



Riga Global Meeting of Experts on the Ethical Aspects of Information Society

**October 16-17, 2013
Riga, Latvia**

Introduction

Transformational changes brought on by the rapid development of the Internet and other information and communications technologies not only open tremendous opportunities to humankind but also pose unprecedented ethical challenges.

How are we to avoid new disparities in the development of knowledge society? How are we to ensure that everybody can enjoy freedom of expression through the Internet and new media? How are we to ensure that information society will be based upon principles of mutual respect and the observance of human rights? Creating a fair and multicultural information society for all requires concerted efforts to comprehend and address the ethical challenges of the 21st century.

The Riga Global Meeting of Experts is the next step in an ongoing effort of the UNESCO Information for All Programme (IFAP) to raise awareness of, identify, and reflect upon societal and ethical challenges brought on by means of the Internet and use of information and communications technologies. It is part of the implementation of UNESCO Executive Board decision EX 190/SR7 III on possible ways in which the Organization could call attention to the ethical dimensions of the information society.

The Riga Meeting also contributes to the fulfillment of the UNESCO mandate given by the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS)C10 Action Line: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society. IFAP discussions on information ethics have been held throughout the WSIS implementation process involving inter-sectorial multi-stakeholders from all regions of the world.

The Riga Global Meeting of Experts will reflect upon conclusions from previous debates in order to formulate proposals concerning the most troubling ethical issues. Discussions will focus on current and emerging ethical challenges of the Information

Society and its different aspects and dimensions; building multi-stakeholder partnerships; and raising awareness of these issues for policy makers.

The Riga Global Meeting of Experts is an important platform to elaborate discussions and develop further actions on the ethical aspects of the Information Society. One intended purpose is to raise awareness of the role of technology and technology-mediated processes in social transformation, while another is to explore how sustainable outcomes may be managed.

Main objectives of meeting

- To discuss current and emerging issues on the ethical aspects of the Information Society;
- To review the progress of UNESCO and IFAP activities implementing WSIS Action Line C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society;
- To work towards a consensus on the basic ethical principles of the information society;
- To prepare the Recommendations of the Riga Global Meeting of Experts for sustainable and feasible actions in the Member States.

Venue

The meeting will take place in Riga, Latvia in the main building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, K.Valdemara Street 3.

Participants

The Riga Global Meeting of Experts will gather participants from the IFAP Council, the IFAP Information Ethics Working Group, and other IFAP WG, UNESCO partner organizations, National IFAP Committees and stakeholders.

Organizers

The Riga Global Meeting of Experts is organized by the UNESCO Information for All Programme (IFAP) in cooperation with and support from:

- UNESCO Communication and Information Sector,
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia,
- Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of Latvia,
- Latvian National Commission for UNESCO,
- other partners.

Schedule of meeting

The meeting is organized as a two-day session October 16th and 17th, 2013. On the first day, participants will be welcomed for pre-operational discussions on current and emerging issues regarding ethical aspects of the Information Society, and perform a

review of the progress of UNESCO and IFAP activities implementing the WSIS Action Line C10: Ethical dimensions of the Information Society.

Participating experts are kindly invited to prepare and present brief presentations outlining their position on the issues debated.

The next day, a general debate is to be held, mainly focusing on building a consensus in regard to the basic ethical principles of the information society.

The outcome of this meeting will be a document named Recommendations of the Riga Global Meeting of Experts, which will summarize the conclusions of the experts for further feasible actions in all the Member States. These Recommendations will be published online and presented to the UNESCO IFAP Council.

Working language

The working language of the meeting is English.

Participation

Travel expenses incurred by participants should be covered by the country represented. Therefore, we invite all governments to support the participation of their national experts to represent the broadest expertise at this global meeting.

The cost of participation for a limited number of representatives from developing countries will be covered by the organizers of the meeting. These costs will be covered only for one request per Member State. In order to apply for such assistance, a request must be received no later than **July 1, 2013**.

Application and Terms

Participants should fill out the Registration Form and send it to the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO via e-mail: office@unesco.lv.

Completed Registration Forms should be sent no later than **August 1, 2013**.

Contact information

Organization Committee

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