Digitalization as a Lever for Sustainability

WG3: Social Sustainability

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Defining social sustainability brings about a broad range of aspects that influence and define it. Among other topics, questions derive about what is the value system that provides the basis to create social sustainability? Or what is the right balance of social and sustainability for whom? Or how to react the correct way in what situation?
Discussing children in depth, the discussion evolved a lot about teaching others about the right behavior and to be resilient toward others. Yet, there are also huge limitations on an individual level - there is no possibility to create social sustainability that is perceived the same way for everyone.

What are measurements of social sustainability?
- Number of harassments and intensity of harassment
- Individual fair working hours versus societal fairness
- Impact of sth being done or expressed

Responsibility to administer social sustainability
Beyond the juristic level, it becomes very complex and flexible who and in what way social sustainability should be administered.

Well-being in this context
Digital applications can and are support already the detection of mental illnesses, and other issues. However, it is also a question of automation and to what degree we want systems to take over and to what degree do we keep the ownership of an activity to the users. Painful experiences are to some degree necessary to know when you are doing well. For example, some people like to join forums and post opposing statements just to start a heated discussion before leaving the chat and never looking back. Taking this as an opportunity, maybe there should be a chatbot that enables people to rand about something and argue with "someone" without having the impact on an actual forum.

Creating empathy for well-being
Bringing people together to debate/exchange views and create empathy: There is, e.g., the "Trump dinner", which means you can either sit together in silence and not argue or start the debate and risk conflict. One of the challenges that need to be tackled is to overcome a

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person's cultural and educational background that shapes their opinions. However, empathy is a skill hard to develop, overall. It also reflects on technological tools that are biased by the designer's value system and beliefs. Counterbalancing approaches include controlling mechanisms of made decisions. Potential solutions: Teaching the younger generations developing their value system.

Ideas to worsen well-being:
Create an agitating system, inlc., e.g., endless scrolling, content that makes you addicted, that pushes competition, (see, e.g. tumblr), and comparison with other people by showing only all the positive, good stuff from others and minimizes your own life/ achievements.

Ideas for improving well-being:
An empowering system, a type of content where you don't feel like missing out and where you can easily stop scrolling through the content. There could be a platform to share shortcomings and to stand up for each other, or all the rejections in your life, supporting individual preferences and liked free-time activities, enabling people to find time and practice for things that brings them joy.