

Introduction

The Internet has become one of the fundamental spaces shaping contemporary social, economic, and political life. It is no longer merely a tool of communication, but an environment in which social relations, individual identities, mechanisms of influence, and new forms of power are formed. For this reason, the Internet has today become an object of simultaneous interest for many academic disciplines. It is a space of normative regulation as well as an arena of dynamic social processes that often elude traditional analytical categories.

The development of online platforms, social media, and systems based on artificial intelligence has led to a profound transformation of modes of communication, information acquisition, and participation in the public sphere. The algorithmization of content, personalization of messages, and the attention economy affect the structure of public debate, fostering both new forms of participation and phenomena such as disinformation, polarization, and informational manipulation. Consequently, the law faces the challenge of regulating not only the infrastructure of the Internet, but also the social consequences of its functioning, including power relations between the state, private actors, and network users.

This issue of the journal *dot.pl* undertakes an attempt at an interdisciplinary analysis of the Internet as a socially constructed and legally regulated space. The presented articles demonstrate how digital technologies influence processes of socialization, the formation of public opinion, and the redefinition of the boundaries of privacy and individual autonomy. Particular attention is devoted to the role of artificial intelligence in online communication, including its significance for the dissemination of conspiracy theories, the shaping of political narratives, and the reinforcement of informational asymmetries.

At the same time, the authors address issues related to Internet security and its use as a tool of political and social influence. Analyses of hybrid conflicts, “sharp power,” state surveillance, and digital diplomacy indicate that the Internet has become a significant field of competition between states and

non-state actors. This raises questions about the legitimacy of power, the scope of permissible control, and social acceptance of actions undertaken in the name of security.

An important theme of this issue also concerns legal regulations governing the functioning of the Internet, including norms related to cybersecurity, data protection, and digital content. The analysis of the NIS 2 Directive and issues related to the protection of intellectual property online reveals the tension between the need for stability and the protection of the legal order, and the dynamic nature of Internet users' social practices. In order to remain effective, the law must take into account the social conditions of technology while at the same time setting the framework for the responsible use of digital space.

The articles collected in this issue confirm that the Internet, as a socio-legal phenomenon, requires in-depth interdisciplinary reflection. The combination of multiple perspectives allows not only for a better understanding of the mechanisms governing the digital world, but also for the formulation of more adequate and socially grounded regulatory solutions. In this sense, the present issue of *dot.pl* constitutes an important voice in the debate on the future of the Internet as a space of freedom, control, and responsibility.

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