

Digital Mare Nostrum – Mediterranean Digital Societies and Law (DIGIMED)

Deliverable 1.3 Mid-term report on the JM Chair activities

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I. Introduction

The Jean Monnet Chair in Mediterranean Digital Societies and Law (JMC) aims to promote Mediterranean studies in computer law through an interdisciplinary cross-fertilisation, contributing to reducing the existing gap in the field of computer law that affects Mediterranean countries, which are often underrepresented in the global arena.

With the goal of amplifying the voice and participation of Mediterranean countries in the EU regulatory and policy debate, the Chair outlined a three-year programme which combines MSc and PhD courses focused on digital society – taught at the Politecnico di Torino – with public academic events (conference and seminars) and dedicated workshops. The impact of the main outcome of the Chair’s initiatives is also supported by other activities of the chairholder, including conference presentations and participation in regional and international fora,¹ which are not part of the JMC programme but complement and increase its visibility and policy impact in the Mediterranean area.

These different research and policy initiatives, carried out during the first year, have made it possible to outline the main issues and challenges to deal with in the context of the Mediterranean digital societies. Based on this knowledge, the Chair’s first publication (in preparation) looks at the Mediterranean Sea as a data space and deals with its different dimensions with a focus on tourism data, which has been one of the main themes of the Chair’s activities this year.

Although not a deliverable of this project, some of the main issues concerning digital societies at the core of the JMC are also addressed in other publications authored by the chair holder, such as the following ones:

- Mantelero, Alessandro. 2023. Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment in the DSA. In: Putting the DSA into Practice / van Hoboken J., Quintais J. P., Appelmann N., Fahy R., Buri I., Straub M., Berlin, Verfassungsblog, pp. 107-119. ISBN: 978-3-757517-96-0
- Mantelero, Alessandro. 2022. Big Data and Data Protection. In: Research Handbook on Privacy and Data Protection Law. Values, Norms and Global Politics / González-Fuster, G., van Brakel, R., De Hert, P., Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 335-357. ISBN: 9781786438508
- Mantelero, Alessandro and Fanucci, Francesca. 2022. The International Debate on AI Regulation and Human Rights in the Prism of the Council of Europe’s CAHAI: Great Ambitions. In: European Yearbook on Human Rights 2022 / Czech P., Heschl L., Lukas K., Nowak M., Oberleitner G., Cambridge, Intersentia, pp. 225-252. ISBN: 9781839702655
- Mantelero, Alessandro. 2022. Artificial Intelligence (AI). In: Elgar Encyclopedia of Human Rights / Binder, C., Nowak, M., Hofbauer, JA, Janig P, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 163-172. ISBN: 9781789903614.

This report is based on the first Annual Evaluation Report issued by the Chair and the feedback from the Teaching Core Team and the Advisory Board (Mid-point meeting MS2).² The text of the report was approved by the Advisory Board on June 20.

II. Chair work plan: implementation in the first year and suggestions for its further development

The Chair’s activities are distributed over three years and on four tasks concerning (i) teaching activities in MSc and PhD courses, (ii) academic events such as international conferences, seminars, and workshops, (iii) scientific publications, and (iv) dissemination, including awareness raising and

¹ For more details, see <https://www.digimed.polito.it/news/>.

² See <https://digimed.polito.it/team/>.

project results exploitation. The combination of these different tasks and the related effort (98 teaching hours per year, including academic events; two international conferences and two international seminars per year, project dissemination and network building) require careful scheduling and organisation, not least because the JMC does not represent the full range of the chair holder's teaching and research duties.

Against this background, the implementation of the JCM programme in its first year had to deal with the request from the funding body to start the Chair's activities at the beginning of 2022, while the academic year was running. Since the project, as approved by the EC, was organised over three academic years and planned to start at the beginning of an academic year, the anticipation of the project launch had a significant impact on the organisation of the JMC and the planned effort.

With regard to the organisation, the teaching curriculum for the academic year 2021/22 was approved in May 2021 by the hosting institution (before the Chair was awarded) and, for 2021/22, was therefore not aligned with the subsequent JMC proposal. For this reason, a change was made to the original proposal by adding teaching hours from another course, namely Data Ethics and Data Protection, to provide teaching activities consistent with the goals of the JMC for the first year.

Regarding the effort required, the early start of the project during the academic year impacted the whole workload of the chair holder, in terms of 40 extra hours of teaching activities and additional tasks to organise all the JMC activities. Apart from teaching activities, the JMC hosts international academic events whose organisation requires a significant effort due to the limited debate existing in the field of Mediterranean digital societies, thus making it difficult to engage experts and scholars in under-explored research areas. For these reasons, a proper pre-launch phase would have been useful, enabling a better management of the workload.

To address these issues, it was necessary to reconsider the way to achieve some of the planned objectives, by prioritising some project goals and focusing on the most relevant and urgent ones. In this sense, teaching activities and international events were the primary concern and absorbed much of the extra effort this situation entailed.

As regards to the dissemination activities, some of them, namely the newsletter, require the building of a minimum network of people related or interested in the project. Having a few months ahead of the project launch, it would have been possible to create an adequate environment to facilitate network building. To compensate for this shortcoming, the JMC decided to increase its visibility in terms of dissemination focusing on the general audience that can be reached through the Chair's website.

This was also necessary to facilitate the engagement in a short time of many experts invited in the first round of events, not having the opportunity to use a pre-launch project phase to present the JMC and to engage colleagues and experts in it. In this context, the website represented a key element in presenting the Chair, its goals and, after the kick-off, its activities and Mediterranean scope. For this reason, the development of the website was prioritised and completed in advance to the schedule, in month 3.

As regards the teaching activities, it is worth noting that the KPIs set in the proposals – namely, the number of students attending the courses and of the participants to the seminars/conferences – were based on the state of the art at the time of the proposal. As for the courses, the MSc course in Law & Technology is part of the MSc programme in Managing Engineering whose organisation is set by the Department of Managing Engineering on a yearly basis. Since the 2021/22 Academic Year, the Department has decided to offer students the opportunity to replace elective courses, including Law & Technology course, with fieldwork activities with companies (so-called Challenges). This new

teaching offer was strongly supported by the university and had a high degree of acceptance among the students; as a result, the MSc course in Law & Technology passed from 46 students (2020/21) to 40 (2021/22) students attending the course. This trend is expected to remain stable in the next years,³ but must be considered as an external constraint affecting the project's KPI outside of possible control and mitigation solutions by the Chair holder.

With regard to attendance at the scientific events, taking into account the early start of the project and the transition phase between pandemic and post-pandemic scenarios, the first two events were organised remotely, both to facilitate the availability of speakers, given the short time frame to engage them, and to comply with certain restrictions characterising the early post-pandemic phase. These external constraints also impacted the number of attendees at these events, but without limiting the international scope and Mediterranean focus of the audience, which was achieved albeit in smaller numbers.

Finally, as regards the organisation of the JMC events, the increased costs of mobility (flights) due to the recent war in Ukraine and the small budget of this project, as well as the EU's suggestion to consider the environmental impact of medium-range mobility, recommended to organise hybrid panels with remotely connected speakers and to benefit from the support of the Chair's partners to organise some of the JMC events in locations other than Turin (e.g. the International Conference on Internet, Law and Politics in Barcelona, organised by the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, in June 2023) enhancing the contribution of local experts in different parts of the Mediterranean area. The post-covid attitude of many people to reduce the participation in international events abroad has also induced to a change in the nature of some of the planned events from conference to workshop.

In this regard, a limited number of high-level experts convened to discuss critical topics combined with some public events, as in the case of the workshop and half-day conference organised in Turin in December 2022, maximise the scope of the Chair in terms of awareness raising, research goals, policy impact, and dissemination.

This workshop on the common core of data protection in the Mediterranean, held in December, was a success in terms of added value for the Chair activities as demonstrated by the Chair's resulting involvement in the initiative of the Réseau Méditerranéen des DPAs et Experts en PDP launched by the Moroccan DPA with its first meeting in Tangier attended by the Chair holder representing Italian academia.⁴ At the same time, the half-day public event, the day after the workshop, made it possible to engage renowned speakers, such as Prof. Viktor Mayer-Schönberger (Oxford Internet Institute) and have an important public debate among the experts, DPAs and civil society representatives involved in the workshop.

Based on this positive outcome and the considerations made above, the Chair intends to explore for the next events more flexible solutions centred on expert workshops and public dissemination of their results rather than prioritising only conferences.

³ In the A.Y. 2022/23, the students attending the course are 22.

⁴ Tangier, 27 January 2023; more details are available here: <https://www.digimed.polito.it/2023/02/07/enlarging-the-network-of-experts-on-digital-mediterranean-societies-prof-mantelero-participates-in-the-international-meeting-towards-a-mediterranean-network-of-dpas-and-experts-in-personal-data-pr/>.

III. The Chair's activities

Based on the JMC programme, as approved by the European Commission, the Chair's activities are briefly described in this section along their main axes, as follows: teaching activities, knowledge generation in the field of Mediterranean digital societies, dialogue between academia and civil society, and dissemination.

III.1 Teaching activities

The JMC builds on both the existing MSc course in Law & Technology, focusing on the Mediterranean digital society, and a new dedicated course for PhD students centred on EU law and digital societies.⁵

As discussed in the previous section, the Chair's teaching activities at the master level in the first year also included the course in Data Ethics and Data Protection for MSc students in Data Science and Engineering, which is one of the new leading MSc curricula of the Politecnico di Torino given the relevance assumed by data science in shaping the technological and societal environment. In this regard, the change introduced to the original JMC programme made it possible to reach an audience represented by master's students that will play a significant role in building future digital scenarios. Increasing their awareness of the EU legal framework and the legal implications of data use is therefore a key element for an EU value-oriented design of future innovation.

As regards the main courses of the JMC, the MSc course in Law & Technology focuses on the role of data-driven digital innovation, data protection and AI, by covering various topics related to the interplay between EU law, society and technology. Adopting a legal perspective, most of the teaching activity deals with the JMC core topics by using case studies from the Mediterranean context. The events organised by the JMC during the semester when the course is running are part of the teaching activities and offer students the opportunity to have direct contact and exchange with experts, policymakers and civil society representatives.

The course has an international audience, with students from EU and non-EU countries (e.g. Asian and Latin American countries), and is taught in English. All the project KPIs were reached⁶ with the

⁵ A detailed description of the courses is available here <https://www.digimed.polito.it/teaching/>, including links to the Politecnico teaching portal for full details.

⁶ Approved syllabuses and course contents are available on the teaching portal of the Politecnico di Torino: https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/gap.pkg_guide.viewGap?p_cod_ins=01URZSM&p_a_acc=2023&p_header=S&p_lang=IT&multi=N;
https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/gap.pkg_guide.viewGap?p_cod_ins=01URBPH&p_a_acc=2023&p_header=S&p_lang=IT&multi=N;
https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/gap.pkg_guide.viewGap?p_cod_ins=01DNTRP&p_a_acc=2023&p_header=S&p_lang=IT&multi=N;
[https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/gap.pkg_guide.viewGap?p_cod_ins=01URZSM&p_a_acc=2022&p_header=S&p_lang=IT&multi=N.](https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/gap.pkg_guide.viewGap?p_cod_ins=01URZSM&p_a_acc=2022&p_header=S&p_lang=IT&multi=N;) All syllabuses and course contents were approved by the university's Joint Committee on Teaching within the Evaluation and Accreditation framework provided by the National Agency for the Evaluation of the University System and Research, passing the university internal JCT review process (**KPI I and II**). The courses used a blended teaching approach, including distance learning and the possibility to follow courses remotely, in the first year of the JMC. Weekly stats of access to the online teaching area with details for each lecture are made available by the Politecnico to teachers (internal portal address, see e.g. https://didattica.polito.it/pls/portal30/sviluppo.bbb_stats.main?p_id_inc=252413; **KPI III**). As for the Academic Year 2022/23 and in the next years, based on the guideline given by the host institution for all the courses, blended teaching is limited to the JMC events included in the courses while the teaching activity benefits from the recordings of A.Y. 2021/22 made available to the students who cannot attend in-person classes. Blended teaching is still used in case of some students cannot attend the class on the basis of specific reasons. As regard the Course evaluation surveys, the

only exception of KPI VI concerning the impact and only with regard to MSc students in the MSc course in Law & Technology in the A.Y. 2022/23 due to the changes in the Politecnico's teaching offer discussed in the previous section. The table below shows how the expected results for KPI VI were more than doubled with regard to the MSc Data Ethics and Data Protection and the second year of the PhD course in Digital Society and Law:

Course	A.Y. 2021/22 (number of students)	A.Y. 2022/23 (number of students)	KPI
PhD Digital Societies and Law	17	34	15
MSc Data Ethics and Data Protection	238		40-100
MSc Law & Technology	40	22*	40-100

III.2 Knowledge generation

The main activity concerning knowledge generation regards the publications listed in the project proposal, which consist in a book that includes the most significant outcomes of the whole project and three articles covering the main topic of each project year.

As regards the book, an informal agreement have already been reached with Hart Publishing and several authors of the book chapters, including some of the speakers in the past JMC events. Considering the specific nature of the topics addressed by the Chair and the limited literature on them, the seminars and conferences organised in the first year and, even more, the workshop in December (with data protection authorities, scholars and NGOs from different Mediterranean countries) have played a crucial role in deepening the knowledge of the main issues concerning the flows of data in the Mediterranean areas, as well as in stimulating the reflection on the possibility to identify a Mediterranean common core in terms of socio-legal values.

On the basis of these insights, it was possible to define an appropriate outline of the first article on Data protection and free flows of data in the Mediterranean area, which is currently in the drafting stage. It is also worth noting that, during the first year of the JMC, the Chair holder has published several book chapters on some of the key topics of the Chair, namely data protection, AI and human rights, from a perspective which also includes the Mediterranean area.⁷

As concerns the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies, given its crucial role in the long-term impact of the project and the importance of strengthening its composition, in terms of

available scores concerns A.Y. 2021/22 are all over the 2.3 threshold (**KPI IV**): Law & Technology 3.5; Data Ethics and Data Protection 2.95. No score is provided by Politecnico for PhD courses but the success of the new course on Digital Societies & Law is demonstrated by the fact that it increased by 50% from the first year (17 PhD students) to the second year (34 students). The high score reached by the courses and the positive response to the new PhD course are in line with the lack of criticisms expressed by the students in the yearly evaluation questionnaires available, which relate to A.Y. 2021/22 (**KPI V**).

* See above Section II.

⁷ See above Section I.

engaged experts and policymakers, the Chair decided to create a synergy with the Mediterranean Network for Data Protection (Réseau Méditerranéen des DPAs et Experts en PDP),⁸ merging the NEDMS with this broader initiative in which the Chair play a key role as representative of the academic component (**KPI I, II, and III**).

III.3 Fostering the dialogue between academia and civil society

In line with the JMC programme, the Chair developed a wide range of initiatives to foster the dialogue between academia and civil society, through scientific and policy events, the involvement of different stakeholders, an active engagement of experts in the Mediterranean context, and the interaction with other EU initiatives. These different outcomes are briefly discussed in the following sub-sections.

III.3.1 Conferences, seminars and workshops

In the first part of the project, the main focus of the Chair's events was on the Mediterranean dimension of humanitarian aid, cultural heritage, data protection and tourism. All these topics were addressed from a perspective centred on the digital society and data-driven solutions developed in all these different fields.⁹

The organised events had an international scope with speakers and attendees from EU and non-EU countries (**KPI I**). As regard to the speakers, all the conferences and seminars granted a gender balance among the speakers (**KPI I**). As discussed in Section II, the early start of the project and the difficulties in the post-pandemic phase negatively affected the attendance to the JMC events. However, the expected thresholds were reached in the following events: 5 April 2022 seminar, 7 November 2022 seminar, 13 December 2022 conference. Based on these results and the considerations expressed in Section II, it is suggested to reconsider the KPI I thresholds by setting them at 20-80 participants for conferences and 15-20 for seminars and workshops. This also considering that the online availability of the JMC events (e.g., presentations, video/audio recordings etc.) make it possible to reach additional audience over the months following each event benefitting from social media dissemination. Considering this long-term effect the overall goal of the initial thresholds is therefore expected to be reached in an asynchronous attendance.

As regards stakeholder engagement (**KPI II**), positive feedback was provided by the students in their questionnaires, but the online nature of the first events did not make it technically feasible to have specific feedback from other categories of attendees. Since 2023 a questionnaire has been created and progressively tested and adopted in the events organised by the Chair. In the next report more details will be provided on the feedback received on the basis of this questionnaire.

In line with the Chair's methodology outlined in the project, before each conference the Chair organised a seminar or a workshop with experts, to set the scene for a more intensive debate during the conference. This made it possible for the students to fully benefit from the unique opportunity

⁸ Further details are available here: <https://www.digimed.polito.it/2023/02/07/enlarging-the-network-of-experts-on-digital-mediterranean-societies-prof-mantelero-participates-in-the-international-meeting-towards-a-mediterranean-network-of-dpas-and-experts-in-personal-data-pr/>.

⁹ Further details, the event flyers, presentations and video/audio recordings of the JMC events are available here: <https://www.digimed.polito.it/events/>.

to observe the dynamic of the European integration process in the field of digital society and to actively interact with the invited speakers.

The first topic covered by the Chair focused on humanitarian actions and digital societies. In accordance with the JMC programme, the Chair organised two events to explore this topic: a seminar and a conference.

On **5th April 2022** the Chair held its inaugural seminar on “*Protecting refugees in the Mediterranean area. The role and challenges of AI*”, with a focus on the use of digital technologies and AI in the protection of refugees in the Mediterranean area. Experts from academia, international organisations and NGOs provided different insights and complementary perspectives, combining a theoretical approach with fieldwork experiences on migration and border management.

The seminar started with a keynote given by **Eleftherios Chelioudakis**, co-founder of Homo Digitalis, who highlighted the role of civil society organisations in the field of migration and border management in the European Union. The keynote was followed by an expert panel discussion with **Massimo Marelli** (Head of the Data Protection Office, International Committee of the Red Cross), **Clementina Barbaro** (Head of the Youth Policy Division – Secretary to the Joint Council on Youth and the European Steering Committee for Youth, Council of Europe) and **Aaron Martin** (Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology and Society and Assistant Professor in Maastricht University’s Humanitarian Action Programme). These three speakers focused mainly on the international perspective and the interaction between the different actors involved in humanitarian crisis management.

The last session of the seminar was a roundtable discussion where **Chloé Berthélémy** (European Digital Rights, Policy Advisor), **Theodora Gazi** (University of Athens, Lawyer), and **Bayram Selvi** (The Turkish Red Crescent, Director of Migration Services) focused on the use of personal data in humanitarian actions, combining legal analysis of concrete cases and fieldwork experience.

The different voices and experiences that contributed to this inaugural seminar clearly showed the existing tension in our Mediterranean societies between the use of digital technology and the focus on human rights. While there is no doubt that data-intensive technology and AI can provide significant advances in a number of fields, including refugee protection and humanitarian action, several relevant aspects require close attention. This is the case with the role of state actors, the interaction between public and private actors, the role of NGOs and civil society, the need for a clear international legal framework, the proper implementation of existing data protection rules, and the need for a human rights by-design approach in the development and use of digital technologies.

Based on the most relevant aspects that emerged during the seminar described above, on **3 June 2022** the Chair held its first international conference with a focus on data collection and human rights in humanitarian actions in the Mediterranean area.

After the opening address by the Rector of the Politecnico di Torino, Prof. Guido Saracco, the conference started with a round-table discussion moderated by **Jeanne Mifsud Bonnici** (University of Groningen and University of Malta), where **Lina Jasmontaite** (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), **Pauline Veron** (European Centre for Development, Policy Management) and **Ayca Atabey** (Information Technology Law Institute at Istanbul Bilgi University and Edinburgh University) focused on the collection of personal data in humanitarian actions, covering several aspects, including data protection, digitalisation, human rights, and gender issues.

In the second part of the morning section, the conference went on with another round-table discussion where **Giuseppe Vaciago**, (LT42 and Politecnico di Torino) and **Alberto Pelliccione** (ReaQta) focused on cybersecurity and human rights.

The afternoon section of the Conference started with a keynote given by **Joe Cannataci** (University of Groningen and University of Malta), former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy and chairman of the DIGIMED Advisory Board. Based on his extensive experience, including many EU-funded research projects, he provided valuable suggestions for further investigations on Mediterranean digital societies and emphasised the importance of an interdisciplinary approach by combining training and theoretical analysis with fieldwork and policy-making, including stakeholder consultation and the development of guidelines and recommendations.

The keynote was followed by an expert panel discussion with **Michelle Pace** (Professor in Global Studies, Roskilde University), **Maria Gabrielsen Jumbert** (Research Director & Senior Researcher at Peace Research Institute Oslo; Co-Director of the Norwegian Centre for Humanitarian Studies) and **Paolo Benanti** (Pontifical Gregorian University). These three speakers offered different perspectives on the various issues that emerged during the conference, focusing on the social, legal and individual dimensions.

The last session of the conference was a round-table discussion moderated by **Massimo Marelli** (International Committee of the Red Cross), where **Belkis Wille** (Senior Crisis & Conflict Researcher, Human Rights Watch), **Catherine Lenman** (Global Privacy Assembly), **Alexandrine Pirlot de Corbion** (Privacy International) and **Christina Zarogianni** (University of Cyprus) discussed the use of new technologies in border control and associated risks, providing important suggestions to address them.

In line with the objective of the Chair to foster the engagement of young scholars in Mediterranean studies concerning digital societies, two speakers of the Conference (Christina Zarogianni and Ayca Atabey) were selected on the basis of a call for abstracts and also invited to participate in the JMC book.

The second topic covered by the Chair during the first year project relates to personal and non-personal data processing and AI in the Mediterranean area, with a focus on culture and heritage. In this line, on 7 November 2022 the Chair organised an interdisciplinary seminar on '*The Roman Mediterranean Sea: data from and for Archaeological research*', involving scholars in the field of law, history and technology.

In the first part of the seminar **Mattia Balbo** (Research Fellow in Roman History at the University of Turin) and **Lorenzo Calvelli** (Professor of Roman History at the University of Venice) provided their contribution from the perspective of historical studies. Lorenzo Balbo highlighted the crucial role played by the Mediterranean Sea in the Roman Empire economy and how non-personal data are important in helping historians to track the flows of goods based on both the discovery of artefacts and the analysis of the overall findings on their circulation. Against this background, Lorenzo Calvelli presented some of the most relevant projects in the field of digital humanities, concerning the Roman period, carried out by the Research Institute for Digital and Cultural Heritage (Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND, GA no. 945361, and Next Generation EU), with a focus on the use of machine learning in the field of epigraphic studies.

The second part of the seminar merged the legal and the technological perspectives. **Maria Letizia Bixio** (Research Fellows in Economic Law at the European University of Rome) discussed the legal framework for archaeological data processing and outlined the key issues arising from the

intersection of copyright and the protection of cultural goods. She explored a very little discussed topic concerning the legal qualification and regulation of the different actors involved in the use of data resulting in excavation activities. Finally, **Massimiliano Lo Turco** (Professor at the Department of Architecture and Design, Politecnico di Torino) and his team presented some technical solutions using Building Information Modeling for cultural heritage, including the possibility of combining physical non-personal data (e.g., maps of the exhibition spaces) and personal data (e.g., flows of museum visitors) to better the interaction between those who visit museums and the artefact exposed.

In line with the considerations expressed in Section II with regard to the relevance of expert and policymaker workshops, the crucial topic of the Mediterranean strategies on data protection and data regulation was discussed in December in Turin in a close-door workshop (December 12, 2022) followed by a public event (December 13). The international workshop on *The Two Sides of the Mediterranean Sea: A Common Core for Data Protection* was organised under the auspices of the Italian Supervisory Authority, Garante per la protezione dei dati personali, and was attended by Dr Guido Scorza (member of the Board of the Italian SA), the presidents of the data protection authorities of Tunisia and Morocco, experts from the EDPS and the Catalan DPA, who were joined by academics from Italy, Greece, Malta, and Spain, including Professor Joe Cannataci (former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy), and representatives of national and international civil society organizations.¹⁰

During the workshop, the discussion on the future of digital societies and the role of a common data policy was articulated along five main axes: (i) cultural heritage and tourism, (ii) smart cities, (iii) crisis management, (iv) trade and employment, and (v) the integration of the Mediterranean area into the global digital space. The discussion, held under the Chatham House Rule, made it possible

¹⁰ Here is the full list of the participants in the workshop and their qualifications:

Dr. Guido Scorza, Member of the Board of the Garante per la protezione dei dati personali (Italian DPA)

Mr Chawki Gaddès, President of the Instance nationale de protection des données personnelles (Tunisian DPA) and President of the Francophone Association of Personal Data Protection Authorities (AFAPDP)

Mr Omar Seghrouchni, President of the Commission Nationale de contrôle de la protection des Données à caractère Personnel (Moroccan DPA)

Mr Olivier Matter, Head of International Cooperation, EDPS

Mr Xavier Puig Soler, Autoritat Catalana de Protecció de Dades (Catalan DPA)

Prof. Joe Cannataci, Head of the Department of Information Policy & Governance Faculty of Media & Knowledge Sciences, University of Malta; Chair of European Information Policy & Technology Law, University of Groningen

Dr. Mariavittoria Catanzariti, Research Associate, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies European University Institute

Prof. Jeanne Mifsud Bonnici, Professor of European Technology Law and Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Groningen and University of Malta

Prof. Lilian Mitrou, Professor of Privacy and Information Law, University of the Aegean; President of the Institute for Privacy Law, Data Protection and Technology (IPL) - European Public Law Organization

Prof. Miquel Peguera Poch, Professor of Law, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

Dr. Aitana Radu, Lecturer, University of Malta

Dr. Amer Bani Amer, General Director, Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development

Mr Eleftherios Chelioudakis, Co-founder, Homo Digitalis

Ms Francesca Fanucci, Senior Legal Advisor, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law

Ms Karolina Iwańska, Digital Civic Space Advisor, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law

to develop some key points for a first initiative towards a Mediterranean strategy for digital societies, which had a follow-up in Morocco at the beginning of 2023.¹¹

In the workshop discussion, the need for an approach that can increase trust in technological solutions emerged. Participants emphasised that this necessarily requires both attention to the values of the communities concerned and an active involvement of these communities in the design of operational solutions.

Furthermore, a common approach to digital societies was identified among the countries of the Mediterranean area, aimed at preserving the characteristics of local communities against forms of power concentration linked to new technologies, which often have standardising outcomes insensitive to the socio-cultural variables of each context. This type of approach finds a unifying element in the protection of human rights, which should also be promoted in the digital context.

From an operational point of view, the importance of promoting university training in the field of law and technology was also underlined, and the Chair's Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS) was launched during the workshop.

The conference organised by the Chair on 13 December 2022 discussed some of the most relevant issues raised during the workshop. In the opening remarks, the chairholder outlined the main goals of this EU-funded project and introduced the **Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS)**, which builds on the experts already involved in the Chair's activities and past events, and will be further expanded in the coming years.

Prof. **Viktor Mayer-Schönberger** (University of Oxford, Oxford Internet Institute) gave the keynote speech dealing with the EU approach to data protection in a global scenario. He pointed out how a change in the current mental model applied to data protection regulatory issues is needed: situational, contextual and temporary data protection regulations – more agile, flexible and adjustable – could better address the legal uncertainties and legal interoperability costs in this field. Moving from the EU-US dialogue on data protection, Prof. **Cannataci** (University of Groningen and University of Malta) commented on the role played by international law and highlighted how the Council of Europe through Convention 108 has shaped the European and global data protection framework. However, he noted that the presence of universal principles in data protection and privacy often does not make the issue of their implementation any less critical.

The first round-table discussion dealt with the role of data protection principles and regulation in creating bridges between countries, involving panellists with different background and experiences in addressing data protection issues at national, regional and international levels. The round-table was moderated by the President of the Instance Nationale de Protection des Données Personnelles (Tunisian DPA), Mr **Chawki Gaddès**, who is also President of the Francophone Association of Personal Data Protection Authorities, and included the following participants: Prof. **Leyla Keser Berber** (Istanbul Bilgi University), Mr **Omar Seghrouchni** (President of the Moroccan DPA), Mr **Olivier Matter** (EDPS), and Mr **Yannick Meneceur** (Council of Europe).

Building on his experience as President of the Tunisian Data Protection Authority, Mr Gaddès emphasised the role that the right to data protection can play as a common core for digital societies in the Mediterranean area and recalled that some countries in the south of the Mediterranean area have signed Convention 108 and passed laws on data protection. This common core has been also stressed by Mr Seghrouchni, who pointed out how this has an impact on the way we shape the growing digital economy, being the protection of the fundamental right to privacy a crucial requirement for its development in the Mediterranean area and with regard to global players.

¹¹ See Sections II and III.2

The novelty of the focus on the Mediterranean area was emphasised by Mr Matter, who expressed the view that countries of this area share common history and values and that existing differences should be seen as a source of richness to build on. The Mediterranean Sea, as an under-investigated microcosm and a laboratory for regulation, therefore requires a collaborative approach across sectors and a network of experts.

Such a Mediterranean approach is based on the common idea that data protection is a fundamental right and that a human-centric approach to technology is needed. As a consequence, the response to many of the existing concerns about data protection and technological innovation would be the same both in the north and in the south of the Mediterranean area, by fostering the importance of collective choices in these crucial matters (e.g. the use of face recognition technology in public spaces). What is more, Mr Matter called for the creation of a generation of technology specialists across the Mediterranean, with a human rights background, which is also one of the goals of the Jean Monnet Chair.

The other speakers provided a different and complementary perspective to the debate by focusing on the impact of EU data protection regulation on the non-EU Mediterranean countries and on the international debate on data protection in relation to the challenges posed by AI. Prof. Keser Berber discussed the Turkish case providing an overview of current data protection legislation in Turkey from a comparative perspective and considering both the GDPR and Convention 108+. Mr Meneceur emphasised the role of the Council of Europe in setting standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy, pointing out the paradigm change introduced by AI. He highlighted how the Council of Europe is addressing these new challenges in setting a Convention on AI in a way consistent with Convention 108+ principles.

The second panel, co-organised with European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL), further explored this relationship between AI and data protection regulation from the perspective of civil society. The panel, moderated by Ms **Francesca Fanucci** (Senior legal advisor at ECNL), included Ms **Karolina Iwańska** (Digital Civic Space Advisor at ECNL and member of EDRI), Mr **Eleftherios Chelioudakis** (co-founder of Homo Digitalis), and Dr **Amer Bani Amer** (founder and director of the AI-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development).

Ms Fanucci framed the discussion by raising the question of whether the current data protection regulatory framework in the European Union and in the Mediterranean area is adequate to ensure data protection and the protection of other human rights in the face of AI, in light of the ongoing debate on the AI Act and the future CoE Convention on AI. Against this background, Mr Iwańska focused on two main challenges posed by AI: the use of proxy data revealing personal (often sensitive) information and the inadequacy of the current implementation of the DPIA tools. Stressing the key role of stakeholder participation and transparency in impact assessment, she pointed out the need for greater accountability in AI development and use, based on participatory human rights assessment and public availability of its main findings.

Human rights and AI were also at the core of the presentation provided by Mr Chelioudakis, who provided an insightful overview of the role of NGOs in the field of digital human rights protection, based on the Greek experience. Emphasising the legal and societal risks of AI, he discussed four cases of AI-driven systems used by public enforcement authorities and private companies. The experience of another Mediterranean country was then presented by Mr Bani Amer, focusing on the Jordan case and, more broadly, the situation in the part of the Mediterranean area embracing the MENA Region. He emphasised that, although some Countries are developing laws in the field of Data Protection, such as Tunisia and Morocco, many others, including Jordan, seem paying limited

attention to data protection and lack independent authorities to enforce such fundamental right. As this also negatively impacts on a human rights-oriented use of AI, Mr Bani Amer urges key actions to foster mobilisations of civil society and develop a data protection culture.

In his concluding remarks, Dr **Guido Scorza** (member of the Board of the Italian SA) stressed the importance of having initiatives such as this JMC conference focused on the Mediterranean area and called for a multi-stakeholder annual meeting. He emphasised the general concern in many Mediterranean countries with regard to new forms of digital colonialism by non-Mediterranean companies trying to establish a predominance in digital society through the design of algorithms. To address this issue, he called for a strengthened cooperation across the Mediterranean area, building on its extraordinary cultural heritage, and the importance for the Mediterranean space to regain governance over both personal and non-personal data, thus enhancing its position in the global arena.

III.3.2 Involvement of different stakeholders, active engagement of experts, and interaction with EU initiatives

The description of the JMC events organised in the first part of the project clearly shows as it was reached the goal of engaging a wide range of entities, in terms of interdisciplinary scope, geographical distribution and gender diversity (**KPI I**). This is referred not only to the speakers and their related affiliations but also to the attendees who come from different EU and non-EU countries.

As for the newsletter, due to the reasons mentioned in Section II, it has been difficult to promptly set it. The most efficient solutions had to be identified in terms of technical feasibility, budget constraints, and data protection-oriented approach. At the same time, without an initial phase of activities of the JMC it was very difficult to collect potentially interested subscribers. Due to these different reasons, the newsletter could be launched only at the end of the year, but specific information were periodically provided via the official email account of the JMC to colleagues, students and other people that showed their interest in the activity of the Chair.

As for the interaction with EU initiatives, many of the speakers invited in the JMC events lead or participate in EU-funded projects and presented the results of the findings of these project in their contribution to the JMC seminars, conferences and workshops, as well as the Chair has been actively involved in initiatives coordinated by various EU-funded projects (**KPI I**).¹²

III.3.3 Dissemination

According the Plan for dissemination, awareness-raising, and exploitation (Deliverable D1.1), the main tools of the JMC dissemination strategy are the Chair's website, its social network accounts (Twitter and LinkedIn), the newsletter, the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS), the JMC scientific events (international conferences, workshops and seminars), and

¹² See, e.g., <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/08/02/prof-mantelero-at-the-eucare-workshop-on-data-privacy-data-property-and-data-sharing-geneva-19-20-june-2023/>.

scientific publications. As for the website, it was realised in advance on the schedule in May (M3), while it was expected for M6 (**KPI I**),¹³ the same applies to the JMC social media accounts.¹⁴

The social media presence is characterised by a focus on experts and people actively engaged in the topics discussed, both the Twitter and LinkedIn accounts show a slow growth in terms of network size and monthly interactions, but this is due to the overlap between the JMC accounts and the accounts of the chairholder, who has a rather significant presence on these two social networks (more than 2300 followers in Twitter and more than 1500 connection on LinkedIn). In this regard, the JMC's social media accounts remain the main channel for communication of the Chair's activities, but a large part of the debate related to many of the topics addressed by the JMC is handled through the chairholder accounts, not least because there are no resources for a dedicated communication support activity.

As regards the NEDMS and its launch see above Sections II and III.3.1, which also includes information on the JMC events organised in the first part of this project.¹⁵ Given its recent establishment, the NEDMS is still at an early stage with a limited number of people involved, consisting mainly of project partners, speakers and experts involved in the JMC activities. However, the strength of the network is confirmed by the availability of colleagues and partners to host some of the most relevant events of the JMC in other European countries and universities, namely Spain (2023), Malta (2024) and Greece (2024).

In addition, specific events were organised outside the JMC programme in collaboration with Professor Lilian Mitrou (University of the Aegean-Greece, member of the JMC Teaching Team) as part of the Deloitte Summer Academy in Syros (Greece), with the Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos by organising a seminar in November 2022 (Torino, San Jose, and Montevideo, 8th November 2022),¹⁶ which offered the Chair the opportunity to promote its activity beyond the borders of the Mediterranean area, and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya with the participation as invited speaker in the conference organised, on 18 November 2022,¹⁷ within the framework of the project Law and Artificial Intelligence (LAI) (RTI2018-101432-B-I00, Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, Programa Estatal de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación Orientada a los Retos de la Sociedad) (**KPI I**).

During the first year project the Chair holder took part in several scientific events to promote and disseminate the JMC research and activities, in European and non-European countries:

Brazilian Senate: on 10th June 2022, Prof. Alessandro Mantelero spoke at the Brazilian Senate-Jurists Commission to support the preparation of the Brazilian regulatory framework for AI.

He highlighted, among other things, the importance of adopting a rights-based approach in risk management, which is preferable to the risk/benefit approach, and pointed out that both the EU Artificial Intelligence Act and the US American Data Privacy and Protection Act, currently under discussion, have proposed some limitations to Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA) in AI due to the industrial strategies for AI in these countries. Prof. Mantelero also stressed that HRIA for AI is

¹³ See also above Section II.

¹⁴ Detailed information on website traffic is not available due to the decision not to use third-party analytics and the ICT internal policy of the host institution.

¹⁵ See also <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/02/07/enlarging-the-network-of-experts-on-digital-mediterranean-societies-prof-mantelero-participates-in-the-international-meeting-towards-a-mediterranean-network-of-dpas-and-experts-in-personal-data-pr/>.

¹⁶ See https://digimed.polito.it/events/#IIDH_Seminar.

¹⁷ See UOC, Jornada de estudio: El futuro marco regulatorio de la Inteligencia Artificial en la Unión Europea <https://symposium.uoc.edu/90081/detail/jornada-de-estudio-el-futuro-marco-regulatorio-de-la-inteligencia-artificial-en-la-union-europea.html>.

not an expanded Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) and that regulatory emphasis on quantifiable risk thresholds requires a methodological approach to HRIA in AI. He suggested an expert-based and participatory HRIA for AI, in line with the proposal described in his recent book *Beyond Data: Human Rights, Ethical and Social Impact Assessment in AI*.¹⁸ Finally, he criticised the emphasis on standardization, pointing out that standards are appropriate tools for phenomena with similar patterns, while HRIA in AI deals with a variety of different situations and requires a context-based approach.

Catalan Data Protection Authority: on 20th September 2022 Prof. Alessandro Mantelero gave a speech at the Catalan Data Protection Authority on data protection and AI regulation. He discussed the proposed EU Regulation on AI, highlighting some weaknesses but also recognising its importance as a step forward in the global regulatory framework, confirming the EU's leadership in the regulation of digital societies.

In relation to the issues arising from the proposal, Prof. Mantelero pointed out, for example, that the AI regulatory proposal focuses mainly on high-risk applications, leaving aside the majority of medium and low-risk applications, which are those affecting the daily lives of many people. In addition, he considered the lack of tools to carry out risk assessment in the development of AI applications, despite its mandatory provision. Moreover, he argued that the Proposal does not promote the participation of citizens when creating AI applications or programs that may affect their rights and freedoms.

Global Privacy Assembly-Istanbul: On 25th October 2022, Prof. Alessandro Mantelero gave a keynote speech at the 44th Global Privacy Assembly (GPA 2022), hosted by the Turkish Data Protection Authority in Istanbul. Starting from the effects of the collection and processing of large-scale datasets, the speech focused on the impacts of analytics and AI technologies on the distribution of power within digital societies.

Prof. Mantelero highlighted the risks related to the 'platformisation' of physical spaces, e.g., smart cities, the consequences on labour exploitation, and the effects of the rise of big players with regard to competition in digital societies. Against this background, he emphasised the need to adopt a broader perspective in assessing the impact of AI on our societies, going beyond data protection and focusing on the impact on human rights, not only in terms of risk assessment but also with regard to the future legal framework. In this respect, he outlined a long-term scenario in which AI regulation will encompass data protection provisions and data protection authorities will play a key role in overseeing AI applications and their effects on society.

31st European Conference of Data Protection Authorities (Spring Conference 2023): on 10th May 2023, Professor Mantelero gave a speech on the opening panel of the annual Spring Conference of the data protection authorities of the Member States of the EU and of the Council of Europe. Dealing with the assessment of social impacts of the use of technology, he outlined three main stages of the evolving process of technology governance: the breaking point, the compromise, and the evolving path. As with previous technological revolutions, the current AI revolution has reached its breaking point with an increasing impact on society. Stressing the fact that innovation must be guided by values, the JM Chair holder emphasised the key role of accountability and responsible innovation.

¹⁸ The book is available in open access here: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-94-6265-531-7>.

At the same time, he framed the future AI regulation as a compromise between European core values and industrial policy, in which individuals, communities, states and business can play different roles but also suffer from limitations in fulfilling their goals. For this reason, in the long run, it is important to plan an evolving path from a top-down approach to co-design, as none of the actors mentioned can be regarded as the sole value designer. Value-driven design must therefore be the result of a participatory and democratic process where the risk-based approach (at the core of the AI Act) is just the first step towards a governance of technology development based on key legal and ethical principles resulting from a democratic participatory process that should be transparent and inclusive.

II Congreso Iberoamericano de Bioderecho y Derechos Humanos, Universidad de Guadalajara: on 8-9 May 2023, Professor Mantelero was invited as keynote speaker to the 2nd Ibero-American Conference on Biolaw and Human Rights, organised by the University of Murcia in collaboration with the University of Guadalajara, the University of San Luis Potosí and the University of Costa Rica and co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme (Pro-Human Biolaw). Professor Mantelero gave a keynote speech on La regulación de la Inteligencia Artificial en Europa (The regulation of AI in Europe) focusing on the challenges and expectations of the European approach to AI regulation.

Collaboration with the Catalan Data Protection Authority on fundamental rights impact assessment in AI: from 12 to 16 June 2023, during a three-day meeting, the Chair holder discussed the new challenges of Artificial Intelligence and data-driven technologies at the Catalan Data Protection Authority. This initiative is part of the important plan launched by the Authority and its director, Ms Meritxell Borràs i Solé, to strengthen data protection in addressing the most relevant challenges of innovation.

In this line, after an interesting discussion during the keynote given at the Catalan Data Protection Authority, Prof. Mantelero held two workshops with experts from the Authority and the DPOs of the main Catalan public bodies to discuss how to perform the fundamental rights impact assessment in AI, which will be a cornerstone of the future implementation of the AI Act. In a dedicated workshop, the Chair holder discussed the ethical impact of AI in research projects with representatives of leading Catalan universities, which are at the forefront of addressing the most innovative applications of AI.¹⁹

18th International Conference on Internet, Law and Politics - Computational Social Sciences (Barcelona): on 15 June 2023, as part of the IDP Conference organised in collaboration with the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, the JMC held a panel on Tourism and Data. Considering that responsible, sustainable and culturally inspired tourism can benefit from the large amount of data

¹⁹ Media sources:

https://www.elnacional.cat/es/sociedad/eurocamara-peligros-inteligencia-artificial-defiende-limitarla_1043829_102.html

https://www.ansalatina.com/americalatina/noticia/ciencia_y_tecnologia/2023/06/14/como-la-ia-afecta-a-derechos-fundamentales_4993a2db-c39f-4f6a-be6e-504befc19168.html

<https://www.forbes.com.mx/experto-etica-advierte-impacto-derechos-humanos-tener-ia/>

<https://elsiglo.com.ve/2023/06/13/experto-en-etica-advierte-del-impacto-en-los-derechos-humanos-que-puede-tener-la-ia/>

generated within the Mediterranean region, the panel focused on the free flow of data as a key element to strengthen tourism governance and to promote a common transnational data space.

The panel was chaired by Prof. Miquel Peguera Poch (Catedrático de los Estudios de Derecho y Ciencia Política, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya) and included the following speakers: Prof. Alessandro Mantelero, Ms. Giovanna Galasso (Intellera consulting - Associate Partner, EU Account Lead), and Prof. Apol·lònia Martínez Nadal (Catedrática de Derecho Mercantil, Universitat de les Illes Balears).

Deloitte Summer Academy on Law & Technology, 5-8 July 2023: as part of the development of the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies, Prof. Alessandro Mantelero participated as an invited speaker at the Summer Academy on Law & Technology 2023, organised in Syros by the Deloitte Academy and KBVL Law Firm, under the auspices of the University of the Aegean and having Prof. Lilian Mitrou (University of the Aegean), a member of the JMC Teaching Team, among its academic organisers.

The Summer School brought together a wide range of experts from law firms, government and academia, including Michail Bletsas (Director of Computing, MIT Media Lab), Mateja Durovic (Reader at King's College London), Vasileios Karkatzounis (Legal advisor to the Secretary General of Telecommunications and Post of the Ministry of Digital Governance), Sokratis Katsikas (Director, Norwegian Center for Cybersecurity in Critical Sectors, Norwegian University of Science and Technology – NTNU), Evangelos Margaritis (Attorney at Law, Scientific fellow at the University of the Aegean), Ioannis Revolidis (Lecturer of Media, Communications & Technology, University of Malta) and Apostolos Vorras (Partner, Head of Data Protection & Digital Technologies, KBVL Law Firm).

In his presentation on Data protection and AI, Prof. Mantelero addressed the challenges of the interplay between the current EU data protection framework and the forthcoming AI Act, pointing out the differences in their risk-based approach. He also outlined the key elements and methodological requirements for the fundamental rights impact assessment that will be required by the EU regulation on AI, but still lacks a specific methodology.

Finally, the Chair holder contributed with its background, including the finding of the JMC activities, in several international fora where the debate on digital society is running. Among them, it is worth noting the presentations given in the contexts of the UNESCO-Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, sub-group on the social and cultural dimension (1 July 2022) and the EU Commission-Annual EUD Focal Points Forum (27-29 June 2022).