

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

## Deliverable 1.4

### Report on the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS) and long-term sustainability and activity plan for the Chair

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## I. Introduction

The Jean Monnet Chair in Mediterranean Digital Societies and Law has among its main objectives the extension of its geographical reach, the creation of a network of experts from academia, policy-making and civil society, and the dissemination of the Chair's results to a wide audience over time. All of these objectives contribute to the achievement of the Chair's goals and to its long-term strategy.

In this respect, this deliverable provides a description of the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS) and its composition, as well as an outline for the long-term sustainability of the Chair's project. The two parts are closely linked, as many of the experts involved in the network created by the Chair are also actively involved in the future development of the Chair's activities, beyond the duration of this project. One example is the involvement of academics and policy-makers in the book **Mediterranean Digital Societies: Law and Technology**,<sup>1</sup> which will be published by Bloomsbury Academic (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc) and will be the first book in the field of Law & Technology in Mediterranean studies.

Another example is the collaboration with the Mediterranean Network for Data Protection (Réseau Méditerranéen des DPAs et Experts en PDP) launched by the Moroccan Data Protection Authority in 2023,<sup>2</sup> which combines this EU-funded project with a major international initiative promoted by the southern Mediterranean countries.

Other collaborations based on the Chair's network have involved the University of Murcia<sup>3</sup> and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya<sup>4</sup> in Spain, the Greek business community and the University of the Aegean,<sup>5</sup> the University of Malta,<sup>6</sup> and participation in EU-funded projects such as the EuCARE<sup>7</sup> and the Pro-Human Biolaw<sup>8</sup> projects.

In addition, the Chair has also been directly involved in important policymaking initiatives at EU and international level on the challenges posed by AI and its regulation. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the keynote speech at the 31st European Conference of Data Protection Authorities (Spring Conference 2023), Budapest, 10-12 May 2023,<sup>9</sup> and the ongoing cooperation with the Catalan Data Protection Authority on AI and fundamental rights impact assessment,<sup>10</sup> as well as, at

<sup>1</sup> The original title of the book, as described in the DIGIMED project, was A sea of data: A Mediterranean perspective for digital societies.

<sup>2</sup> See <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/>.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/07/15/data-spaces-rights-society-market-and-information-power-university-of-murcia-14-july-2023/>.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/06/16/the-digimed-jean-monnet-chair-at-the-18th-international-conference-on-internet-law-and-politics-barcelona-15-june-2023/>.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/07/09/in-syros-greece-at-the-deloitte-summer-academy-on-law-technology-5-8-july-2023/>.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.polito.it/ateneo/comunicazione-e-ufficio-stampa/appuntamenti/news?idn=23513>.

<sup>7</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/06/21/prof-mantelero-at-the-eucare-workshop-on-data-privacy-data-property-and-data-sharing-geneva-19-20-june-2023/>.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/05/31/ii-congreso-iberoamericano-de-bioderecho-y-derechos-humanos-universidad-de-guadalajara-8-9-may-2023-keynote-speech/>.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/05/31/31st-european-conference-of-data-protection-authorities-spring-conference-2023-budapest-10-12-may-2023/>.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/06/17/in-barcelona-to-discuss-the-fundamental-rights-impact-assessment-in-ai-at-the-catalan-data-protection-authority-travel-notes/>.

the international level, the cooperations with INTERPOL<sup>11</sup> and UNDP.<sup>12</sup> Policy activities have therefore been focused not only on the EU area,<sup>13</sup> but also beyond the EU borders, as in the case of the active participation in the legislative and institutional debate on the future regulation of AI in Brazil.<sup>14</sup>

All these past and ongoing activities, ranging from research to policy-making, have confirmed the visibility achieved by the Chair in the EU and international contexts in relation to the key topics of the DIGIMED project, and lead to predict a positive outcome in terms of future expansion and consolidation of the network of experts created by the Chair, as well as contributing to the long-term sustainability of the DIGIMED project.

## II. The Chair and the Network of Experts on Digital Mediterranean Societies (NEDMS)

During the first two and a half years, the Chair has been able to gather around its project a diverse group of renowned experts in the fields related to the different facets of digital Mediterranean societies. This network of experts<sup>15</sup> has been directly involved in the Chair's initiatives, such as public and closed-doors events, and has actively supported the Chair's objectives, creating new opportunities for collaboration on research projects, publications and policy initiatives.

Given the novelty of the focus on digital society and law in Mediterranean studies, the network has reached a significant dimension in terms of the topics covered, the regional scope, and the diverse nature of the people involved, as detailed below.

In terms of geographical distribution, the network covers the international and EU levels, the Western and Eastern Mediterranean, and includes experts from non-Mediterranean countries. In terms of composition, the different areas include academics, policy-makers, civil society, and business, with a greater engagement of the first three groups, as business is more present as a target of the Chair's initiatives, in line with the project's goals ("The NEDMS will contribute to the project implementation and to its long-term impact by bringing together scholars, experts, policy-makers, and civil society representatives").

<sup>11</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/11/16/the-jmc-contributes-to-the-regulatory-debate-on-ai-prof-mantelero-at-the-european-parliament-and-interpol/>.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2024/06/08/prof-mantelero-leads-the-undp-training-workshop-in-ankara-on-human-rights-impact-assessment-hria-in-ia-1-2-february-2024/>.

<sup>13</sup> See the AI Policy Leader in Academia award received by the JMC chair-holder from the Center for AI and Digital Policy Europe at the CPDP Conference for the work in favour of the introduction of the FRIA-Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment in the AI Act (now Article 27 of the Act) through active engagement with the team of the EP Rapporteur on the AI Act, <https://digimed.polito.it/2024/06/08/prof-mantelero-receives-the-ai-policy-leader-in-academia-award-from-the-center-for-ai-and-digital-policy-europe-at-the-cpdp-conference-21-may-2024/>.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://digimed.polito.it/2022/06/23/hearing-of-professor-mantelero-at-the-brazilian-senate-on-the-future-regulatory-framework-for-ai/> and <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/11/19/professor-mantelero-in-brasilia-to-discuss-the-brazilian-and-eu-approach-to-ai-regulation-9-10-november-2023/>.

<sup>15</sup> In terms of structure, the NEDMS involves directly the as a members the following persons:

Alessandro Mantelero (JMC), Maria Samantha Esposito (Assistant professor of Private Law, Department of Management and Production Engineering Politecnico di Torino), Leyla Keser Berber (Associate professor of Law Information Technology Law Research Center, Istanbul Bilgi University), Lilian Mitrou (Professor of Privacy and Information Law University of the Aegean President of the Institute for Privacy Law, Data Protection and Technology - European Public Law Organization), and Miquel Peguera Poch (Associate professor of Law, Faculty of Law and Political Science Universitat Oberta de Catalunya). The other persons listed in the tables in the text are affiliated (A) or partners (P) of the NEDMS. The affiliates contribute to the research and teaching activities of the Chair, while the partners take part in specific initiatives focused on the Mediterranean region in the field of digital society.

As far as NGOs are concerned, it is worth noting that the DIGIMED project has given a voice to civil society from countries, such as Jordan, Greece and Turkey, where NGOs have limited or no visibility outside their national borders and at EU level. The public events in which they participated, their online streaming and the availability of the recorded files, therefore contribute to a broad Mediterranean discourse on digital society and increase the visibility of local NGOs and their projects and goals.

Experts by region	
<p>Catherine Lennman, Global Privacy Assembly (A)</p> <p>Alexandrine Pirlot de Corbion, Director of Strategy, Privacy International (P)</p> <p>Massimo Marelli, Head of the Data Protection Office, International Committee of the Red Cross (A)</p> <p>Clementina Barbaro, Head, Youth Policy Division – Secretary to the Joint Council on Youth and the European Steering Committee for Youth, Council of Europe (A)</p> <p>Belkis Wille, Senior Crisis &amp; Conflict Researcher, Human Rights Watch (P)</p> <p>Yannick Meneceur, Council of Europe (A)</p> <p>Peter Kimpian, Secretary to the Committee 108, Council of Europe (P)</p>	International
<p>Chloé Berthélémy, European Digital Rights-EDRi (P)</p> <p>Pauline Veron, European Centre for Development Policy Management (P)</p> <p>Olivier Matter, Head of International Cooperation, EDPS (A)</p> <p>Francesca Fanucci, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (A)</p> <p>Karolina Iwanska, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law and EDRi (A)</p> <p>Mihalis Kritikos, European Commission, Research Ethics and Integrity Sector, DG RTD, Policy Analyst (P)</p> <p>Karine Caunes, Center for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP) - Global Program Director and CAIDP Europe Executive Director (P)</p>	EU
<p>Graziella Roccella, Chief Research and Product Design Officer – Planet Smart City (P)</p> <p>Marco Santambrogio, Entrepreneur – Senior Advisor – Vice Chairman Metasociale (P)</p> <p>Michele Pellerzi, Senior Associate 42 Law Firm (A)</p>	Western Mediterranean <sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/sea-basins/west-mediterranean>.

Julián Valero-Torrijos, Professor of Administrative Law and Director of the Integra Foundation Chair on Identity and Digital Rights, University of Murcia (A)

Albert Ruda Gonzalez, Professor of Private Law, University of Girona (P)

Joe Cannataci, Head, Department of Information Policy & Governance, University of Malta and Co-Director of the STeP Research Group, University of Groningen (A)

Giovanna Galasso, Intellera consulting - Associate Partner, EU Account Lead (P)

Apol·lònia Martínez Nadal, Catedrática de Derecho Mercantil en la Universitat de les Illes Balears (P)

Miquel Peguera Poch, Catedrático de Derecho Mercantil en la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (A)

Tommaso Messina, Analyst and Policy Consultant (P)

Francesco Luigi Milone, Politecnico di Torino (P)

Manuela Rebaudengo, Politecnico di Torino (P)

Paolo Benanti, Pontifical Gregorian University (P)

Mattia Balbo, University of Turin (P)

Lorenzo Calvelli, University of Venice (P)

Maria Letizia Bixio, European University of Rome (P)

Massimiliano Lo Turco, Politecnico di Torino (P)

Jeanne Mifsud Bonnici, University of Groningen and University of Malta (A)

Chawki Gaddès, 2019-23 President of the Instance nationale de protection des données personnelles (Tunisian DPA) and President of the Francophone Association of Personal Data Protection Authorities (P)

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

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

Luigi Montuori, Head of Service for EU and International Matters – Garante per la Protezione dei dati personali (P)

Agostino Ghiglia, member of the Board of the Garante per la protezione dei dati personali (P)

Alessandro Politi, NATO Defense College Foundation, Director (P)

Clinton O'Neill, Commander of the Armed Forces of Malta (P)

Ann Fenech, The Comité Maritime International, President (P)

Christopher Aquilina, Malta Financial Services Authority, Deputy Head (P)

<p>Brando Benifei, Member of the European Parliament, Head of Delegation, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Rapporteur for the European Parliament on EU AI Act (P)</p> <p>Giuseppe Vaciago, LT42, Politecnico di Torino (P)</p> <p>Alberto Pelliccione, ReaQta (P)</p> <p>Christian Iaione, Professor of Public Law, co-director of LABORatory for the GOVERNance of the City as a Commons, LUISS University (P)</p>	
<p>Bayram Selvi, The Turkish Red Crescent, Director of Migration Services (P)</p> <p>Theodora Gazi, University of Athens, Lawyer (P)</p> <p>Christina Zarogianni, University of Cyprus (P)</p> <p>Leyla Keser Berber, Istanbul Bilgi University</p> <p>Amer Bani Amer, Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development (P)</p> <p>Eleftherios Chelioudakis, Homo Digitalis (A)</p> <p>Ayca Atabey, Information Technology Law Institute at Istanbul Bilgi University and Edinburgh University (A)</p> <p>Maria Bottis, Professor of Information law – Ionian University (A)</p> <p>Vagelis Papakonstantinou, Professor of Personal Data Protection Law, Faculty of Law &amp; Criminology Vrije Universiteit Brussel Research fellow, Institute for Privacy Law, Data Protection and Technology (IPL), European Public Law Organization (A)</p>	Eastern Mediterranean <sup>17</sup>
<p>Aaron Martin, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology and Society and Assistant Professor in Maastricht University's Humanitarian Action Programme (P)</p> <p>Lina Jasmontaite, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (A)</p> <p>Michelle Pace, Professor in Global Studies, Roskilde University (P)</p> <p>Carolina Aguerre, Profesora de alta dedicación, Universidad Católica del Uruguay, co-directora del Centro de Estudios en Tecnología Sociedad (CETYS) de la Universidad de San Andres e investigadora asociada del Centro de Estudios para la Cooperación Global (GCR21) de la Universidad de Duisburg-Essen (P)</p> <p>Eduardo Bertoni, Representante de la Oficina Regional para América del Sur del IIDH (P)</p> <p>Viktor Mayer-Schönberger, Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford (P)</p>	Non-Mediterranean countries

<sup>17</sup> See <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/sea-basins/east-mediterranean>.

<p>Maria Gabrielsen Jumbert, Research Director &amp; Senior Researcher at Peace Research Institute Oslo, Co-Director of the Norwegian Centre for Humanitarian Studies (P)</p> <p>Manuel David Masseno, Polytechnic Institute of Beja (P)</p> <p>Alina Wernick, Researcher, Legal Tech Lab, University of Helsinki, Helsinki (P)</p> <p>Brett Frischmann, The Charles Widger Endowed University Professor in Law, Business and Economics - Villanova University (P)</p> <p>Charles Raab, Professor Emeritus of Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh (P)</p> <p>Sanja Bauk, TalTech - Tallinn University of Technology, Research Professor (P)</p>	
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In terms of the different areas of expertise represented in the network set up by the Chair, they cover the main themes of the project, which are also the most relevant ones under discussion in the Mediterranean region, as listed below.

<p>Humanitarian actions and migration</p>	<p>Eleftherios Chelioudakis, Homo Digitalis</p> <p>Massimo Marelli, International Committee of the Red Cross</p> <p>Clementina Barbaro, Council of Europe</p> <p>Aaron Martin, Maastricht University</p> <p>Theodora Gazi, University of Athens</p> <p>Bayram Selvi, The Turkish Red Crescent</p> <p>Chloé Berthélémy, European Digital Rights-EDRi</p> <p>Jeanne Mifsud Bonnici, University of Groningen and University of Malta</p> <p>Lina Jasmontaite, Vrije Universiteit Brussel</p> <p>Pauline Veron, European Centre for Development Policy Management</p> <p>Ayca Atabey, Information Technology Law Institute at Istanbul Bilgi University and Edinburgh University</p> <p>Giuseppe Vaciago, LT42, Politecnico di Torino</p> <p>Alberto Pelliccione, ReaQta</p> <p>Joe Cannataci, University of Groningen and University of Malta</p> <p>Michelle Pace, Professor in Global Studies, Roskilde University</p> <p>Paolo Benanti, Pontifical Gregorian University</p> <p>Maria Gabrielsen Jumbert, Peace Research Institute Oslo and Norwegian Centre for Humanitarian Studies</p> <p>Massimo Marelli, International Committee of the Red Cross</p>
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	<p>Belkis Wille, Human Rights Watch</p> <p>Catherine Lennman, Global Privacy Assembly</p> <p>Christina Zarogianni, University of Cyprus</p> <p>Alexandrine Pirlot de Corbion, Privacy International</p>
Cultural heritage and digital humanities	<p>Mattia Balbo, University of Turin</p> <p>Lorenzo Calvelli, University of Venice</p> <p>Maria Letizia Bixio, European University of Rome</p> <p>Massimiliano Lo Turco, Politecnico di Torino</p>
AI and human rights	<p>Carolina Aguerre, Universidad Católica del Uruguay</p> <p>Eduardo Bertoni, Representante de la Oficina Regional para América del Sur del IIDH</p> <p>Brando Benifei, Rapporteur for the European Parliament on EU AI Act</p> <p>Karine Caunes, Center for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP)</p> <p>Peter Kimpian, Council of Europe</p> <p>Vagelis Papakonstantinou, Vrije Universiteit Brussel and IPL-EPLO (A)</p>
Data Protection and data flows in the Mediterranean area	<p>Viktor Mayer-Schönberger, University of Oxford</p> <p>Chawki Gaddès, Tunisian DPA and Francophone Association of Personal Data Protection Authorities</p> <p>Leyla Keser Berber, Istanbul Bilgi University</p> <p>Omar Seghrouchni, Moroccan DPA</p> <p>Olivier Matter, EDPS</p> <p>Yannick Meneceur, Council of Europe</p> <p>Francesca Fanucci, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law</p> <p>Karolina Iwanska, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law and EDRI</p> <p>Eleftherios Chelioudakis, Homo Digitalis</p> <p>Amer Bani Amer, Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development</p> <p>Guido Scorza, Italian DPA</p>
Tourism and responsible data use	<p>Manuel David Masseno, Polytechnic Institute of Beja</p> <p>Tommaso Messina, Analyst and Policy Consultant</p>

in the Mediterranean area	<p>Francesco Luigi Milone, Politecnico di Torino</p> <p>Maria Samantha Esposito, Politecnico di Torino</p> <p>Manuela Rebaudengo, Politecnico di Torino</p> <p>Giovanna Galasso, Intellera consulting</p> <p>Apol·lònia Martínez Nadal, Universitat de les Illes Balears</p> <p>Miquel Peguera Poch, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya</p>
Smart cities and public data	<p>Luigi Montuori, Italian DPA</p> <p>Maria Bottis, Ionian University</p> <p>Graziella Roccella, Planet Smart City</p> <p>Marco Santambrogio, Metasociale</p> <p>Michele Pellerzi, 42 Law Firm</p> <p>Julián Valero-Torrijos, University of Murcia</p> <p>Alina Wernick, University of Helsinki</p> <p>Christian Iaione, LUISS University</p> <p>Brett Frischmann, Villanova University</p> <p>Charles Raab, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Mihalis Kritikos, European Commission</p> <p>Albert Ruda Gonzalez, University of Girona</p> <p>Agostino Ghiglia, Italian DPA</p>
Maritime traffic and cybersecurity	<p>Joe Cannataci, University of Malta and University of Groningen</p> <p>Alessandro Politi, NATO Defense College Foundation</p> <p>Sanja Bauk, Tallinn University of Technology</p> <p>Clinton O'Neill, Commander of the Armed Forces of Malta</p> <p>Ann Fenech, The Comité Maritime International, President</p> <p>Christopher Aquilina, Malta Financial Services Authority</p>

### III. Long-term sustainability and activity plan of the Chair

The long-term sustainability and activity plan of the DIGIMED project is articulated around six different axes, based on the main target groups of the Jean Monnet Chair's activities. These target

groups are namely: (i) POLITO students and international students; (ii) academia; (iii) policy-makers; (iv) civil society; (v) experts and professionals; (vi) business community and SMEs

Regarding **POLITO students and international students**, the main objective of the project's long-term strategy is to bridge the gap between technical education and legal knowledge with regard to EU regulation of innovative data and AI-based applications. Based on the results of the first two and a half years of the project, this goal can be considered achieved.

The Politecnico di Torino now includes the following courses that combine legal and technical knowledge in the field of digital society: Digital Society & Law (PhD course); Law and Technology (MSc in Engineering and Management); Data Ethics and Data Protection (MSc in Data Science and Engineering). These courses are part of the MSc and PhD programmes and will be repeated in the following years, so that they become a permanent part of the training of management engineers and data scientists, the two most relevant profiles in technical education in terms of impact on the strategies and design for the development of digital societies.

As regards the long-term strategy in the academic context, both the network created by the Chair (see the section above) and the scientific output of the project can have a lasting result in terms of the contribution of computer law experts to the EU regulatory and policy debate. The forthcoming book **Mediterranean Digital Societies: Law and Technology**, to be published by Bloomsbury Academic (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc) on the basis of an agreement already signed with the publisher, will be a milestone in Mediterranean studies in the field of law and technology.

The book is the first international book in this field, adopting a multidisciplinary approach and framing the different aspects of the Mediterranean digital society. More than just a legacy of the project, it is a groundbreaking publication that opens a new stream of studies in the field of Mediterranean digital societies.

In view of the growing importance of the Mediterranean region in the current geopolitical scenario, the book aims to provide a Mediterranean perspective on digital societies, focusing on key challenges and common interests in addressing core issues such as cultural heritage, tourism, smart city development, migration, humanitarian action management, maritime security, and the Mediterranean data space. The book adopts a multidisciplinary approach, with contributions from scholars and experts in these fields, and chapters covering the legal, societal and technical dimensions of the Mediterranean digital environment.

This book will be essential reading for scholars wishing to better understand these under-explored digital societies and do so from a Mediterranean perspective. In this respect, it will also be an important tool for **policy-makers** around the Mediterranean region in designing their digital strategies, both sectoral and general, considering the impact of data-driven technologies on society and their geo-political dimension.

The following textbox provides a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the book, showing the diversity of the key issues discussed in the book and the involvement of academics from different countries of the Mediterranean region, including non-EU countries, in a way that also contributes to the creation of an international academic group of experts in this field.

## Chapter I

### Mediterranean digital societies: a common path?

Although politically divided for centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire, the Mare Nostrum has remained a geographical and social space that has not ceased to forge links between the peoples and countries that flourished around its shores.

The current geo-political scenario and the need for greater cooperation in strategic sectors, such as migration, security, and tourism, are leading policy-makers to look back to the Mediterranean area.

Against this background, three main issues arise with regard to the future Mediterranean digital societies: (i) the consequences of data-driven policies grounded in a geo-political division between EU and non-EU countries and the risk of perceiving the focus on the Mediterranean area as a regional issue of the southern members of the EU; (ii) the difficulties in establishing a solid roadmap for a Mediterranean strategy in the development of digital societies, based on dialogue between Mediterranean countries; (iii) the role that the uniqueness of Mediterranean culture can play in shaping and paving the way for digital societies.

To address these issues dealing with society, territory, data spaces and data borders, this book looks at four main areas in which data-driven technologies are playing an increasingly significant role: (i) the management of the various crises affecting this area related to migration and geopolitical tensions; (ii) the scenarios for an integration of Mediterranean countries into a common digital space, at least in key sectors such as tourism and health; (iii) the governance of smart cities along common lines and with a focus on the preservation of their tangible and intangible heritage, taking into account the way in which a key cultural value as privacy has evolved; (iv) the maritime security in the context of renewed geopolitical tension and the digitalization of diplomacy, intelligence and warfare.

While the following chapters explore these issues in depth, the first chapter aims to provide a general overview and, like an ancient mosaic, tries to put these different pieces together in order to answer to the main research question: whether the Mediterranean approach to the digital society is simply based on the need to cooperate in order to address common problems or it shows peculiarities rooted in the cultural approach of this area. Regardless of the different conclusions that can be drawn on this point, it is clear that the Mediterranean area deserves more specific attention in the context of an inclusive multilateral approach, rather than being presented as a mere dichotomy between EU and non-EU countries.

**Prof. Alessandro MANTELERO, Polytechnic University of Turin**

## Chapter II

### Data protection in humanitarian actions

*Many humanitarian organisations are active in the Mediterranean region, seeking to protect, assist and empower vulnerable people in the context of armed conflicts, other crisis and violence settings, and natural disasters – circumstances that are out of the ordinary. Many of these organizations' work is mission-driven and does not necessarily fit into a 'typical' legal framework. As such, some organisations have carried out specific tasks under international law founded on their privileges and immunities.*

*Given this complex background, where many stakeholders participate and contribute to international development assistance and humanitarian aid programmes, we question whether a special legal basis is needed to facilitate their work while safeguarding the interests and rights of vulnerable groups. Would the 'public good' as a legal ground fit this purpose? What would be the consequences of such a legal basis on*

*the data processing obligations of humanitarian organisations? Would using this legal ground result in broader use of different categories of data processed and increased the amount and sharing of data among stakeholders? Would this positively affect vulnerable populations and help safeguard their best interests? What are the risks and benefits of implementing a separate legal basis to address the collaborative needs of the present-day humanitarian landscape? To answer these questions, this Chapter aims to draw from practical examples and case studies in the Mediterranean context, critically analyse the need for a separate legal basis for processing personal data, and further explore practical considerations in its application.*

**Dr. Lina JASMONTAITE, Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Ayça ATABEY, Edinburgh University**

## **Chapter III**

### **Contractual solutions to protect human rights in critical areas of international cooperation**

*The EU established a partnership with the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean back in 1995, when the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership was established. This cooperation operates in various fields and has given rise to numerous local projects that, in recent years, have increasingly relied on digital technology to achieve their goals.*

*The progressive datafication of the physical and social environment in the context of project development has often faced the risks associated with digital ecosystems characterised by knowledge and information asymmetries, where significant power lies in the hands of local technology partners, in terms of access to data, development of data processing tools, and potential data re-use and sharing.*

*This chapter aims to analyse these challenges in contexts where the legal framework does not provide an effective level of protection of personal data and human rights, in terms of the laws in force and their implementation.*

*To address these challenges and based on case studies, the chapter focuses on strategies using a range of solutions to ensure the responsible use of digital technologies and AI throughout the project lifecycle, which can be implemented regardless of the level of protection provided by the local context in which the funded projects are developed. Various legal tools (such as policies, guidelines, and contracts) are explored and related to the different objectives and nature of the project initiatives.*

**Prof. Alessandro MANTELERO, Polytechnic University of Turin**

## **Chapter IV**

### **Tourist data: towards a Mediterranean data space**

*The Mediterranean area is the planet's leading tourist destination with over 232 million international tourists a year and 665 million expected by 2025. In order to manage such a large number of tourists, the role of data is crucial for optimising flows, offers and boosting this economic sector. However, the geographical, political, and functional fragmentation of tourism policies and the variety of actors involved hinder the achievement of these results.*

*It is therefore necessary to develop synergies based on better interaction, common objectives and data sharing. In this respect, a central role is to be played by data spaces.*

*This chapter aims to contribute to the proper design of such spaces and their regulatory framework by analysing tourism data ecosystems, studying the interplay between data governance and sovereignty, and considering the most recent regulatory proposals in this field.*

**Dr. Maria Samantha ESPOSITO and Prof. Alessandro MANTELERO, Polytechnic University of Turin**

## **Chapter V**

### **Health data sharing in the Mediterranean context**

*Health data play a relevant role in the Mediterranean context in a number of different scenarios related to the flows of people and services in this area. On the one hand, migrants and tourists, for different reasons, need healthcare; on the other hand, collaborations between hospitals and research centres need data exchanges to be realised.*

*This variety of scenarios is based on different frameworks and legal bases for data exchange, with the EU moving towards a common space for health data and benefiting from harmonised rules, but with much greater variability among non-EU countries. Hence the need to question legal solutions to facilitate the exchange of data in the light of the operational scenarios and the existing framework of international relations.*

**Prof. Belén ANDREU MARTÍNEZ, University of Murcia and Dr. Chawki GADDES, Former President of the Instance nationale de protection des données personnelles (INPDP) of Tunisia**

## **Chapter VI**

### **Smart cities: the challenges of digitalising public administration**

*Smart cities have recently become one of the main axes for promoting the modernisation of public administration functions, particularly at municipal level. The design and development of these projects imply greater accessibility of citizens' information, not only by the public administration but also, and more critically, by other actors involved in the provision of public services. Furthermore, the demand for greater transparency in access to public sector information according to open data standards for commercial re-use represents a further challenge for the protection of the personal data of service users.*

*This chapter analyses the implications of such an approach with regard to the effective respect of fundamental rights from the perspective of the EU and the broader Mediterranean legal framework, with the aim of finding a way to combine rights protection and innovation in smart cities.*

**Prof. Julián VALERO TORRIJOS, Integra Foundation Chair on Identity and Digital Rights, University of Murcia**

## **Chapter VII**

### **Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture and more: towards a more nuanced methodology for understanding the past and present of privacy in the Mediterranean**

*The Mediterranean is a conveniently fascinating place for the study of the origins and development of privacy. For more than three thousand years, possibly far longer, many Mediterranean peoples have built their houses with privacy in mind, developing their domestic architecture to create distinct flows between the public and the private. Ever since technological evolution led to innovations in transport such as the ship, water-borne commerce and migration also contributed to the spread of ideas, information, traditions and culture. The impact on privacy of the easier, safer and speedier flow of goods, people, ideas and religions across the sea needs to be better understood by contrasting the development of the*

*Mediterranean littoral with that of inland regions where transport constraints and climate imposed different speeds and conditions of transit eg. the Sahara desert or the Silk Road.*

*It is only gradually and recently that archaeology and ethnoarchaeology are shedding more light on the creation of private spaces in pre-Hellenic domestic architecture, with influences on the rest of classical antiquity. This is opportune since a cohesive, holistic methodology requires research on “the archaeology of privacy”, taken together with the history and evolution of domestic architecture to include both private and less private (or public) places. It then fuses the evidence from archaeology and architecture with the even broader approach offered by anthropology when trying to understand the many different aspects of the human experience which are privacy related. Yet, this “Triple A” approach is, of itself, not enough. In its turn it needs to be combined with a conceptualisation of “the technologies of privacy” and “the economics of privacy” while not losing sight of the impact of climate and culture – and perhaps especially religion – on the way that the core of privacy and the periphery of privacy rights and sentiments have developed differently in different countries across the ages. This methodology promises to provide a better understanding of what was regulated and what needs to be regulated as the Mediterranean stumbles into the Digital Society and Knowledge Economy eras in a typically multi-speed, multi-tiered way. With 22 countries and nearly 500 million inhabitants reflecting millennia of cultural development, the Mediterranean littoral presents us with several opportunities for an evidence-based approach to Privacy Law.*

**Prof. Joe CANNATAKI, University of Malta and University of Groningen**

## **Chapter VIII**

### **Cultural heritage and data**

*The cultural dimension is a key element of the Mediterranean area, which is the custodian of an immense cultural heritage to be managed. In this field too, the transformation induced by the digital society has led to significant changes in the management, access and enjoyment of cultural heritage.*

*Data management thus assumes the nature of a crossroads, even from a legal point of view, between heritage, personal and non-personal data, and intellectual property protection. Hence the purpose of this chapter, namely to outline some guidelines for a common space for cultural heritage data.*

**Prof. Miquel PEGUERA POC, Open University of Catalonia**

## **Chapter IX**

### **Maritime security in the Mediterranean Sea**

*Maritime traffic necessarily plays an essential role in Mediterranean trade. In this context, the progressive digitalisation of this sector opens up new scenarios in transport management and safety, ensuring higher levels of performance. However, the digital environment, coupled with the growing presence of geo-political conflicts in the Mediterranean area, also brings new risks in terms of cybersecurity in both the commercial and military domains.*

*This chapter analyses these new threats and the regulatory framework currently being developed, both regionally and internationally, to address them and question the adequacy of the proposed solutions and directions for their further development.*

**Prof. Lilian MITROU, University of the Aegean, President of the Institute for Privacy Law, Data Protection and Technology (IPL) European Public Law Organization**

Active participation in the regulatory and policy debate is not only an expected outcome based on this publication and the existing network of experts, but is already an ongoing process, as demonstrated by several initiatives, such as the Mediterranean Network for Data Protection (Réseau Méditerranéen des DPAs et Experts en PDP),<sup>18</sup> the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quo Vadis AI Act international conference in Athens,<sup>19</sup> and the international workshop on AI Ethics Across Borders: Forging Intercultural Approaches in the Euro-Med Region organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation, which brought together both academics and policy-makers.

In this context, the scientific activity of the Chair has been developed hand in hand with the policy objectives, as described in more detail in the Policy and Impact section of the JMC website.

For this reason, several **policy-makers** have already been involved in the activities of the Chair and this group will be the cornerstone of a long-term strategy to promote regulatory dialogue in the Mediterranean region on the regulation of the digital society between EU Member States and between EU and non-EU countries. In this context, it is worth noting that the chair-holder will lead the UNDP initiative in the Eastern Europe and Asia region on human rights impact assessment in AI, with specific pilots in Türkiye in 2024-25, as well as continue to participate in the OECD Expert Group on AI, Data and Privacy, which is actively working at the international level to shape future AI regulation and where it is important to bring the Mediterranean perspective into the discourse.

A recent endorsement of the strength of the path taken by the Chair and its potential future outcomes comes from the AI Policy Leader in Academia award granted to the JMC chair-holder by the Center for AI and Digital Policy Europe on the opening night of the CPDP conference, which is Europe's leading data protection conference. Prof. Mantelero received the award together with Prof. Gianclaudio Malgeri (Leiden University) "for promoting human rights impact assessment in the governance of AI".

The Chair has also strengthened its ties with **civil society** and its leading organisations in the field of digital society, such as the Center for AI and Digital Policy Europe, the European Center For Not-For-Profit Law (ECNL), and Homo Digitalis. More specifically, in line with the project objectives, the Chair actively supports a more inclusive and human-centred development of data-intensive and AI applications with the involvement of civil societies through participatory processes, as confirmed by the publications on AI regulation co-authored with the European Center For Not-For-Profit Law (ECNL)<sup>20</sup> and the Chair's active engagement in the Framework for Meaningful Engagement: Human rights impact assessments of AI realised by ECNL.<sup>21</sup>

In addition, civil society has participated in all the events organised by the Chair. This has strengthened the relationship between the Chair and various actors in the field. In this respect, future cooperation will be facilitated by these relations and by the ongoing research carried out by the Chair in the field of HRIA (Human Rights Impact Assessment)<sup>22</sup> and FRIA (Fundamental Rights

<sup>18</sup> See <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/>.

<sup>19</sup> See <https://calendar.boussiasevents.gr/event/quo-vadis-conference/>.

<sup>20</sup> See Mantelero, A. and Fanucci, F. 2022. Great ambitions. The international debate on AI regulation and the human rights in the prism of the Council of Europe's CAHAI. In Philip Czech et al. (eds). European Yearbook on Human Rights 2022 (Intersentia: Cambridge), 225-252.

<sup>21</sup> See <https://ecnl.org/publications/framework-meaningful-engagement-human-rights-impact-assessments-ai>.

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., <https://digimed.polito.it/2024/06/08/prof-mantelero-leads-the-undp-training-workshop-in-ankara-on-human-rights-impact-assessment-hria-in-ia-1-2-february-2024/> and <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/06/17/in-barcelona-to-discuss-the-fundamental-rights-impact-assessment-in-ai-at-the-catalan-data-protection-authority-travel-notes/>.



Impact Assessment),<sup>23</sup> which are key issues for civil society at international and EU level and which require specific methodologies to facilitate an effective protection of fundamental rights. In this context, civil society has responded positively to the Chair's recent publication on *The Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment (FRIA) in the AI Act: Roots, legal obligations and key elements for a model template*, 54 Computer Law & Security Review, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clsr.2024.106020> (open access).

Regarding the impact on **experts and professionals**, the achievement of a long-term impact is based not only on the network created by the Chair and described in the previous section, but also on the various professionals and experts who attended the Chair's events and read the main outputs of this project. In this respect, several experts have been in contact with the Chair during and after the public events or have asked for further information on the ongoing and future outreach of the Chair in the Mediterranean context.

Finally, as far as the **business community and SMEs** are concerned, the Chair's extensive work on the impact of AI on fundamental and human rights<sup>24</sup> represents an important contribution to these business actors in addressing the key challenges of the AI-driven digital society, as confirmed by the European Commission's initiatives and goals concerning the Conformity Assessment and the Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment in the context of the implementation of the AI Act, by providing specific methodological guidance to AI providers and deployers.

The positive outcome of the Chair's efforts in this field has been confirmed by the request of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation to the JMC chair-holder to draft the Guidance Framework on the Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment and AI in the Frame of the Ethics Review Procedure and the Role of Ethics in the Assessment of the Fundamental Rights Effects of AI.

#### IV. Conclusions

The various activities carried out by the Chair over the last two and a half years and the expected results at the end of this project outline a significant capacity both to support the network of experts on digital Mediterranean societies and to achieve further results in the teaching, research and policy advice in this field.

In terms of sustainability, the teaching activities have been integrated as a permanent part of the existing MSc and PhD programmes at the Politecnico di Torino. The courses have been recorded and are also available online (with the exception of the Data Ethics & Data Protection course) and will continue to be offered after the end of the project, under the responsibility of the host institution, which will provide the necessary maintenance, technical support, and updates. Similarly, the

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., <https://digimed.polito.it/2024/06/08/prof-mantelero-receives-the-ai-policy-leader-in-academia-award-from-the-center-for-ai-and-digital-policy-europe-at-the-cdpd-conference-21-may-2024/>, <https://digimed.polito.it/2023/11/16/the-jmc-contributes-to-the-regulatory-debate-on-ai-prof-mantelero-at-the-european-parliament-and-interpol/>, and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0267364924000864?via%3Dihub>.

<sup>24</sup> See <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clsr.2024.106020>, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6265-531-7>, and <https://digimed.polito.it/publications/>.

outcomes of project events (conferences, seminars, etc., with the exception of Chatham House Rule sessions) have been recorded and remain freely available online.

In this regard, the project micro-site and the newsletter will continue to provide access to the project resources and information on studies and events on Mediterranean digital societies and law, and the social media accounts will remain active and updated.

As far as publications are concerned, not only those that represent an expected output of this project are and will be available on the project website, but also other publications by the JMC chairholder on the DIGIMED themes that have been published in the last two years.<sup>25</sup> All the publications of this project and most of the others are open access, as will be the case for the main project output, the book *Mediterranean Digital Societies: Law and Technology*, which will be published in 2025 and whose chapters will be included in the “Jan Monnet - Digital Mare Nostrum” working paper series.

While the sustainability of the teaching activities and the availability and access to the project results are granted, it is worth noting that further research and policy initiatives can benefit from the results achieved by the Chair over the years in terms of research, policy impact and networking, but will need to be funded by a specific budget, as the EU funding for this project is limited to its duration. However, in terms of sustainability, this seems to be an affordable challenge as the network created by the Chair has already provided several opportunities for joint initiatives with academic partners, and the relevance of the topic investigated and the positioning of the Chair as a leading project in the field will facilitate the application for further EU and non-EU funding.

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<sup>25</sup> See, e.g., Mantelero, A. 2022. *Beyond Data: Human Rights, Ethical and Social Impact Assessment in AI* (Springer-Asser); Mantelero, A. and Vaciago, G. 2022. *Reconciling Data Protection and Cybersecurity: An Operational Approach for Business Sector*. In *Privacy and Data Protection in Software Services* (Springer Nature); Mantelero, A. and Fanucci, F. 2022. *Great ambitions. The international debate on AI regulation and the human rights in the prism of the Council of Europe’s CAHAI*. In *European Yearbook on Human Rights* (Intersentia); Mantelero, A. 2022. *Artificial Intelligence (AI)*. In *Elgar Encyclopedia of Human Rights* (Edward Elgar Publishing); Mantelero, A. 2022. *Big data and data protection*. In *Research Handbook on Privacy and Data Protection Law* (Edward Elgar Publishing); Mantelero, A. 2023. *Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment in the DSA*. In *Putting the DSA into Practice* (Verfassungsblog); Mantelero, A. 2024. *The Fundamental Rights Impact Assessment (FRIA) in the AI Act: Roots, legal obligations and key elements for a model template*. 54 *Computer Law & Security Review* 106020.