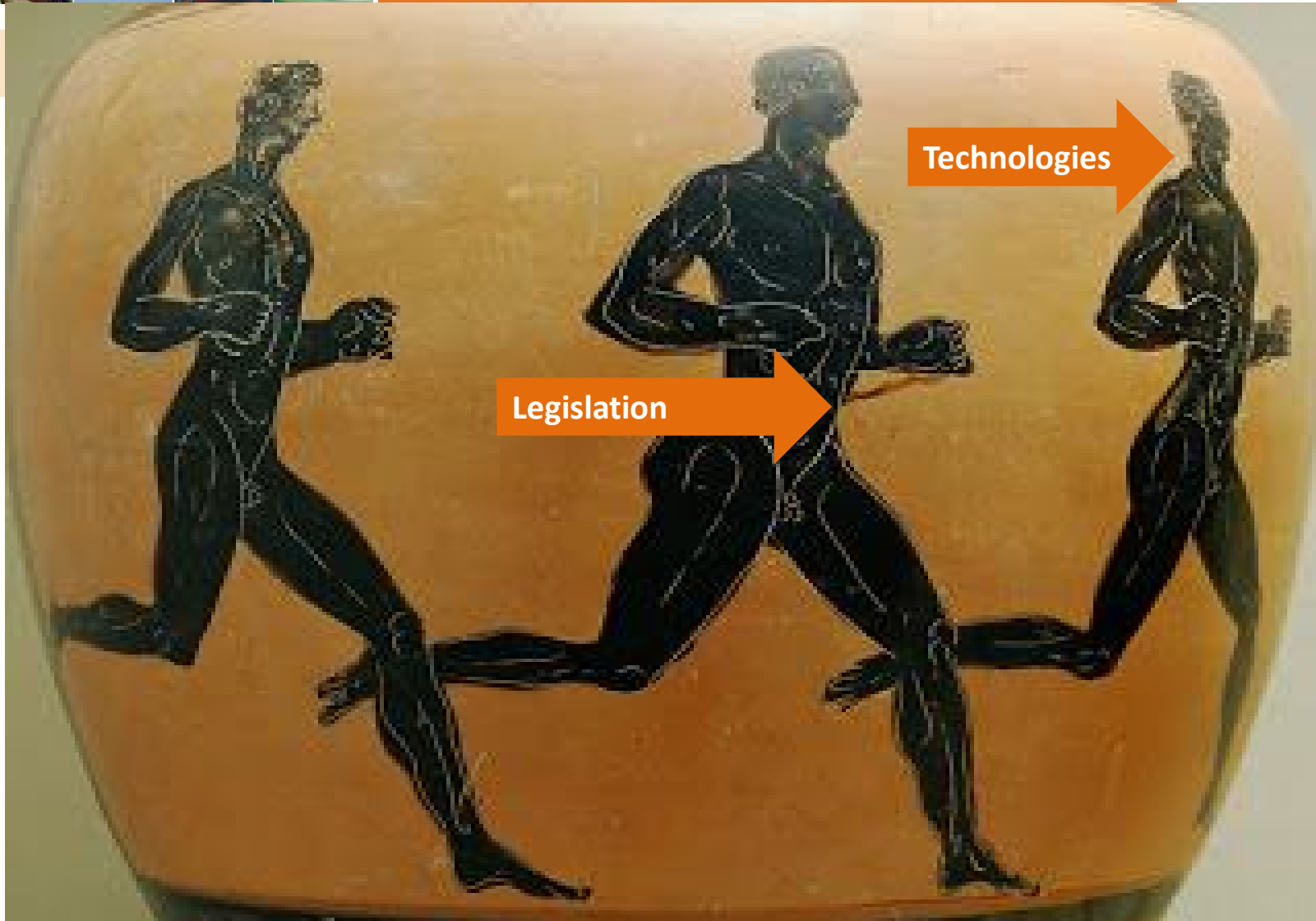
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013





Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

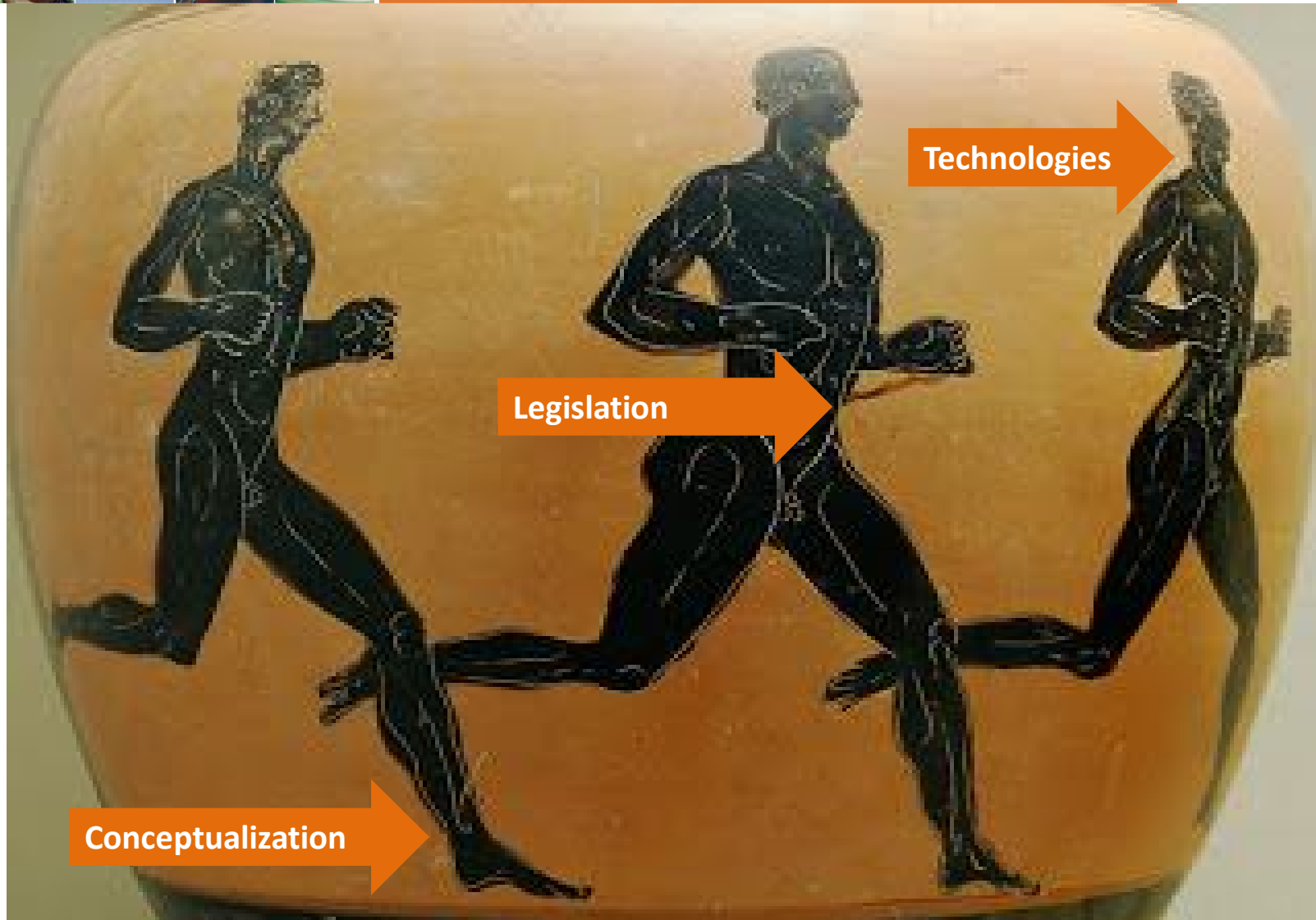
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013





Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



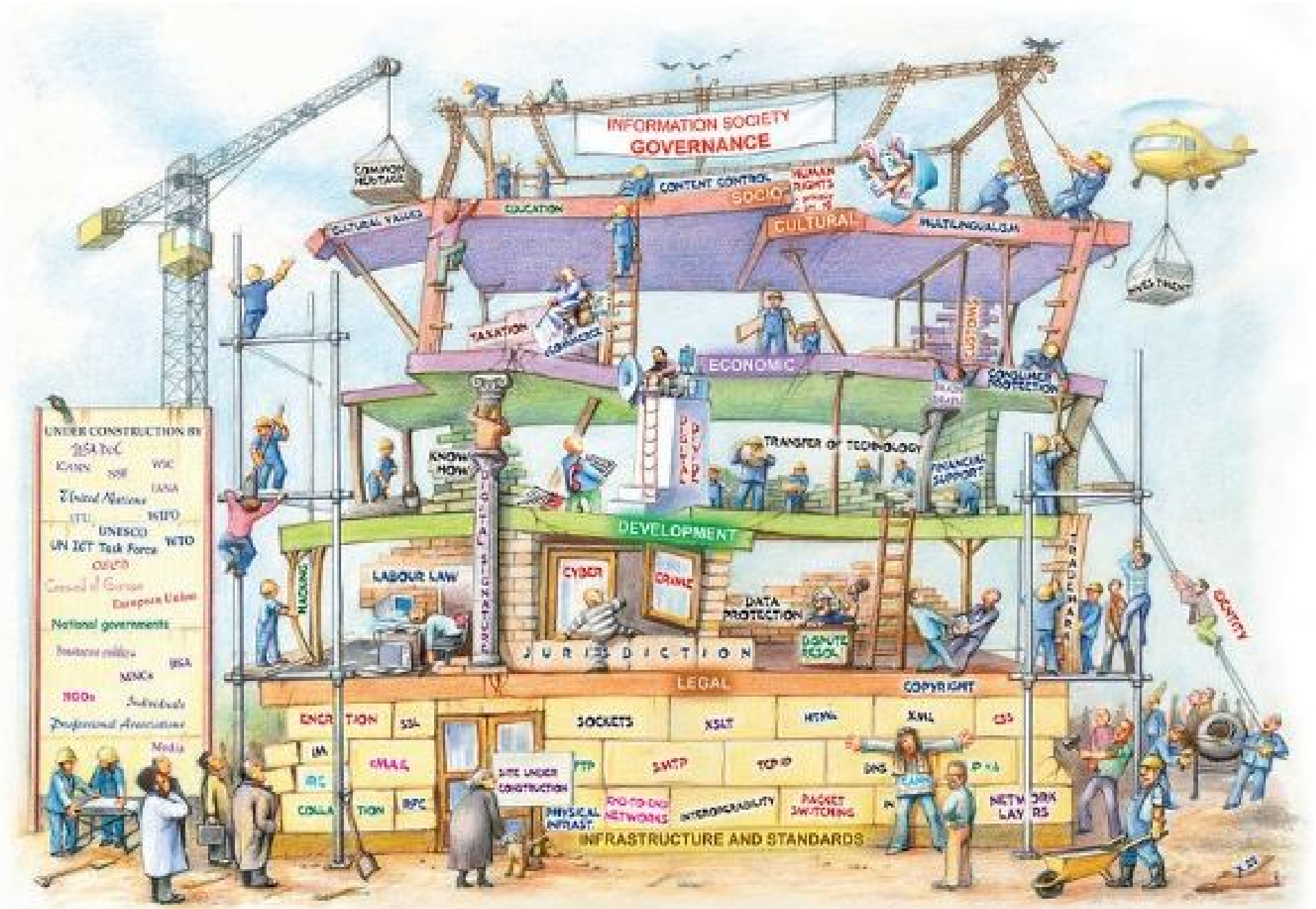


Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



World Summit on Information Society

- Goal – to facilitate creation of **inclusive** information (knowledge) society:
 - To create **equal opportunities** for all in access and use of information and knowledge
 - To ensure a balanced development of society, to overcome the **digital divide**
 - Focused on people not on technologies
 - To facilitate reaching of the UN development goals (**Millenium Development Goals**)



Source: diplomacy.edu





**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



WSIS process

Geneva phase December 2003:

- Declaration and Action Plan

Tunis Phase November 2005:

- Tunis Commitment
- Tunis Agenda for the Information Society



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



WSIS Action Line C10

Ethical dimensions of the information society

The Information Society should be subject to universally held values and promote the common good and to prevent abusive uses of ICTs.

- a. Take steps to promote respect for peace and to uphold the **fundamental values of freedom**, equality, solidarity, tolerance, shared responsibility, and respect for nature.
- b. All stakeholders should increase their **awareness** of the ethical dimension of their use of ICTs.
- c. All actors in the Information Society should promote the common good, **protect privacy and personal data** and take appropriate actions and preventive measures, as determined by law, **against abusive uses** of ICTs such as illegal and other acts motivated by racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, hatred, violence, all forms of child abuse, including paedophilia and child pornography, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.
- d. Invite relevant stakeholders, especially the academia, to continue **research** on ethical dimensions of ICTs.



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Role of UNESCO

- Develop a basis for informing action that is grounded in respect and observance of **human rights**.
- Identify areas where current **policies** are insufficient or inadequate, to elaborate these policies or create new in respect to the abovementioned rights.
- Assist policy-makers in anticipating the **longer-term impacts** of current trends as well as the inevitable fast arrival of technological innovations and breakthroughs.
- By **raising awareness** and collectively discussing possible future outcomes and responses, UNESCO empower policy-makers and society to both prepare for, and better cope with technological challenges.





Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



IFAP Priority Areas

Information for Development

focuses on the value of information for addressing development issues.

Information Literacy

empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goal.

Information Preservation

strengthening the underlying principles of the Memory of the World Programme, beyond its registers, which serve as catalysts to alert decision makers and the public at large.

Information Ethics

cover the ethical, legal and societal aspects of the applications of ICT and derive from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Information Accessibility

issues surrounding availability, accessibility and affordability of



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



“Member States and international organisations should recognise and support universal access to the internet as an instrument for promoting the realisation of the human rights as defined in Articles 19 and 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”

UNESCO recommendation on the ‘Promotion and use of multilingualism and universal access to cyberspace’ adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2003



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Regional debate in Latin America

- UNESCO regional Latin American conference on information ethics, December 6-9, 2006 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
- Declaration on the ethical dimensions of the information society (Declaración de Santo Domingo):
 - to promote peace and respect fundamental values such as liberty, equality, solidarity, tolerance and shared responsibility;
 - to promote the awareness on the ethical dimension of ICTs;
 - to avoid abusive use of ICTs and to promote the respect for privacy and personal data;
 - to promote equal access to information and knowledge;
 - to promote the responsible use of ICTs;
 - to improve the access and responsible autonomous use of ICTs by young generations;
 - to take all measures in order to allow an equitable access to ICTs.



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Regional debate in Africa

- Africa Information Ethics Conference 5-7 February 2007 in Tshwane, South Africa as part of the implementation of Action Line C10 of the Geneva Plan of Action:
 - Creation of the Africa Network for Information Ethics (ANIE)
 - the Tshwane Declaration on Information Ethics in Africa.
- e-Government and ethics workshop for African government officials, 23 to 26 February, 2009 in Magaliesburg, South Africa



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Regional debate in Asia

- Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific on the Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society, from 12 to 14 March 2008 in Hanoi, Vietnam
 - statement on information ethics as a contribution to UNESCO's Draft Code of Ethics



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Regional debate in Europe

- European meeting on ethics and human rights in the information society, Strasbourg, September 13-14, 2007



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Code of Ethics for the Information Society

- Prepared and proposed by the IFAP Council
- Not adapted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 36th session in 2011
- Document “UNESCO and the ethical dimensions of the information society” adapted by the Executive Board in October, 2012:
 - Building multi-stakeholder partnerships to raise awareness of the ethical dimensions of the Information Society and strengthen action in this area
 - Contribute to the international debate on the ethical dimensions of access to, and use of information
 - Supporting capacity-building at national level
 - Foster research and studies in the field of infoethics



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



*"the same rights that people have
offline must also be protected online,
in particular freedom of
expression, regardless of frontiers and
through any media"*

Resolution of the Human Rights Council of the
United Nations, *"Promotion, Protection and
Enjoyment of Human Rights on the Internet"*
5 July 2012



Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society

Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



WSIS+10 Review Process

- Goals:
 - To assess the progress in achieving WSIS Action Plan
 - To set the goals and implementing instruments after 2015
- UNESCO Forum: *Towards Knowledge Societies for Peace and Sustainable Development*
Paris, UNESCO Head office, February 25-27
- Sakhalin Conference on Internet and Socio-Cultural Transformations in Information Society
September 8-12, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk
- Riga Global Meeting of Experts on the Ethical Aspects of Information Society
October 16-17, 2013



World Summit Geneva, 2003
Tunis, 2005
on the Information Society
Turning targets into action



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Conclusions

- It is evident that many ethical issues can and will be understood differently according to different cultural and political frameworks
- It is necessary to continue global debate in order to have a common ground for dealing with global issues, presupposing a deep and sustainable analysis and critical discussion of the issues at stake
- The ethical challenge is also to promote a global awareness on ethical issues

(Capurro, Britz, 2010)



**Internet and Socio-Cultural
Transformations in Information Society**
Yushno-Sakhalinsk, September 9, 2013



Information ethics is about the future of Information
and Knowledge Society

Thank you!