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Cross-border Threats to Health: "Building a European Health Union"

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COVID-19 has shown that serious threats to health are inherently cross-border. The EU and its Member States provided to, and also received assistance from, third countries in responding to the crisis. In direct response to COVID-19, the Commission provided the EU's enlargement countries and priority Eastern neighbouring countries access to the Health Security Committee and Early Warning and Response System. This was undertaken to maximise the protection of citizens and support the response of the EU by clearly acknowledging that the virus does not stop at borders, and that the strongest response and crisis management is via regional and international solidarity and cooperation. The October 2020 European Council committed to strengthening EU support to health systems and the reinforcement of partners' preparedness and response capacity in Africa. Furthermore, the Commission and EU Agencies also initiated regular exchanges of experience with prevention and control measures with China and other third countries. To consolidate and underpin the benefits of international cooperation and coordination, the new proposals confirm the EU's leading role in the global sphere of public health preparedness and response, with the objective of addressing outbreaks at the source via a two-pronged approach: reinforced and targeted international cooperation and coordination; and on the ground support to Member States and third countries, in times of need. These are the main objectives of the EU to address the cross-border threats to health expressed in its Communication "*Building a European Health Union*" (11.11.2020). The paper will also focus on the latest normative proposals submitted on November 2020 by the Commission: the first concerning a regulation on the serious cross-border threats to health; the secondo concerning a regulation on the establishment of a European Centre for disease prevention and control.

Humor visual issues in social networks during COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns

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One of the most dangerous world's pandemic of COVID-19 caused multiple changes in everyday life of modern society. At the same time the fear of getting sick or even dying was only the constituent part of comprehensive impact on humans' health and conscience which the spread of the virus had. Of course taking into account the amount of people who faced with the disease itself, we should not forget the total of transformations in our routine. And if in year 2019 the spread of COVID-19 was just at its beginning and often was perceived as a remote threat, then the spring of 2020 was the starting point of anti-pandemic measures all over the world.

The restrictions run by the authorities to avoid COVID-19 could be different depending on countries and their epidemiological situation and varied from partial enforcements such as wearing masks, closing habitually crowded placed etc. to prolonged lockdowns. Development and implementation of vaccines have become one of the decisive factors for a stable relaxation of these restrictions. However, in any case such a load has become a powerful source of emotional tension. Being trapped in limited space of their flats or undergoing other strong changes in their habitual way of life people had a necessity to invent brand new ways of leisure, activity and sometimes labor facing the lack of space, social contacts and travelling.

On the other hand, they always need to express their emotions, feelings, perceptions and opinions. Under the new conditions this requirement grew stronger seeking for new ways of its satisfaction too. Here we should consider that a good means of one's emotions and feeling expression are the jokes all together regarded as a humor. In its turn the humor adapted to online and network communication is exposed in pictures or short messages. And this visual communication in social networks is a source of extensive information on what people think, do and create. Humor visual issues in networking sites and applications contain therefore huge data by means of which many social effects of COVID-19 can be discovered and explained within visual research.

Liberties vs Security during COVID-19: Anti-Vaccine Protests in Europe

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Doctor and Associate Professor, respectively, Dokuz Eylul University

As security threats evolve and new issues become security concerns, democratic societies face the liberty-security dilemma in new forms. With the COVID-19 pandemic, public health security responses of governments have raised concerns over intervention of the states in people's lives. Recently, a number of European governments decided to impose compulsory vaccine mandates, COVID passes for indoor places as well as execution of new lockdowns. Tens and thousands of Europeans protested these decisions in the streets in the last couple of weeks (November 2021) by claiming that these policies were against civil rights, particularly to the protection of freedom, people's life and body. This paper aims at revisiting the liberty vs. security discussion over compulsory vaccine mandates, in the context of anti-vaccine protests in Europe, mapping the main actors and their arguments. The protesters throughout Europe converged on the argument that vaccine mandates have interfered with people's fundamental right to make their own health care decisions. However, the literature suggests that vaccine mandates do not always contradict civil liberties, particularly when they involve risk of harming others, in the case of highly infectious and devastating diseases like COVID-19.

Assessing MENA Cybersecurity Frameworks in the context of Misinformation during COVID-19

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The COVID-19 pandemic has done for cybersecurity what it has done in every other area of life: exacerbated existing problems and brought them to the fore. In a context of working from home and necessary recourse to electronic alternatives to in-person occasions, the presence of technology, the extent to which it has become an immutable part of the social fabric, and the seemingly overwhelming challenges that this poses have become even more evident. It has in particular shed light on the propagation of misinformation and disinformation via social media networks that often fail to adequately address the role that they play in facilitating the spread of harmful content.

This paper will examine the policy framework that governs online communication in the MENA region, or the lack thereof, and will seek to present possible steps forward based on an assessment of current usage trends in the region.

The importance of global cooperation in preparing for future shocks and similar events to COVID-19

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The world predicted the spread of a pandemic but couldn't imagine the devastating aspect of such a global shock. We thought that we had the necessary resources and knowledge to overcome these types of threats. And for the first time, the modern world has never been confronted with a crisis of such magnitude. Its social and economic impacts were more destructive than ever estimated.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the collective inability to organize a common fast and effective response. It demonstrated how highly disconnected we were from the reality of our economies and social systems. It has also revealed the worst facets of our societies and nations often marked by total selfishness.

It fed off inequalities, starkly reminding us that there is no health security without social security. COVID-19 has taken advantage of the mess of the world.

Due to the medical, technological achievements during the last decades, gaps have emerged between populations which led to a higher rate of mobility between nations, a higher need in energy consumption, and increased interdependence.

Viruses took advantage of these parameters. Their transmission from wild and domestic animals to humans became imminent or even expected. Globalization does not discriminate when it comes to spreading a shockwave of a tsunami, earthquake, hurricane, or viruses.