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MASTER THESIS

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„*Digital Epochal Change: The United Nations and the
Emergence of a New Normative System*”

verfasst von / submitted by

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ABSTRACT

1. English version

The Master's Thesis seeks to provide an analysis of *the digital normative system* within the United Nations. Namely, by relying on the specific model, the thesis aims to provide an explanation of how the previous normative system, the so-called analog or pre-digital, has been transformed into the new one and how newly emerged norms are linked to the previous ones. With the aim of providing an answer to the aforementioned research question, the thesis conducts a qualitative descriptive analysis of the specific documents issued by the United Nations. Having done the former, the thesis demonstrates that the norms of the digital normative system are *remodeled digital versions* of the previous *meta-analog norms* that have been transformed by structural and agency-oriented factors.

Keywords: norms, normative system, norm dynamism, norm entrepreneurs, institutionalization, the United Nations

2. German version

Die Masterarbeit soll eine Analyse des digitalen normativen Systems innerhalb der Vereinten Nationen liefern. Genauer gesagt soll die Arbeit, indem sie sich auf das spezifische Modell stützt, eine Erklärung dafür liefern, wie das vorherige normative System, das sogenannte analoge oder vordigitale, in das neue System umgewandelt wurde und wie neu entstandene Normen mit den vorherigen verknüpft sind. Mit dem Ziel, eine Antwort auf die oben genannte Forschungsfrage zu geben, führt die Arbeit eine qualitative deskriptive Analyse der spezifischen Dokumente durch, die von den Vereinten Nationen herausgegeben wurden. Nachdem dies getan wurde, zeigt die Arbeit, dass die Normen des digitalen normativen Systems digitale Versionen der vorherigen Normen sind, die durch strukturelle und agenturorientierte Faktoren umgewandelt wurden.

Schlüsselwörter: Normen, normatives System, Normendynamik, Normunternehmer, Institutionalisierung, Vereinte Nationen

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"On my honor as a student of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it."

Nikola Marinkovic

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of the Master's Thesis is to conduct a thorough analysis of *the digital normative system* and its main pillars, *digital norms*. More specifically, the author seeks to provide the answer to the research question regarding *the digital normative system* within the United Nations (UN system), by explaining its emergence as well as shedding light on its intrinsic components designated as *digital norms*. The main hypothesis of the thesis is that the digital normative system is based upon the previous analog one. More specifically, the hypothesis is that the norms of *the digital normative system* are *the remodeled digital versions* of the previous *meta-analog norms* that have been transformed by structural and agency-oriented factors. With respect to the causality or cause-and-effect relationship, the independent variable in this very analysis will be the normative system, and the specific norms in question will be dependent variables. Accordingly, the changes at the systemic level have a lasting effect on the events on an individual level.

With respect to the structure, the thesis is going to be divided into three different but related sections. Every section is going to be then further divided into chapters and subchapters dedicated to a specific issue. In the first section, the author is going to conduct a comprehensive literature review of the research on the theory of norms. Having done that, in the second section, designated as the theoretical framework, the author is going to be properly equipped to develop a specific model in a theoretical framework. In the third section, based on the aforementioned model, the author is going to conduct a main analysis in order to test the hypothesis. In conclusion, the author will provide a concise overview of the Master's Thesis, discuss the key findings, and give the final and overall thoughts on the research question. Likewise, the author is going to explain the contribution of the study, as well as its limitations. Having done the former, the author is going to make a recommendation for further research work and policy. Last but not least, in the bibliographical section, the author is going to lay out the bibliographical units.

In his research, with an aim to provide an answer to the research question, the author is going to rely on prominent scholarly publications, including books, journals, and articles. Regarding the sources, the author is going to use specific documents issued by the United

Nations, statements of officials, as well UN websites. On the other hand, with respect to methodology, the author is going to apply qualitative descriptive analysis.

Prior to the beginning of the analysis, it is crucial to elaborate on the reasons for conducting research on this topic. As a matter of fact, the author's field of interest is the intersection between diplomacy, international relations, and digital technologies, commonly known as *tech diplomacy* or *digital international relations*. Therefore, the author aspires to specialize in digital transformation and cooperation. More specifically, by conducting his interdisciplinary research and collaborating with colleagues, the author would be eager to provide insightful solutions on how digital technologies must be harnessed for the greater societal good and global peace. Having that in mind, this Master's Thesis serves as a pivotal milestone in the author's future academic and professional trajectory.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY

In this part of the thesis, the author is set to lay out a comprehensive literature review on the research of the theory of norms. More specifically, the section is going to be divided into three chapters in which different aspects of the research are going to be discussed. Likewise, every chapter is going to be further divided into specific subchapters. In the first part, designated as *the essence of norms*, the author is going to introduce the notion of norms by discussing the essential features of constructivism, definitions of norms and their characteristics, as well as the structure of norms. In the second part, labeled as *Norm dynamism*, the author is going to introduce different schools of thought, as well as a specific model deemed essential for the analysis. In the last chapter, *International Organizations and Norms*, the author is going to discuss the prominent role of IOs in *norm dynamics*, elaborating on the two essential components: the endeavor of norm entrepreneurs and the process of institutionalization. Having done this comprehensive analysis, the author is going to be properly equipped to develop a theoretical framework and conduct the main analysis

1.1 THE ESSENCE OF NORMS

1.1.1 (Social) Constructivism

Norms and normative issues have been central to the study of politics for at least two millennia, which can be seen in the writings of the most prolific thinkers, including Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Grotius, Karl Deutsch, and Ernst Haar.¹ Likewise, other

¹ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 889, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550789>; Emanuel Adler, "Constructivism in International Relations: Sources, Contributions, and Debates," in *Handbook of International Relations*, by Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013), 118, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446247587.n5>.

disciplines within the field of social science have given a great deal of attention to the issues regarding norms.² Nevertheless, the infatuation with these issues within International Relations studies has emerged relatively recently. More specifically, this *epochal change* was characterized by the emergence of *(social) constructivism* in the field of International Relations. This coincided with the rise in prominence of the constructivist approach in other social sciences, especially sociology and anthropology. Namely, this school of thought emerged as a response and challenger to the analytical and empirical limitations of conventional IR theories, more specifically, neorealism and neoliberalism.³ These *rationalist schools*, preoccupied with materialistic and individualistic approaches, downgrade the importance of *the ideational* and *holistic phenomena*. Contrary to that, *(social) constructivism* has offered an alternative understanding of International Relations by providing new and unprecedented theoretical insights with the *earth-shaking* potential to transform the discipline. In its essence, *social constructivism* is both *metaphysical* and *social theory*, as well as the theory of process, which relies on theoretical and empirical perspectives in explaining the reality that is grounded on *social* ontological and epistemological foundations.⁴ Namely, *the Weltanschauung* of constructivism puts human consciousness on a pedestal of the analysis and perceives international relations and politics more *holistically* and *ideationally*, underscoring their *socially constructed nature*.⁵ Accordingly, international relations and human interaction, in general, are primarily driven by *ideational factors* that are collectively held and thus *intersubjective*.⁶ In that vein, *(social) constructivism* emphasizes the importance of ideas, values, beliefs, norms, discourses, knowledge, and culture in the construction of *social reality* and its evolution.⁷ More specifically, it perceives these *social facts* as *building blocks* and *impetus* for international relations having a predominant impact on *the identity* and *interests* of

² Robert Axelrod, "An Evolutionary Approach to Norms," *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (December 1, 1986): 1109, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1960858>.

³ Annika Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Reflections," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 15, no. 1 (April 2002): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557570220126216>.

⁴ Adler, "Constructivism in International Relations," 114.

⁵ Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4, no. 1 (June 2001): 391, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.4.1.391>. John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 856, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550770>.

⁶ Finnemore and Sikkink, "T" 392–93. Adler, "Constructivism in International Relations," 121.

⁷ Adler, "Constructivism in International Relations," 113, 121, 123; Finnemore and Sikkink, "The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics" 392.

purposive actors (both states and non-state actors), as well as contributing to the formation of *the social structures* that shape interactions among them.⁸ Likewise, as opposed to the *agent-centered perspective*, *social constructivism* perceived both agents and structures existing in a mutually constitutive manner.⁹ Thus, constructivist research's main endeavor has been understanding the process, dynamics, and mechanisms of how these *intangible phenomena* emerge, evolve, change, diffuse, and eventually impact the actors of the international system situated within a specific *social milieu*.

1.1.2 Definitions of norms and their characteristics

The explosion of the constructivist literature within the field of International Relations has put norms on a pedestal of scientific research, demonstrating and underscoring their profound significance for a proper comprehension of the *social nature* of the world. Indisputably, this *epochal change* has been a *catalyst* and a *turning point* for the norms to *figure prominently* as one of the most widely studied topics of contemporary IR scholarship. Therefore, the literature on this matter, both theoretical and empirical, is quite immense, as norms have become an essential part of *the constructivist worldview*. Thus, there are multiple definitions of norms, which converge and overlap, as a wide range of scholars has attached various meanings to the notion of norms. The widely accepted definitions, which come from the early norms literature in IR that borrowed insights from organizational sociology, perceive norms as *intersubjective standards of appropriate behavior*, *collective expectations*, or *shared understandings that make legitimate behavioral*

⁸ Alan Nelson, "The Construction of Social Reality," *Ethics* 108, no. 1 (October 1997): 2–10, <https://doi.org/10.1086/233794>; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511612183>; Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together?," 855–60; Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 3 (September 1997): 321–23, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066197003003003>; Richard Price and Christian Reus - Smit, "Dangerous Liaisons?: Critical International Theory and Constructivism," *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 3 (September 1998): 263–65, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066198004003001>.

⁹ Orchard and Wiener, "Norm Research in Theory and Practice," 5; David Dessler, "What's at Stake in the Agent-Structure Debate?," *International Organization* 43, no. 3 (1989): 441–73, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300032999>; Alexander E. Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (1987): 337–339, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830002751X>.

claims, which actors of a given identity adhere to with the purpose of being regarded as *appropriate members* of a certain group, system, or community.¹⁰

Regardless of the existence of various definitions, norms are *social constructs* or *collective evaluations* that project *future expectations* with respect to *what ought to be done* as a certain kind of actor, hence shaping *the perception* of the actors and *increasing the probability of adherence*.¹¹ Norms thus have an *explanatory power* for actors' behavior, having lasting effects on the formation as well as change of actors' preferences and identities.¹² In other words, they are used to account for *behaviors* governed by *social rules* or *values* and thus serve to entail a mode of interaction based on a *logic of appropriateness*. The *appropriateness* is inextricably linked to the *values* or *judgments* of a specific *social community*, as norms are essentially about *values* that act as a *social glue*.¹³ Therefore, *norm-breaking behavior* generates disapproval or stigma, while *norm-conforming behavior* produces praise.¹⁴ As such, norms serve the purpose of *making demands, rallying support, justifying actions, ascribing responsibility, and assessing the praiseworthy or blameworthy character of an action*.¹⁵ Likewise, norms *offer solutions to coordination problems, reduce transaction costs, define rights and obligations, and provide a language and grammar of*

¹⁰ Peter J. Katzenstein, 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security', in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996. 5 Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe," *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (March 1999): 88, <https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00112>; Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 891; Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Cornell University Press, 1996), 70, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501707384>.

¹¹ Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations," 15; Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, "Everyday Ethics in International Relations," in *Ethics and International Relations*, ed. Hakan Seckinelgin and Hideaki Shinoda (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2001), 79, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230520455_5; Gregory A. Raymond, "Neutrality Norms and the Balance of Power," *Cooperation and Conflict* 32, no. 2 (June 1997): 128, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836797032002001>; Ann E. Towns, "Norms and Social Hierarchies: Understanding International Policy Diffusion 'From Below,'" *International Organization* 66, no. 2 (April 2012): 187, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818312000045>; Ann Florini, "The Evolution of International Norms," *International Studies Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (September 1996): 364–65, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600716>; Annika Björkdahl, *From Idea to Norm: Promoting Conflict Prevention*, Lund Political Studies 125 (Lund: Lund Univ., Dep. of Political Science, 2002), 43.

¹² Florini, "The Evolution of International Norms," 364; Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Cornell University Press, 1996), 13, <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501707384>; Katzenstein, 'Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security', 7; Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid*, Cornell Studies in Political Economy (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1999).

¹³ Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 891--892.

¹⁴ Finnemore and Sikkink, 892.

¹⁵ Friedrich Kratochwil, "The Force of Prescriptions," *International Organization* 38, no. 4 (1984): 686, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300026916>.

international politics.¹⁶ By and large, norms address specific problems and provide instructions on appropriate behaviors and policy measures, which consequently evens out divergences among actors.¹⁷ Nevertheless, norms do not simply generate a more homogeneous society of like units, but simultaneously help differentiate and hierarchically order actors by specifying what is abnormal and undesirable behavior, as well as by ranking those actors that do not fulfill the requirements and expectations as inferior and deficient; thus, homogenizing and stratifying tendencies are mutually implicated in norms.¹⁸

1.1.3 Structure of Norms

From the abovementioned definitions and characteristics, it could be inferred that the norm in its essence possesses two essential *functions*, whose interaction creates the norm's *conceptual structure*. These two aspects, although different and distinct, are mutually interdependent and co-occurring.¹⁹ First and foremost, there is a *constitutive function* that is accountable for the construction of categories of actors and actions, as well as for determining their interests and identities, by assigning names and attributes to each one of them in a specific context.²⁰ More specifically, by creating *intersubjective meanings* norms attach certain *values* to these *tangible* and *intangible categories* which increases the

¹⁶ Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda," *International Studies Review* 2, no. 1 (June 2000): 66, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00184>.

¹⁷ Towns, "Norms and Social Hierarchies," 180.

¹⁸ Towns, 180.

¹⁹ Nicholas Onuf, "Constructivism: A User's Manual," in *International Relations in a Constructed World*, eds. Vendulka Kubáľková, Nicholas Onuf, and Paul Kowert (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 68; Thomas Risse, "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics," *International Organization* 54, no. 1 (2000): 5, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081800551109>.

²⁰ Annika Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations: Some Conceptual and Methodological Reflections," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 15, no. 1 (April 2002): 16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557570220126216>; Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, eds. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 54; Carla Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution: A Conceptual Approach," *European Journal of International Relations* 24, no. 3 (September 2018): 640, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066117720794>; Antje Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics: Contested Norms and International Encounters*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 32–38, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511490408>; Antje Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, SpringerBriefs in Political Science (Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2014), 27–33, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-55235-9>; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 32–35; Elvira Rosert, "Effects of International Norms: A Typology," *Journal of International Political Theory* 20, no. 1 (February 2024): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1177/17550882231184275>.

effectiveness of norms and amplifies their impact.²¹ In other words, this *function* defines and qualifies who the actors are and what counts as a certain action, thus having inclusionary, exclusionary, and hierarchizing tendencies.²² Consequently, these *value-laden categories* define specific *problems*, as *material* or *social facts* must be comprehended in the context of certain *values* for the purpose of being morally judged.²³ This eventually implies the second inextricable component of the norms, and that is their *regulative function* that encompasses the *behaviors* of actors.²⁴ Namely, the very same *values* that are accountable for the identification of a *problem*, concurrently play crucial roles in restricting and reducing the spectrum of *behaviors* that are *appropriate* for solving it.²⁵ More specifically, the *regulative function* consists of both the *enabling function* and the *constraining function*. In other words, it endorses and validates certain types of *behaviors* (*enabling function*), while devaluing the others (*constraining function*).²⁶ Thus, the *regulative function* indicates which specific types of *behaviors* certain actors are expected to follow in particular situations and underlines the social and material costs resulting from alternative choices.²⁷ Likewise, by providing instruction and guidance to the actors on how to behave, it acts as an indicator for assessing the *behavior* of others.²⁸ Therefore, this *function* is accountable for prescribing, proscribing, and ordering *behaviors*, operating like a standard or roadmap that specifies and establishes particular rights and obligations.²⁹

Taken together, the interaction between these two *functions* is undoubtedly the major step in the process of *norm-building*, as it ultimately results in the formation of *the*

²¹ Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution," 640; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 110; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 30; Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics*, 36.

²² Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution," 640; Ann E. Towns, "Norms and Social Hierarchies: Understanding International Policy Diffusion 'From Below,'" *International Organization* 66, no. 2 (April 2012): 180, 188 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818312000045>; Rosert, "Effects of International Norms," 9; Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes, "Beyond Belief: Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 2 (June 1997): 210, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066197003002003>; Gary Goertz, *International Norms and Decision Making: A Punctuated Equilibrium Model* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 40.

²³ Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution," 640; Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 111–12; R. Charli Carpenter, "Setting the Advocacy Agenda: Theorizing Issue Emergence and Nonemergence in Transnational Advocacy Networks," *International Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (March 2007): 112, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2007.00441.x>.

²⁴ Rosert, "Effects of International Norms," 9.

²⁵ Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution," 640.

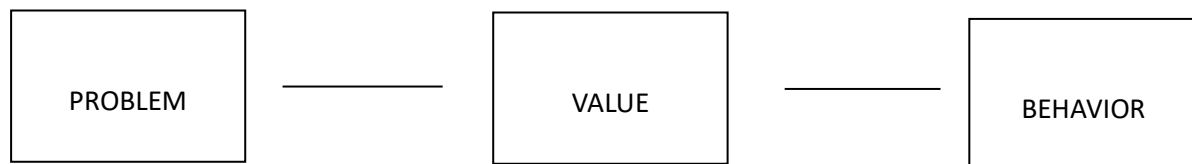
²⁶ Gregory A. Raymond, "Problems and Prospects in the Study of International Norms," *Mershon International Studies Review* 41, no. 2 (1997): 214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.701997070>; Towns, "Norms and Social Hierarchies," 182; Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations," 15–16.

²⁷ Rosert, "Effects of International Norms," 9; Cortell and Davis Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms," 69.

²⁸ Rosert, "Effects of International Norms," 9; Kratochwil, "The Force of Prescriptions," 686.

²⁹ Björkdahl, "Norms in International Relations," 15.

conceptual tripartite structure of norms.³⁰ That being said, a norm in its essence represents a unique nexus between a *problem*, a *value*, and a *behavior*.³¹ This structure could also be perceived as a *moral syllogism*, where these three components are superseded with logical terminology: *the major premise* stands for a certain value; *the minor premise* represents a problem to which the established value needs to be applied; and *the conclusion* is the specific behavior that is an outcome of an interaction of the premises.³² To put it more precisely, this structure could be explained by the following statements. Namely, in order to exist, every norm needs to address a certain *problem* that prevents the full enjoyment or attainment of a particular *value* that in turn gives moral weight to the *problem*.³³ Consequently, the norm has to enjoin a specific corrective *behavior*, indicated by the interaction of the *problem* and *values*, which facilitates better expression or practice of the *values* in question.³⁴ In short, shared and overarching *values* inform actors of the assumption of the *problem* and how they should act according to those *assumptions* and *values*.³⁵



³⁰ Carla Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution: A Conceptual Approach," *European Journal of International Relations* 24, no. 3 (September 2018): 640, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066117720794>. Andrew Hurrell and Terry Macdonald, "Norms and Ethics in International Relations," in *Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Beth A. Simmons, Walter Carlsnaes, and Thomas Risse (London: Sage Publications, 2012), 61.

³¹ Richard Price, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," *International Organization* 52, no. 3 (1998): 618-620, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081898550671>.

³² Goertz, *International Norms and Decision Making*, 32–35.

³³ Winston, "Norm Structure, Diffusion, and Evolution." 640.

³⁴ Winston. 640

³⁵ Rodger A. Payne, "Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction," *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 1 (March 2001): 43, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066101007001002>.

1.2 INTERNATIONAL NORM DYNAMICS – NORM CHANGE

The (social) constructivist theoretical *U-turn* in IR, with its paramount emphasis on the concepts of norms, eventually paved the way for the initial emergence of the research and debate on *the theories of international norm dynamics or the life cycle on the norms*, which have gradually over the years grown in importance and developed into an essential feature and core question of the study of international relations. More specifically, these theories analyze the dynamics of stages by which norms emerge, evolve, and change. Likewise, the theories in question explore specific mechanisms that account for norm dynamism being its impetus. Although the literature on *norm dynamics* is vast, as there are many examples of scholarly attention to it, the subsequent subchapters are going to underscore the major *schools of thought* relevant to the main analysis of this Master's Thesis. In other words, by examining the major pillars of these theories and their respective models, the author is going to be in a position to develop a suitable theoretical and analytical framework essential for providing an answer to the research question.

1.2.1 The first school of thought – norm socialization

The very first stream of research on *norm dynamics* was designated as the *norm socialization* literature. Namely, a primary goal of these initial studies on *norm dynamics* was to examine and elaborate on how certain ideas come to achieve an *intersubjective* and *normative status*, as well as to trace and analyze the process of how these newly established, nascent norms spread and travel through the *process of socialization* from the actors of one community to the actors outside this community eventually becoming *habitualized*, *internalized* and *taken for granted*.³⁶ Nevertheless, the most significant limitation and

³⁶ Matthew J. Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, by Matthew J. Hoffmann (Oxford University Press, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.60>; Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 185–214, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300028162>; Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1998); Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change," *International Organization* 55, no. 3 (2001): 553–88, <https://doi.org/10.1162/00208180152507551>; Alastair Iain Johnston, "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments," *International Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (December 2001): 487–515, <https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00212>; Jeffrey T. Checkel, "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework," *International Organization* 59, no.

disadvantage of these *first-wave studies* have been seen in their oversimplification of *norm dynamics*. More specifically, the early constructivist literature on norms held underlying false assumptions in their treatment of analyzed norms as relatively *static* and *constant* phenomena. Accordingly, as soon as they emerged, norms *acquired the status of stability* up until they reached their *taken-for-granted endpoint* becoming *the prevailing standard of appropriateness, fixed or settled*.³⁷ Thus, the whole process was envisaged as unidirectional and linear, without the possibility of norm decay and contestation.³⁸ To put it more precisely, the literature did elaborate on the replacement of fully formed norms with new ideas that gained normative status, in most cases as a consequence of *exogenous shocks*; nevertheless, it did not put effort into developing a comprehensive explanation of how norms themselves change without necessarily being replaced.³⁹

1.2.2 The second school of thought - Norm contestation

Norm socialization research has been recently questioned, critiqued, and challenged by the rise in prominence of the so-called *second wave* of constructivist research on norms,

04 (October 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818305050289>; Ethan A. Nadelmann, "Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society," *International Organization* 44, no. 4 (1990): 479–526, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300035384>; Klotz, *Norms in International Relations*; Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change"; Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society*; Jeffrey W. Legro, "The Transformation of Policy Ideas," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, no. 3 (July 2000): 419, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2669256>; Payne, "Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction"; G. John Ikenberry and Charles A. Kupchan, "Socialization and Hegemonic Power," *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1990): 283–315, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081830003530X>.

³⁷ Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 23; Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 895; Ryder McKeown, "Norm Regress: US Revisionism and the Slow Death of the Torture Norm," *International Relations* 23, no. 1 (March 2009): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117808100607>; Mervyn Frost, *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory*, 1st ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 105–6, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511521706>; Orchard and Wiener, "Norm Research in Theory and Practice," 6.

³⁸ Antje Wiener "Norm(ative) Change in International Relations: A Conceptual Framework" (June 1, 2020). KFG Working Paper Series, No. 44, Berlin Potsdam Research Group "The International Rule of Law – Rise or Decline?" 15-16; Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*. 24-25

³⁹ Wesley W. Widmaier and Susan Park, "Differences Beyond Theory: Structural, Strategic, and Sentimental Approaches to Normative Change: Differences Beyond Theory," *International Studies Perspectives* 13, no. 2 (May 2012): 123–34, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2012.00459.x>; Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations," 6; Kees Van Kersbergen and Bertjan Verbeek, "The Politics of International Norms: Subsidiarity and the Imperfect Competence Regime of the European Union," *European Journal of International Relations* 13, no. 2 (June 2007): 208, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107076955>; Jeffrey M. Chwieroth, "Normative Change from Within: The International Monetary Fund's Approach to Capital Account Liberalization," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (March 2008): 132, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2007.00494.x>; Wayne Sandholtz, "Dynamics of International Norm Change: Rules against Wartime Plunder," *European Journal of International Relations* 14, no. 1 (March 2008): 110, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066107087766>.

better known as *norm contestation* literature, which culminated in what has been described as *critical constructivist research on norms*.⁴⁰ Building upon the initial accomplishments of the empirical studies of *norm socialization*, which demonstrated the efficacy of norms in the research on international politics, *norm contestation* literature is set to explore when/where norms matter and how/when/why norms themselves change to a greater extent at the international level.⁴¹ Contrary to the previous perception of norms as *fixed*, *stable*, and *finished* entities, this research underscores the state of the inherent and constant dynamism and flux of norms.⁴² Accordingly, they are *being born anew every day through interactive processes of strategic social construction, as actors instantiate them through their beliefs and actions*; additionally, they are seen as *processes* and *works-in-progress*, rather than *things*, that have the ongoing potential for contestation and recreation.⁴³ As opposed to being viewed as *frozen*, norms are understood as generic *social facts* that do not provide fully specified rules for how to behave in every possible situation, especially not for novel situations.⁴⁴ Thus, constant (re)interpretation of norms, or their meanings, is deemed necessary with the aim of facilitating their translation into concrete behaviors.⁴⁵ As a consequence, the norms that are being diffused on the international scale have a tendency to be extremely *vague* even after their institutionalization, which in turn makes their content prone to modification and thereby adaptation for a variety of different purposes.⁴⁶ Therefore, the true nature of norms is understood as having the so-called *dual*

⁴⁰ Andrew P. Cortell and James W. Davis Jr., "Understanding the Domestic Impact of International Norms: A Research Agenda," *International Studies Review* 2, no. 1 (June 2000): 66, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00184>. Wiener and Puetter, "The Quality of Norms Is What Actors Make of It" 3. Lisbeth Zimmermann, "More for Less: The Interactive Translation of Global Norms in Postconflict Guatemala," *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (December 1, 2017): 774–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqx044>.

⁴¹ Matthew J. Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations," in *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, Vol. 8, edited by Robert A. Denemark, 5415. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

⁴² Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*. 26; Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations." 12; Mona Lena Krook and Jacqui True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms: The United Nations and the Global Promotion of Gender Equality," *European Journal of International Relations* 18, no. 1 (March 2012): 104–108, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066110380963>.

⁴³ Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations." 5419; Krook and True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms." 104; Phil Orchard and Antje Wiener, "Norm Research in Theory and Practice," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2023, 8 <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4499020>.

⁴⁴ Hoffmann, "Norms and Social Constructivism in International Relations." 13; Matthew J. Hoffmann, *Ozone Depletion and Climate Change: Constructing a Global Response*, SUNY Series in Global Politics (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005). 11–15; Sandholtz, "Dynamics of International Norm Change." 103–105

⁴⁵ Sandholtz, "Dynamics of International Norm Change." 104 <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511490408>; Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*. 26.

⁴⁶ Krook and True, "Rethinking the Life Cycles of International Norms." 104; Wiener, "Contested Norms and International Encounters." 2008, 22–25.

*quality: being both structuring and socially constructed through interaction in a context.*⁴⁷

That being said, while their structural character is not disputed, the inner ambiguous nature of norms is being emphasized: *while stable over particular periods, they always remain flexible by definition.*⁴⁸

Within this school of thought, the so-called *vertical typology norms* have been developed. Namely, it is built upon an assumed hierarchy of international norms that asserts that some norms possess *primordial importance*, and thus are higher on a *hierarchical ladder* in comparison to others.⁴⁹ One of the recent typologies worth mentioning, for the sake of the analysis of this work, has been introduced by Antje Wiener to account for varying degrees of abstractness and moral reach.⁵⁰ Accordingly, norms are distinguished according to the relevance they have for the agents dealing with them regarding their degrees of generalization, specification, and contestation on moral and ethical grounds.⁵¹ Thus, norms can be identified based on the scale of their respective moral reach (wide, medium, narrow), and the level of governance and/or the societal layer (macro, meso, micro).⁵² Both scales and levels include the diversity of distinct meanings as well as the variety of different involved agents and actors.⁵³ In that vein, three types of norms could be distinguished in international relations: *fundamental norms*, *organizing principles*, and *standardized procedures*. *Fundamental norms* represent basic procedural norms negotiated at the macro layer of a global society by representatives of the government.⁵⁴ They are more general but less specific, making them significant for the normative system and entailing wide and universal moral claims.⁵⁵ These *meta-norms* include both foundational principles of the United Nations as well as globally shared norms that are not legally stipulated but

⁴⁷ Antje Wiener, "The Dual Quality of Norms and Governance beyond the State: Sociological and Normative Approaches to 'Interaction,'" *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 10, no. 1 (March 2007): 47–69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230601122412>.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Wiener, 49.

⁴⁹ Raymond, 223.

⁵⁰ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 183–85; Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics*, 52–55; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36–37. Antje Wiener and Uwe Puetter, "The Quality of Norms Is What Actors Make of It: Critical Constructivist Research on Norms," *Journal of International Law and International Relations* 5, no. 1 (2009): 11–12.

⁵¹ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 1833.

⁵² Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36.

⁵³ Wiener, 36.

⁵⁴ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 183; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36.

⁵⁵ Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics*, 53; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36; Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 184. Wiener and Puetter, "The Quality of Norms Is What Actors Make of It" 11.

taken for granted.⁵⁶ Taking into consideration their formal validity and moral weight, which are in turn sustained through the formal frameworks of international organizations, *fundamental norms* are highly probable to be agreed upon in principle, but most likely to be contested in practice.⁵⁷ *Organizing principles*, with medium moral reach, are constituted through policy and political practice at the meso-layer, being the result of interaction and reflecting intersubjective meaning.⁵⁸ Thus, they are closely linked with the process of policymaking, jurisprudence, or political processes.⁵⁹ As such, they serve as guidance for political procedures and policy practices.⁶⁰ Last but not least, *standardized procedures* refer to the specifically defined standards, directions, prescriptions, rules, regulations, and procedures that facilitate immediate and uncontested understanding.⁶¹ This norm type is implemented by designated norm-followers such as firms or individuals at the microlayer of global society, having the narrowest moral reach and being the least likely to be contested on moral and ethical grounds.⁶²

1.2.3 Model of Norm Dynamics

Having explained two major schools of thought it is necessary to introduce a specific model that explains the process of *norm dynamics*. The model that is going to be laid out has been introduced by Carmen Wunderlich and Harald Müller in *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control* (2013) and aims to elaborate on *the driving forces* behind *norm dynamics*. Accordingly, *norm dynamics* could be understood as driven by *structural* and *agency-oriented forces*.⁶³ First and foremost, the *structural forces* could be either *extrinsic* or *intrinsic factors*. On the one hand, *extrinsic factors* refer to the particular changes in *the sociopolitical environment* that disrupt the international order in which the norms are embedded; they encompass major processes, events, and crises that are exogenous to the

⁵⁶ Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36.

⁵⁷ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 184; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36.

⁵⁸ Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 37; Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 184.

⁵⁹ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 184; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 36. Wiener and Puetter, "The Quality of Norms Is What Actors Make of It" 12

⁶⁰ Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 184.

⁶¹ Wiener, 185; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 37; Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics*, 53.

⁶² Wiener, "Enacting Meaning-in-Use," 185; Wiener, *A Theory of Contestation*, 37; Wiener, *The Invisible Constitution of Politics*, 53. Wiener and Puetter, "The Quality of Norms Is What Actors Make of It" 13.

⁶³ Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*, 29.

norm system influencing its internal stability and development.⁶⁴ In most cases, these *extrinsic events* correspond to the shifting material basis of policy caused by scientific and technological advancements that create a new reality by posing unprecedented challenges and offering new tools for potential solutions.⁶⁵ Consequently, such an international upheaval eventually leads to the obsolescence of commitment to the existing norm system, paving the way for the establishment either of new norms or remodeling of existing ones.⁶⁶ These exogenous factors play a crucial role in the first school of thought. On the other hand, *intrinsic factors* refer to the so-called *change from within* which underscores the ambiguity and interpretability of norms, as well as their consequential contentedness.⁶⁷ That being said, intrinsic factors push norm dynamics in either a constructive or destructive direction.⁶⁸ These *intrinsic sources* are explained by the second school of thought. By and large, *intrinsic* and *extrinsic factors*, however, only provide one part of *the equation* accountable for *norm dynamics*, as *structural forces* only create opportunities and constraints for action.⁶⁹ That being said, the specific *agency* is of utmost importance for handling the abovementioned opportunities and constraints with the purpose of generating change or maintaining the status quo.⁷⁰ To put it more specifically, these agents in question, play a crucial role in shaping *norm dynamics* that owing to them gain social meaning and take effect.⁷¹ The endeavor of the agents is going to be explained in the next chapter.

⁶⁴ Müller, 11.

⁶⁵ Müller, 12; Wayne Sandholtz, *Prohibiting Plunder: How Norms Change* (Oxford [England] New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 269.

⁶⁶ Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*, 28.

⁶⁷ Müller, 30.

⁶⁸ Müller, 30.

⁶⁹ Müller, 30–31.

⁷⁰ Müller, 31.

⁷¹ Müller, 31.

1.3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NORMS

Within the literature on norms, International Organizations play a prominent role. Namely, International Organizations are of utmost importance for the institutionalization of the norms, i.e. their codification, implementation, monitoring, and enforcement.⁷² Namely, upon their integration within the official policies of International Organizations, norms serve as a guide for decision-making, have an immense effect on the allocation of resources, as well as place strict demands on its member states.⁷³ Likewise, IOs are perceived as disseminators, transmitters or diffusers of international norms, which can be seen in a decent overviews of the literature given by Tallberg et al (2020) and Park (2006).⁷⁴ Conventional literature underlines the importance of IOs for the dissemination of international norms across countries. On the one hand, one strand of the literature depicts the vertical relationship between IOs and states, portraying the former as sources or teachers of norms, and the latter as the recipients.⁷⁵ On the other hand, the second strand of literature conceptualizes a more horizontal relationship, where International Organizations are presented as forums and hubs, where states have an opportunity to acquire new norms.⁷⁶

⁷² Martha Finnemore, "International Organizations as Teachers of Norms: The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and Science Policy," *International Organization* 47, no. 4 (1993): 595, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300028101>; Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," 899–900; Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*, 37.

⁷³ Jonas Tallberg et al., "Why International Organizations Commit to Liberal Norms," *International Studies Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (September 1, 2020): 626, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqaa046>; Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2004), 4–5; Lisa L. Martin and Beth A. Simmons, "International Organizations and Institutions," in *Handbook of International Relations*, by Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (1 Oliver's Yard, 55 City Road, London EC1Y 1SP United Kingdom: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2013), 337–38, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446247587.n13>.

⁷⁴ Jonas Tallberg et al., "Explaining Policy Norm Adoption by International Organizations," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2017, 1–55, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3059442>; Susan Park, "Theorizing Norm Diffusion Within International Organizations," *International Politics* 43, no. 3 (July 2006): 342–61, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ip.8800149>.

⁷⁵ Tallberg et al., "Explaining Policy Norm Adoption by International Organizations," 3; Finnemore, "International Organizations as Teachers of Norms"; Judith Kelley, *Ethnic Politics in Europe: The Power of Norms and Incentives*, 2. print., and 1. paperback print (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2006); Alexandra Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the 'New Europe,'" *International Organization* 59, no. 04 (October 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818305050332>; John Boli, ed., *Constructing World Culture: International Nongovernmental Organizations since 1875*, Nachdr., Sociology / Political Science (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 20); Alexandru Grigorescu, "European Institutions and Unsuccessful Norm Transmission: The Case of Transparency," *International Politics* 39, no. 4 (December 2002): 467–89, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ip.8892005>; Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe."

⁷⁶ Tallberg et al., "Explaining Policy Norm Adoption by International Organizations," 3; David H. Bearce and Stacy Bondanella, "Intergovernmental Organizations, Socialization, and Member-State Interest

Apart from the traditional literature on states, recent studies have started to examine and underscore the phenomenon of *diffusion* across IOs.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, regardless of these divergences, the literature is quite convergent on the fact that norms that IOs disseminate are deeply rooted in the *social structure* of the international system in which they exist and operate.⁷⁸ Therefore, before being *disseminated* and *diffused*, these norms need to be incorporated within IOs. In that vein, two vital processes could be distinguished: the endeavor of norm entrepreneurs and the very process of *institutionalization*.

1.3.1 Norm Entrepreneurs

Before being incorporated within the IOs, norms arise in the *social structure* of international systems, being actively created and constructed by the important actors, commonly designated as *norm entrepreneurs*. The term was initially coined by legal scholar Sustain but gained a foothold in constructivist research on norms owing to Finnemore and Sikkink.⁷⁹ The most suitable definition of *norm entrepreneurs* has been given by Annika Björkdahl, who perceives them as *actors committed to a particular idea set out to change the existing normative context and alter the behavior of others in the direction of the new norm*.⁸⁰ On the one hand, upon the identification of the problem within the existing normative system, they begin their *proselytizing mission* of changing the existing normative order, thus being accountable for *norm-contestation* and *norm-making*.⁸¹ On the other hand, they rely on *ideational* or *material* resources in order to persuade the audience of *the appropriateness of the new norm*, as well as to recruit the

Convergence,” *International Organization* 61, no. 04 (October 2007), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818307070245>.

⁷⁷ Tallberg et al., “Explaining Policy Norm Adoption by International Organizations,” 3; Alexandru Grigorescu, “The Spread of Bureaucratic Oversight Mechanisms across Intergovernmental Organizations I: The Spread of Bureaucratic Oversight,” *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 3 (September 6, 2010): 871–86, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2010.00613.x>; Karen J. Alter, “The Global Spread of European Style International Courts,” *West European Politics* 35, no. 1 (January 2012): 135–54, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2012.631318>; Tobias Lenz and Alexandr Burilkov, “Institutional Pioneers in World Politics: Regional Institution Building and the Influence of the European Union,” *European Journal of International Relations* 23, no. 3 (September 2017): 654–80, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066116674261>; Thomas Risse, *The Diffusion of Regionalism*, ed. Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse (Oxford University Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199682300.013.6>; Thomas Sommerer and Jonas Tallberg, “Diffusion Across International Organizations: Connectivity and Convergence,” *International Organization* 73, no. 02 (2019): 399–433, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818318000450>.

⁷⁸ Park, “Theorizing Norm Diffusion Within International Organizations,” 343.

⁷⁹ Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change.” Cass R. Sunstein, “Social Norms and Social Roles” (Coase-Sandor Institute for Law & Economics Working Paper No. 36, 1996).

⁸⁰ Björkdahl, *From Idea to Norm*, 46.

⁸¹ Müller, *Norm Dynamics in Multilateral Arms Control*, 32.

norm followers.⁸² Nevertheless, apart from *norm-contestation*, *norm-creation* and *norm-promotion*, they are heavily engaged in maintaining, ensuring, protecting, and enforcing norms.⁸³ In this whole process, International Organizations play a crucial role, as they present the platform through which the norms can be presented, promoted, and disseminated. Thus, so far, the scholarly literature has identified three types of *norm entrepreneurs* and a very good overview of this literature has been written by Tallberg et al (2017) and Tallberg et al (2018). The first school of thought underlines the crucial importance of *state entrepreneurship* where one prominent state, as well as the coalitions of smaller or medium-sized states, are accountable for the emergence of the norm due to their own moral or strategic reasons, ranging from *ideational commitment* to *the boosting of their reputation*.⁸⁴ Thus, states rely upon the assistance of the IOs to put these norms on the agenda by bringing closer attention to them, gaining wider support, and advocating for further policy adaptation. The second category of *norm entrepreneurs*, widely recognized in the literature, refers to *supranational actors* and *international bureaucracies*, who are presented as *knowledge brokers*, *negotiation facilitators*, and *capacity builders* with respect to the process of *norm-making*.⁸⁵ The third and last category, standing as the most significant and pivotal among all the others, represents the activities associated with *transnational norm entrepreneurs* or *transnational advocacy networks* that include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, activists, foundations, media, epistemic communities, and advocacy groups.⁸⁶ Namely, the relevance of these entities has

⁸² Müller, 37.

⁸³ Müller, 35.

⁸⁴ Jonas Tallberg et al., “Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015,” *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2018, 6; Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change”; Audie Klotz, “Norms Reconstituting Interests: Global Racial Equality and U.S. Sanctions against South Africa,” *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 451–78, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300033348>; Elizabeth David-Barrett and Ken Okamura, “Norm Diffusion and Reputation: The Rise of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative,” *Governance* 29, no. 2 (April 2016): 227–46, <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12163>.

⁸⁵ Tallberg et al., “Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015,” 7; Elena McLean, “Frank Biermann and Bernd Siebenhüner. 2009 (Eds.). *Managers of Global Change: The Influence of International Environmental Bureaucracies* (Cambridge: MIT Press),” *The Review of International Organizations* 6, no. 1 (March 2011): 105–8, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-010-9087-0>; Michael Barnett and Liv Coleman, “Designing Police: Interpol and the Study of Change in International Organizations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (December 2005): 593–620, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2005.00380.x>.

⁸⁶ Finnemore and Sikkink, “International Norm Dynamics and Political Change”; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Michele Merrill Betsill and Elisabeth Corell, eds., *NGO Diplomacy: The Influence of Nongovernmental Organizations in International Environmental Negotiations* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2008); Jonas Tallberg et al., “NGO Influence in International Organizations: Information, Access and Exchange,” *British Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 1 (January 2018): 213–38, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000712341500037X>; Kal Raustiala, “States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions,” *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1997): 719–40,

been deeply rooted in their well-established credibility and reputation, moral authority, as well as the invaluable knowledge they possess, which all together enable them to *generate* new norms and employ various strategies of persuasion or lobbying.⁸⁷ Last but not least, it is of utmost importance to underscore that the private sector, whose endeavor is always achieved through the partnership with the public sector, has been recently incorporated in the category of *norm entrepreneurs*, designated as *corporate norm entrepreneurs* in the literature.⁸⁸

1.3.2 Institutionalization of Norms

The procedure of *institutionalization* is understood as a gradual process that follows two consecutive phases. In the first phase, the highest and the main decision-making body of IOs acknowledges the significance of a particular norm by addressing it in formal discussions and recordings.⁸⁹ In other words, the process of *norm recognition* has been undertaken by rhetorically referencing a norm in policy outputs and official documents; nevertheless, this is only understood as a shallow endorsement of the norm, as some norms oftentimes never reach the subsequent critical stage.⁹⁰ Thus, the next principal phase represents *norm adoption* where *the robustness* of the norm in discourse and practice is higher compared to recognition, which makes it less susceptible to weakening by

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2478.00064>. Keck and Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders*; Sanjeev Khagram, James V. Riker, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds., *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, Social Movements, Protest, and Contention, v. 14 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Lisa Maria Dellmuth and Jonas Tallberg, "Advocacy Strategies in Global Governance: Inside versus Outside Lobbying," *Political Studies* 65, no. 3 (October 2017): 705–23, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321716684356>; Jutta Joachim, "Framing Issues and Seizing Opportunities: The UN, NGOs, and Women's Rights," *International Studies Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (June 2003): 247–74, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2478.4702005>; Amanda M. Murdie and David R. Davis, "Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs1: Shaming and Blaming," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 1 (March 2012): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2011.00694.x>. Tallberg et al., "Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015," 7-8

⁸⁷ Tallberg et al., "Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015," 8

⁸⁸ Louise Marie Hurel and Luisa Cruz Lobato, "Unpacking Cyber Norms: Private Companies as Norm Entrepreneurs," *Journal of Cyber Policy* 3, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 61–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2018.1467942>; Annegret Flohr et al., eds., *The Role of Business in Global Governance: Corporations as Norm-Entrepreneurs*, Global Issues Series (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Nancy Ayer Fairbank, "The State of Microsoft?: The Role of Corporations in International Norm Creation," *Journal of Cyber Policy* 4, no. 3 (September 2, 2019): 380–403, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23738871.2019.1696852>; Robert Gorwa and Anton Peez, "Big Tech Hits the Diplomatic Circuit: Norm Entrepreneurship, Policy Advocacy, and Microsoft's Cybersecurity Tech Accord," preprint (SocArXiv, December 11, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/g56c9>.

⁸⁹ Tallberg et al., "Why International Organizations Commit to Liberal Norms," 628. Tallberg, Jonas, et al. "Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015." 3,4,20,33

⁹⁰ Tallberg et al., 628.

contestation.⁹¹ More specifically, it conforms to developing full policies as well as mobilizing resources dedicated to codifying, implementing, and promoting that specific norm.⁹²

⁹¹ Tallberg et al., 628.

⁹² Tallberg et al., 628. Tallberg, Jonas, et al. "Norm Adoption by International Organizations, 1980-2015.", 20

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Having laid out the extensive literature review of the theory of norms, the author is now properly equipped to develop a theoretical framework deemed necessary for providing an answer to the research question. Before the outset of the analysis of the individual norms, it is of utmost importance to propose the author's central argument referring to the question of *norm dynamism* or *norm change*. As a matter of fact, the author's *Weltanschauung* is in absolute compliance with the constructivist standpoint that puts *norms* on a pedestal for IR research, perceiving them as *building blocks* of the international *normative system* that in turn presents the cornerstone of modern world politics and global governance. Thus, *the normative system* in the author's argument represents the system of distinctive norms that are alike, correlated, and mutually interdependent. With respect to individual norms, the author relies on the basic *tripartite structure* of the norms (problem – value – behavior) to explain the newly emerged norms within *the normative system*. Last but not least, the author follows the constructivist logic to the *agent-structure problem*, perceiving them as equally important for the construction of a *normative system*. Building upon this, the author's argument further relies on the theoretical approach developed by Wunderlich, which conceptualizes *norm dynamics* as driven by both *structural* and *agency-oriented factors*. Nevertheless, while the author's argument underscores the importance of both *intrinsic* and *extrinsic structural factors*, the author adds one more important component of *agency-oriented factors* apart from *norm entrepreneurship*: the crucial role of *international organizations*. Namely, by functioning as *forums* or *hubs* for various stakeholders, international organizations are deemed essential for the process of the institutionalization of norms, a pivotal step upon the norm emergence and prior to norm dissemination. Taken together, the mutual interdependence between all of these distinctive *factors* eventually paves the way for the transformation of the existing *normative system* and the construction of a new one.

First and foremost, *the structural factors* of the argument, both *extrinsic* and *intrinsic*, need to be elaborated. On the one hand, with respect to *extrinsic structural factors* of norm change, they refer to the factors that are *exogenous* to the normative system but have an immense impact on it. In the case of the analysis, these factors encompass scientific and technological advances, commonly designated as *digitalization*. That being said, *the*

epochal change, spurred by rapid advancements and innovations of *digital tech*, has had *earth-shaking* consequences on the stability of the existing *analog normative system*. More specifically, *digitalization*, as an *exogenous factor*, has signaled the obsolescence of the existing *normative system*, entailing either the establishment of new norms or the remodeling of the existing ones. In other words, referring to the *tripartite structure* of the norms, it could be inferred that the new and unprecedented *problems* that have arisen as a result of the process of *digitalization*, have entailed the implementation of innovative solutions in the form of new *behaviors* while simultaneously adhering to the same system of *values*. Thus, *digital norms* emerged to address and solve the unprecedented *problems* of the *digital world*, which prevent the full enjoyment of existing overarching values, by prescribing, proscribing, and ordering specific corrective *behaviors*. On the one hand, with respect to *the intrinsic sources* of norm change, they impact the *normative system* from within as they are deeply rooted in the inner nature of the norms, i.e. their everlasting potential for change. In other words, as it has been explained by the second way of the research of the norm's dynamics (the school of *norm contestation*), norms are not fixed and stable but are always prone to reinterpretation, redefinition, modification, and thus contestation. This argument could be further underpinned by referring to *the vertical typology* that stems from this school of thought and has been explained in the same chapter. More specifically, the norms that are under the scrutiny of this analysis stem from their pre-digital or analog predecessors that are understood as being positioned the highest on *the hierarchical norms ladder*. That being said, these analog *meta-norms* have the widest and thus universal moral reach, being negotiated at the macro societal level of a global society. Nevertheless, their abstractness and generalization make them less specific, thus prone to contestation.

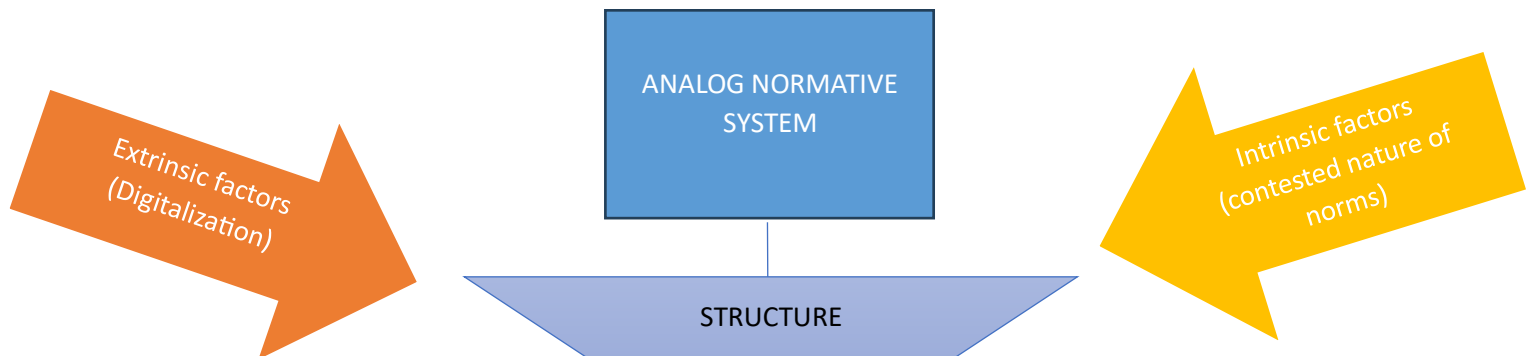
Having explained *structural factors*, it is of utmost importance to elaborate on *agency-oriented* factors. Namely, both *extrinsic* and *intrinsic structural factors* present just one part of *the equation* accountable for *norm dynamics*. To put it more specifically, *structural factors* create only a suitable environment for a *norm change*, acting as a necessary *stimulus* for specific *agents*. Thus, the specific *agency* is of utmost importance for the complete realization of *norm dynamics*. That being said, these agents in question, being triggered by the *structural stimulus*, play an active role in the shaping of *norm dynamics*. Having that in mind, the author's argument incorporates both *norm entrepreneurship* and *international organizations* within the concept of *agency*. The mutual

interaction between these *agents* is primarily accountable for the reconstruction of the existing obsolete *normative system*, which subsequently results either in the emergence of new norms or the reconstruction of existing ones. On the one hand, *norm entrepreneurs* are perceived as *harbingers of change*, as they are *the creative force* who acknowledge *the structural factors* and challenge the existing *normative system* by projecting their new vision of it. Eventually, they engage in the construction of a *normative system* that aligns with their *Weltanschauung* by recruiting *norm followers* (who automatically become new *norm entrepreneurs*). On the other hand, a new *normative system* can only arise and gain importance if it undergoes the process of *institutionalization* within the specific institutional setting of major international organizations. The institutional setting in the case of this analysis refers to the one within *the UN system*. More specifically, it is perceived as a *convener* that brings different stakeholders together providing a suitable environment for debating and creating specific norms and normative system. Furthermore, in the case of this analysis, *the UN system* is accountable for the recognition, adoption (definition, codification, policy creation), and subsequent implementation of the new norms.

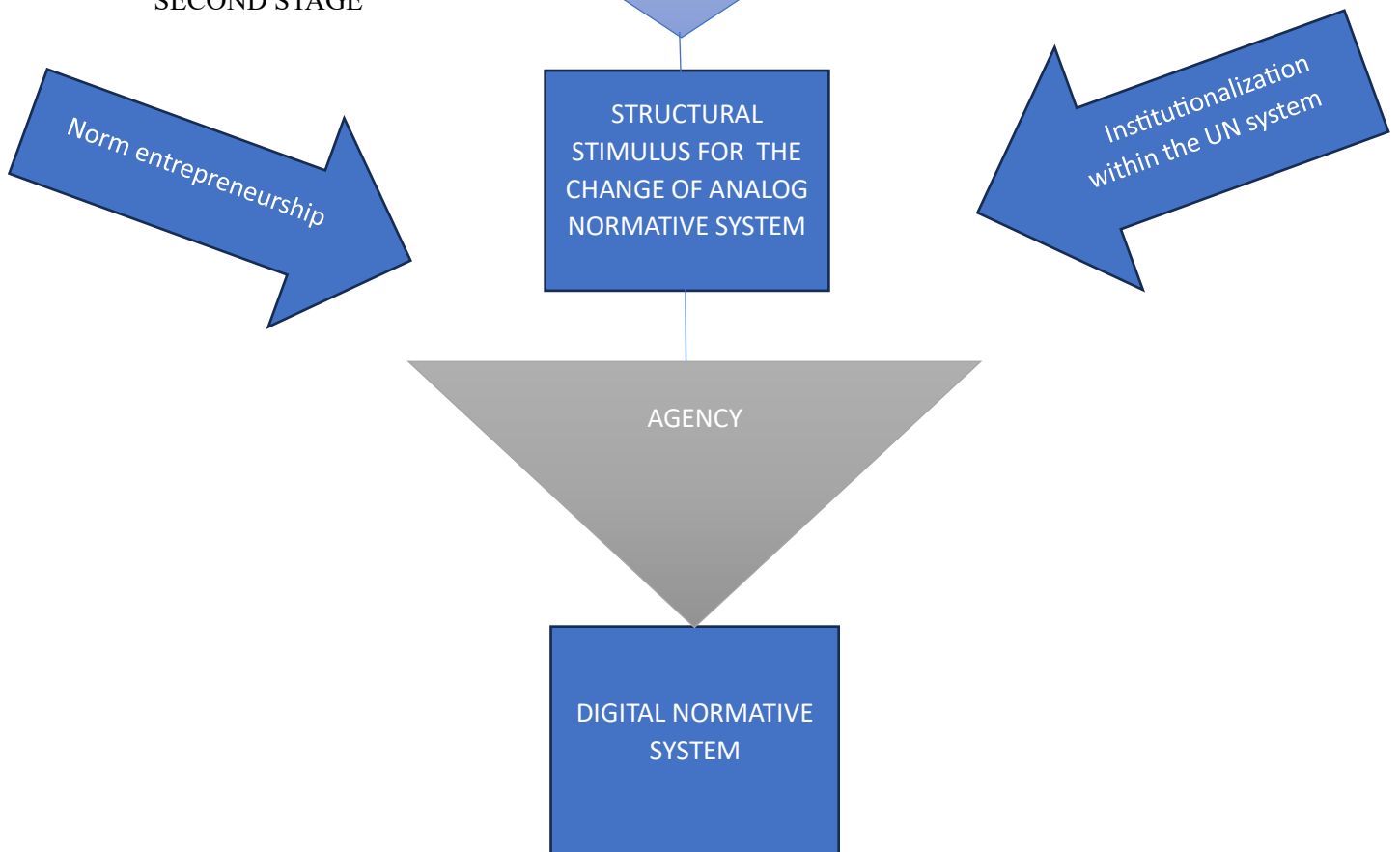
Last but not least, in order to fully grasp the author's argument regarding the *agent-structure problem* within the concept of *norm dynamics*, it is of utmost importance to provide a brief explanation of the stages of *normative system change* along with a visual representation of this process on a diagram. Namely, two consecutive stages could be differentiated. First and foremost, the transformation of the *normative system* begins within the *structure* of the system. On the one hand, under the influence of *extrinsic structural factors* (digitalization), the preexisting *analog normative system* reaches obsolescence. On the other hand, this process is amplified by *intrinsic structural factors* that make every *normative system* prone to contestation. Taken together, structural factors create a *structural stimulus* for the change of the *analog normative system*. This marks the beginning of the second stage of the process, the *agency stage*, whereby mutual interaction between *norm entrepreneurs* and *the UN system* gives rise to the new *digital normative system* and its *institutionalization*. Namely, *the new digital normative system* is understood as an independent variable that has a lasting effect on the individual digital norms, perceived as dependent variables. Regarding the latter, *the new digital norms* should be understood as transformed digital versions of *analog norms*: *tangible development*-----*global (universal) digital connectivity*; *capacity building (intangible development)* -----*digital capacity building*; *public goods*-----*digital public goods*; *social inclusion*-----*digital*

inclusion; human rights-----digital human rights; trust and security ----- digital trust and security; environmental sustainability ----- digital environmental sustainability, cooperation(partnership) ----- digital cooperation.

FIRST STAGE



SECOND STAGE



3. MAIN ANALYSIS

In the main part of the Master's Thesis, the author is going to apply the previously established model of norm dynamism and conduct a qualitative descriptive with an aim of providing an answer to the research question of how the *digital normative system* and its *digital norms* came into being. More specifically, in order to do so the author is going to undertake the following steps. First and foremost, the author is going to explain *the analog normative system* by referring to specific conferences, summits, initiatives, and outcome documents that have established the former. Having finished that, the author is going to shift to the analysis of the digital normative system. First and foremost, the author is going to explain the stimulus for the transformation of the normative system. Secondly, the author is going to elaborate on the institutionalization of *the digital normative system*. As has already been explained, the process of institutionalization consists of two stages (recognition and adoption). Thus, the author is going to explain both: rhetorical references to the normative system, as well as official documents and initiatives that amount to norm adoption. Having done that, in the third part, the author is going to conduct a descriptive analysis of digital norms, establish their tripartite structure, as well as name norm entrepreneurs. Likewise, for every digital norm the author is going to make a link to the corresponding analog norm.

3.1 ANALOG NORMATIVE SYSTEM

The empirical analysis of norm dynamism begins with an overview of the *analog normative system*. Namely, this system serves as the foundation of the forthcoming one, as the latter builds upon it and enhances it. More specifically, the original normative system, the so-called pre-digital or analog, corresponds to *the sustainable development normative system* (author's designation), established by specific conferences, summits, initiatives, and outcome documents. Thus, with the aim of understanding the essence of this *normative system*, it is of utmost importance to shed light on these frameworks by introducing and analyzing them within a specific timeframe.

The very foundation of any normative system is definitely *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1948, which raised human rights on a pedestal of the UN agenda by proclaiming their universal protection.⁹³ Therefore, this very declaration paved the way for all future development endeavors, including the Declaration on the Right to Development in 1986, which recognized development as an inalienable human right.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, the concept of *sustainable development* was of later origin. Namely, it was first introduced and defined by the report of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, better known as *Our Common Future: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the conference that marked the beginning of *the sustainable development normative system* and its institutionalization was *The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED), commonly known as *the Earth Summit*, which was convened in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in June 1992; namely, this conference demonstrated the correlation and interdependence between different social, economic, and environmental factors, as well as their common responsibility for sustaining

⁹³ United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," 217 A (III), Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on December 10, 1948, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.

⁹⁴ United Nations General Assembly, "Declaration on the Right to Development," resolution 41/128, December 4, 1986, <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/rtd.pdf>.

⁹⁵ World Commission on Environment and Development, ed., *Our Common Future*, Oxford Paperbacks (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.

human life on the planet.⁹⁶ The main outcomes of this conference were two key documents: *Agenda 21* and *the Rio Declaration*.⁹⁷

The next turning point was *the World Summit for Social Development* which was held in Copenhagen (Denmark) in March 1995. This conference was of historic importance as it put *place people at the center of development by ensuring full participation by all* advocating for the eradication of poverty, achieving full employment, and fostering social inclusion.⁹⁸ The main document where these goals were stipulated was the *Declaration and Programme of Action* (A/CONF.166/9).⁹⁹

At the turn of the century, i.e. start of the third millennium, a symbolic conference was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York in September 2000, with the aim of reinventing the strategies for the twenty first century and fast-changing world.¹⁰⁰ The main outcome of the conference was *the Millennium Declaration* (A/RES/55/2) which set out 8 goals toward sustainable development: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability developing a global partnership for development.¹⁰¹ Shortly afterward, these goals were reiterated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg (South Africa) in September 2002, and the World Summit in New York in September 2005.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ “United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 1992, Conferences,” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/rio1992>

⁹⁷ United Nations. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*. A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I). Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992. Distributed on 12 August 1992. New York: United Nations, 1992. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>.
United Nations. *Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development*. New York, NY: Department of Public Information, United Nations, 1994. <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/>.

⁹⁸ “World Summit for Social Development 1995, Conferences” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/social-development/copenhagen1995>

⁹⁹ United Nations. *Report of the World Summit for Social Development: Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995*. A/CONF.166/9. New York: United Nations, 1996. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N95/116/51/PDF/N9511651.pdf>.

¹⁰⁰ “Millennium Summit. New York, USA, September 2000, Conferences” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/newyork2000>

¹⁰¹ United Nations. *Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly: United Nations Millennium Declaration*. A/RES/55/2. General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Agenda item 60 (b). Distr.: General, 18 September 2000. <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>.

¹⁰² “World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002, Conferences” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/johannesburg2002>.

The pinnacle of sustainable development was the formal gathering of world leaders convened by the United Nations in New York (September 2015), marking the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Organization; the main aim of this meeting was to propose a new agenda for sustainable development.¹⁰³ The main outcome of the conference, which had been a result of approximately two years of intensive consultation and engagement of various stakeholders, was the new plan known as *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/70/L.1)*; *The Agenda2030* has adopted 17 Sustainable goals and 169 targets to be realized by 2030, in the areas critical for humanity and the planet: *No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequality, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, Partnerships for the Goals*.¹⁰⁴

<https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/johannesburg2002>;

“World Summit, New York 2005, Conferences” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/newyork2005>

¹⁰³ “United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development, New York 2015, Conferences” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/newyork2015>

¹⁰⁴ United Nations, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, A/RES/70/1.

3.2 DIGITAL NORMATIVE SYSTEM

3.2.1 Structural stimulus for the change of the analog normative system

The stimulus for the transformation of the preexisting normative system could be found in the acts and statements of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres outside of the *UN system*. More specifically, since Mr. Guterres assumed the office of Secretary-General in 2017, his endeavor could be characterized as a decisive step toward harnessing the power of new digital technologies on the global level and thus preparing the world for the upcoming digital era. Therefore, the innovative and transformative vision of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who is himself an engineer by education and occupation, has been accountable for the creation and development of the new digital normative system within the United Nations, aligning it with the previous one with the aim of achieving SDGs. That being said, in this chapter, the author is going to present chronologically the acts and statements of Mr. Guterres that were made at specific events, conferences, and summits. Basically speaking, the following few instances could be designated as the stimulus for the transformation of the preexisting normative system and the creation of the new digital one.

The initial stimulus for the transformation of the normative system came right after Mr. Gutters assumed his office in January 2017 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Namely, the World Economic Forum is an International Organization created for public-private cooperation that *provides a global, impartial, and not-for-profit platform for meaningful connection between stakeholders to establish trust and build initiatives for cooperation and progress*.¹⁰⁵ Namely, at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, more specifically at the special session on *Cooperation for Peace: Tackling the Root Causes of Global Crises*, Mr. Guterres gave his speech touching upon the issues of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and digital technologies: *And that is why I believe that there is now an opportunity for a new platform of partnership, at a higher level. A platform*

¹⁰⁵ “Our Mission,” World Economic Forum. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.weforum.org/about/world-economic-forum/>.

*for the partnership that can now serve not only to implementing the goals and defining the past, but addressing the challenges that we will be facing in relation to the future and namely the impacts that have been discussed so many times in this World Economic Forum, the so-called fourth industrial revolution, and the challenges that the international community faces in areas like genetic engineering or artificial intelligence and the problems of cyber-space, in which is my deep belief that only with a very strong dialogue and partnership between governments, international organizations, and the private sector, it would be possible to transform them in instruments that would allow for a fantastic increase in the well-being of people and avoid the risks that would be a nightmare for mankind as, unfortunately, a totally unregulated form of research in some of these areas would eventually generate.*¹⁰⁶

The second instance that can be characterized as a stimulus for the transformation of the normative system happened at the WEB Summit in Lisbon (November 2017). Namely, the WEB Summit is an annual technology conference that organizes the world's largest technology events by aiming to establish meaningful connections between CEOs, founders, investors, media, politicians, and cultural figureheads that together have the potential to change and reshape the world.¹⁰⁷ Exactly at this conference, Mr. Guterres gave his speech addressing the issues related to the new emerging digital technologies and the fourth industrial revolution: *I am an engineer and, for the time being, I am also Secretary-General of the United Nations and we are all here because we believe in the force of Science, Innovation and Technology. From my perspective, what is important is to combine innovation and technology, innovation and public policy to make sure that innovation works for the good of humankind....I am a true believer that this fourth industrial revolution can be the answer to the main questions that we are putting to ourselves today, facing the enormous difficulties that we are still facing in the different aspects of social inequality, in the different aspects of the deterioration of the environment and the different type of threats to our collective life. But as in relation to the past, we need to be able now to look into the near future with a strategic vision and combine the action of governments with the private sector, with researchers, academia, the civil society in order to be able to make sure that this fourth industrial revolution is indeed in all its aspects a force for good. It is clear that*

¹⁰⁶ Remarks at the Special Session on 'Cooperation for Peace: Tackling the Root Causes of Global Crises' Secretary-General," United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2017-01-19/secretary-generals-cooperation-peace-remarks>.

¹⁰⁷ "About Web Summit," Web Summit. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://about.websummit.com/>

*this fourth Industrial Revolution will have a dramatic impact in our societies, in our way of life, but also in labor markets. It's very important to anticipate the potential net negative impacts of this technological evolution.... My appeal those that are in this web summit, again governments, businesses, academia, researchers, scientists, is to start seriously discussing the impacts of the fourth industrial revolution in the societies of tomorrow...*¹⁰⁸

The most recent example that can be classified as a stimulus occurred once again at the World Economic Forum in Davos, but this time in January 2018. Namely, the Secretary-General, being interviewed by the President of the World Economic Forum Mr. Borge Brende on the 25th of January, delivered his Special Address that touched upon the issues of the fourth industrial revolution and digital technologies.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, the video of the session has been deleted and thus since then has been available neither on the Forum website, nor on the UN WEB TV, nor as a transcript in the archive of the Secretary-General speeches. Due to that reason, the author is not in a position to provide a verbatim speech that would showcase the thoughts of Mr. Guterres about the issues in question. Nevertheless, this last event definitely represents a final step toward the transformation of the normative system.

3.2.2 Institutionalization of the Digital Normative System

3.2.2.1 *The recognition of the digital normative system*

The process of recognition or rhetorical reference of *the digital normative system* within the United Nations commenced after the initial stimuli in the external environment. Once again, a crucial role was played by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and his transformative vision. Namely, the recognition began in *the Opening remarks at a press conference* at UN Headquarters (July 2018) where Mr. Guterres among other things discussed the benefits and risks digital technologies might pose and announced the creation

¹⁰⁸ “Remarks at ‘Web Summit’ Secretary-General,” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2018-11-05/remarks-web-summit>

¹⁰⁹ “Special Address by António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,” World Economic Forum. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2018/sessions/special-address-by-antonio-guterres-secretary-general-of-the-united-nations/>

of the High Panel of Digital Cooperation: *Digital Technology is changing economies and societies at warp speed. The scale and pace of change are unprecedented, but the current means and levels of international cooperation are unequal to the challenge. Technology now fuels so many aspects of our lives, from personal relationships to business and politics... And technology is not standing still; developments are accelerating.... At the same time, the world is only beginning to address the dark side of innovation – such as cybersecurity threats, the risks of cyberwarfare, the magnification of hate speech, and violations of privacy. As a global community, we face questions about security, equity, ethics, and human rights in a digital age. We need to seize the potential of technology while safeguarding against risks and unintended consequences. I see the United Nations as a unique platform for dialogue in our digital age. The Panel will map trends in digital technologies, identify gaps and opportunities, and outline proposals for strengthening international cooperation. It will contribute to the broader public debate on the importance of cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to the full range of digital challenges. The Panel will submit its recommendations to me in nine months, and I am confident that the public consultations of this Panel, and its resulting report, will help advance digital cooperation for our shared future.*¹¹⁰

The second recognition step represents the actual establishment of the High Panel of Digital Cooperation. *The High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation* was convened by the UN Secretary-General in July 2018 with the aim of raising awareness about the transformative impact of digital technologies as well as strengthening cooperation in the domain of digitalization *among Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, academia, the technical community, and other relevant stakeholders.*¹¹¹ The Panel was cochaired by Ms. Melinda Gates (Co-Chair of The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, USA) and Mr. Jack Ma (Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group, China) and had an additional 20 members; all members of the Panel served in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their affiliated institutions.¹¹² The work of the Panel toward

¹¹⁰ “Opening Remarks at Press Conference at UN Headquarters Secretary-General.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2018-07-12/remarks-press-conference-un-headquarters>.

¹¹¹ “Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/sg-digital-cooperation-panel>

¹¹² United Nations, “Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation.”

recognition of the digital normative system followed several procedures. First and foremost, by conducting a careful consultation process, the Panel managed to gather the views and proposals of academia, civil society, relevant industries, and Member States; having done that, the Panel relied on the expert communities by being actively engaged at existing events, conferences, forums, virtual hubs, and online participation platforms; eventually, the Panel completed its deliberation and submitted its final report and actionable recommendations, which together amount to the beginning of the process of norm adoption.¹¹³

3.2.2.2 The adoption of the digital normative system

The actual adoption of *the digital normative system* has been a result of three consecutive initiatives: 1) the publishment of *the Age of Digital Interdependence Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation*; 2) the publishment of the *Report of the Secretary-General Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*; 3) the establishment of *the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology*. The initiatives in question are the product of the work of the United Nations (the UN system), which provides the necessary setting for the final stage of institutionalization of *digital norms*, i.e. norm adoption (definition, codification, policy creation, and implementation).

The effort of *The High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation* materialized after several in-person and virtual meetings in the report *The Age of Digital Interdependence* that was submitted to the Secretary-General in June 2019; the main objective of the report was to make recommendations on how the international community could work together to optimize the use of digital technologies and mitigate the risks.¹¹⁴ More specifically, the report analyzed and identified gaps and opportunities brought about by digital technologies, as well as highlighted the necessity of strengthening international cooperation within the digital world.¹¹⁵ The report consists of three sections. The very first section analyses the issue of how digital technologies can ensure a more inclusive digital economy and society; the second section deals with the issues related to human rights, human agency, and security in the digital era; the third section gives a thorough analysis of current gaps within

¹¹³ United Nations, "Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation."

¹¹⁴ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, Report of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation (New York: United Nations, June 2019), <https://www.un.org/en/pdfs/DigitalCooperation-report-for%20web.pdf>.

United Nations, "Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation"

¹¹⁵ United Nations, "Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation."

cooperation and makes proposals on how to improve global digital cooperation architecture.¹¹⁶ Based upon the aforementioned, the report makes five sets of recommendations: building an inclusive digital economy and society, developing human and institutional capacity, protecting human rights and human agency, promoting digital trust, security, and stability, and fostering global digital cooperation.¹¹⁷

Shortly afterward, *the Age of Digital Interdependence* was augmented by the publishment of *the United Nations Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation* in May/June 2020.¹¹⁸ Namely, the main objective of the *Roadmap* has been to provide solutions on how the opportunities brought about by digital technologies can be harnessed by the international community while at the same time addressing their challenges.¹¹⁹ Thus, the *Roadmap* developed a step-by-step approach to *connect, respect, and protect people in the digital age* by building upon the recommendation of the previous report.¹²⁰ More specifically, the *Roadmap* presents the Secretary-General's recommendations on how to facilitate global cooperation: *Achieving universal, affordable, connectivity by 2030, Ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable, Strengthening digital capacity building, Ensuring the protection of human rights in the digital era, Supporting global cooperation on Artificial Intelligence, Promoting digital trust and security, Building a more effective architecture for digital cooperation.*¹²¹

The next stage was the General Assembly's *Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations* in September 2020; namely, in paragraph 13 Member States agreed upon the necessity of improving digital cooperation

¹¹⁶ United Nations, "Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation."

¹¹⁷ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019

United Nations, "Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation."

¹¹⁸ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/74/821, May 29, 2020, https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf; United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation: Implementation of the Recommendations of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation*, illustrated version, designed by the Graphic Design Unit, Department of Global Communications, Report of the Secretary-General, June 2020, https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/assets/pdf/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_EN.pdf.

¹¹⁹ "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology." United Nations. Accessed June 8, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/about>.

¹²⁰ United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

¹²¹ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020; United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology.," "Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology." United Nations. Accessed June 8, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/roadmap-digital-cooperation>.

by taking into consideration both the benefits and risks of digital technologies, while recognizing the importance of the United Nations to *provide a platform for all stakeholders to participate in such deliberations*.¹²² One year later, in September 2021, as a response to the aforementioned declaration, the *Report of the Secretary-General Our Common Agenda* was published. Namely, paragraphs 92 and 93 take into consideration the digital issues, emphasizing the necessity to protect the online space and strengthen its governance, while proposing a *Global Digital Compact* to be developed through a multistakeholder track and agreed on a *Summit of a Future*, which would outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all.¹²³

The last step was the establishment of *the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology*, with Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill assuming office in July 2022 as its head.¹²⁴ Serving as an advocate and focal point for digital cooperation, its primary objective has been to coordinate and oversee the implementation of *the Secretary-General's Roadmap on Digital Cooperation*.¹²⁵ Likewise, *the Office* plays an important role in facilitating dialogue on the recommendations of *the Roadmap* and related parts of *the Common Agenda* with the aim of accelerating global digital cooperation, underpinning the work towards a *Global Digital Compact*, as well as ensuring collective progress towards achieving the Goals by 2030.¹²⁶ Last but not least, *the Office* works closely with all United Nations entities, participates in interagency and United Nations systemwide processes, and collaborates with ongoing multilateral and international processes and forums.¹²⁷

¹²² United Nations, "Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations." Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on September 28, 2020, A/RES/75/1. September 28, 2020. <https://undocs.org/en/A/75/L.1>.

¹²³ *Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General* (New York: United Nations, 2021).

¹²⁴ United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

¹²⁵ United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

¹²⁶ United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

¹²⁷ United Nations, "About the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

United Nations, "Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology."

3.3 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF DIGITAL NORMS

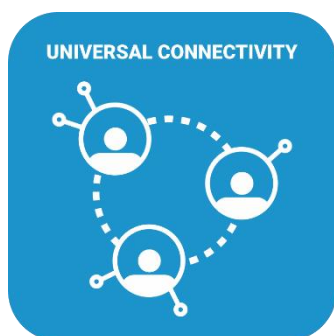
In this section of the Master's Thesis, the author is going to conduct an in-depth analysis of the norms that are part of a newly emerged *digital normative system*: *Global (universal) connectivity*, *Digital Capacity Building*, *Digital Public Goods*, *Digital Inclusion*, *Digital Human Rights*, *Digital Trust and Security*, *Digital Environmental Sustainability*, *Digital Cooperation*. The analysis of the *digital norms* is going to be conducted in the following ways. Namely, this section is going to be divided into 9 chapters, each of them dedicated to a single *digital norm*. On the one hand, within the chapters, the author is going to apply *descriptive analysis* of these *digital norms* relying upon the sources. Likewise, the author is going to provide explanations of the original *analog norms* relying on specific documents and literature. More specifically, regarding *analog documents*, the author is first going to present the documents that first mentioned and institutionalized analog norms, and then refer to the key areas of the *Agenda2030* that address them. Furthermore, for every *digital norm*, the author is going to plot a *tripartite structure* on diagrams (problem – value – behavior) and explain it. Last but not least, with respect to *norm entrepreneurship*, at the end of every chapter, the author is going to present both the initial norm entrepreneurs (*champions*) and their staunch *norm followers* (*key constituents*) who together contribute to *norm entrepreneurship*. Taken all together, these agents are going to be presented in the tables in which they are going to be grouped into five categories: *State entrepreneurship*, *Supranational norm entrepreneurship*, *International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurship*, *Transnational Non-profit Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurship*, and *Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurship*. Regarding the last two, *Transnational Non-profit Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurship* and *Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurship*, further categorization is going to be established on the basis of their type.

Before the outset of the analysis, it is essential to elaborate on the *tripartite structure* (problem – value – behavior) that is going to be applied in the analysis. As has been already mentioned, new *problems* that have emerged as a byproduct of the process of *digitalization*, necessitate the invention of new behaviors that align with the already established system of values. Thus, for the sake of the analysis it is necessary to shed light on all three components of the *tripartite structure*. First and foremost, the *problems* related to the process of digitalization could be divided into three groups: *digital divide* (disparity between those

who have and do not have access to the relevant digital technologies), *digital challenges and risks* (potential threats that exist with access), *gaps in digital cooperation* (problems with institutional arrangements). Secondly, the proposed behaviors could be categorized into three groups, as well: *narrowing/closing the digital divide*, *addressing/preventing digital challenges and risks*, and *narrowing/closing gaps in digital cooperation*. Last but not least, there are well-established values that need to be adhered to: *inclusiveness* (leaving no one behind, so that we can maximize equality of opportunity, access, and outcomes to achieve Sustainable Development Goals); *respect* (embodying respect for human rights and human dignity, diversity, the safety and security of personal data and devices, and national and international law); *human flourishing* (promoting sustainable economic growth, the social good and opportunities for self-realization); *transparency* – (promoting open access to information and operations); *collaboration* – (upholding open standards and interoperability to facilitate collaboration); *accessibility* (developing affordable, simple and reliable devices and services for as diverse a range of users as possible); *sustainability* (furthering the aim of a zero-carbon, zero-waste economy that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs); *harmony* (the use by governments and businesses of digital technologies in ways that earn the trust of peers, partners and people, and that avoid exploiting or exacerbating divides and conflicts).¹²⁸

¹²⁸ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019.7

3.3.1 Universal Connectivity



The first norm under scrutiny of analysis is *the norm of Universal Connectivity*. This norm represents a remodeled digital version of the previous meta-analog norm of tangible development, which has been present in all initiatives. Concerning Agenda2030, this norm is present in SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, specifically Target 9.1)¹²⁹ which aims to develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure that will be accessible and affordable to all. That being said, the digital normative system has given this analog norm a new dimension by further stipulating the problems and potential solutions to them.

How can this digital norm be explained? The norm of Universal Connectivity refers to the establishment of physical infrastructure and providing equipment that will enable the use of the Internet by individuals.¹³⁰ More specifically, according to the statistics, approximately 3.6 billion people do not possess access to the Internet; on top of that, in the least developed countries, only 19% of people have connections.¹³¹ Therefore, the problem that gave rise to this norm concerns the affordability of physical infrastructure and equipment.¹³² With the aim of providing the solution to the aforementioned problem, the norm proposes that by 2030 every adult should have access to the Internet.¹³³ In order to do so, on the one hand, the norm suggests identifying baselines regarding the fundamental level of digital connectivity that enables individuals to access the online space; on the other, it suggests developing specific targets and metrics regarding affordability.¹³⁴

With respect to the tripartite structure, the norm of Universal Connectivity could be envisioned in the following ways. The obvious problem is certainly the digital divide characterized by a lack of connectivity. Thus, the solution to the problem is seen in

¹²⁹ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.20

¹³⁰ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 12

¹³¹ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 5

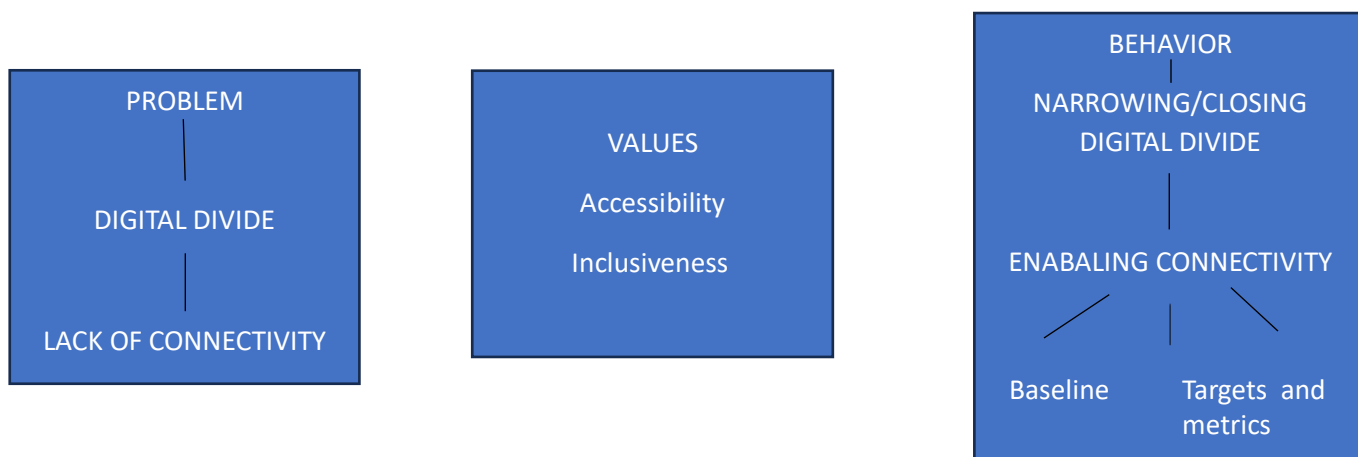
“Global Connectivity, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/global-connectivity>

¹³² United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 6

¹³³ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 29

¹³⁴ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 7

narrowing/closing the digital divide by enabling connectivity in the aforementioned ways, while adhering to the well-established value of *accessibility* and *inclusiveness*.



3.3.1.1 Global Digital Connectivity – Norm Entrepreneurship¹³⁵

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of Uganda – (champion)	European Union (EU) (key constituent)	International Telecommunication Union (ITU) – (champion)	ACTAI Global – (multi-stakeholder platform) (key constituent)	Alibaba – (private sector-multinational e-commerce corporation) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Egypt (key constituent)	STOA (Chair of the European Parliament’s Science and Technology Options Assessment body)	UNICEF – (champion)	Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) – (a multi-stakeholder initiative) (key constituent)	Econet Wireless – (private sector – multinational communications corporation) (key constituent)

¹³⁵ “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology,” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. https://www.un.org/techenvoy/sites/www.un.org.techenvoy/files/List_of_roundtables_key_constituents.pdf.

		(key constituent)			
3.	The Government of Kazakhstan (key constituent)		Internet Society (ISOC) (key constituent)	Ethereum – (Decentralized Technology Platform – Blockchain and Smart Contracts)) (key constituent)	Facebook – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
4.	The Government of Malaysia (key constituent)		World Economic Forum (WEF) (key constituent)	Gates Foundation – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) – (Business Association – International Trade and Policy) (key constituent)
5.	The Government of Niger (key constituent)		Office of the Deputy-Secretary-General of the United Nations	Lemann Foundation – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	Mastercard – (private sector-multinational financial corporation) (key constituent)
6.	The Government of Rwanda (key constituent)		International Trade Law Division, Office of Legal Affairs (key constituent)	Upenn/I WorldConnected – (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	Microsoft – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
7.			UN Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	Web Foundation – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	M-Pesa (private sector – mobile financial service platform) (key constituent)
8.			United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (key constituent)		Eutelsat OneWeb – (private sector – multinational communication company) (key constituent)

9.			United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) (key constituent)		Viasat – (private sector – multinational communications corporation) (key constituent)
10.			World Bank (key constituent)		
11.			World Food Programme (key constituent)		
12.			UN Global Compact (key constituent)		
13.			ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development (key constituent)		

3.3.2 Digital Capacity Building



The second norm under the scrutiny of the analysis is *the norm of Digital Capacity Building*. Indisputably, this norm is a *remodeled digital version* of the previous *meta-analog norm of capacity building*. Namely, *capacity-building* refers to the intangible aspects of development, i.e. *the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world*.¹³⁶ This very norm was institutionalized at the 1992 *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* by *Agenda 21*. Namely, chapter 37.1 defines *capacities* as *the country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional, and resource capabilities*; thus, *capacity-building* refers to strengthening these *capacities with the right policy choices and modes of implementation among development options*.¹³⁷ Taking that into consideration, capacities and capacity-building are prevalent components of the *Agenda 2030*, being addressed in almost all of the goals. Nevertheless, *Agenda 2030* specifically refers to *Capacity Building* in SDG17, (*Partnerships for the Goals, Targets 17.9, 17.18, 17.19*), mentioning the targets for capacity building, such as increasing technology and innovation as well as improving data collection and monitoring.¹³⁸

Having provided a brief explanation of the *predecessor norm*, it is now possible to shed light on its *digital version*. Namely, the major reason for the emergence of *digital capacity-building* is the lack or deprivation of capacities deemed *substantial for real and sustained progress* in the digital era, which is amplified by the insufficient investment and supply-driven approach to development (particularly in developing countries).¹³⁹ Thus,

¹³⁶“Capacity-Building, Academic Impact,” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/page/capacity-building>.
<https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/page/capacity-building>

¹³⁷ United Nations. *Agenda 21*. 1992. 329.

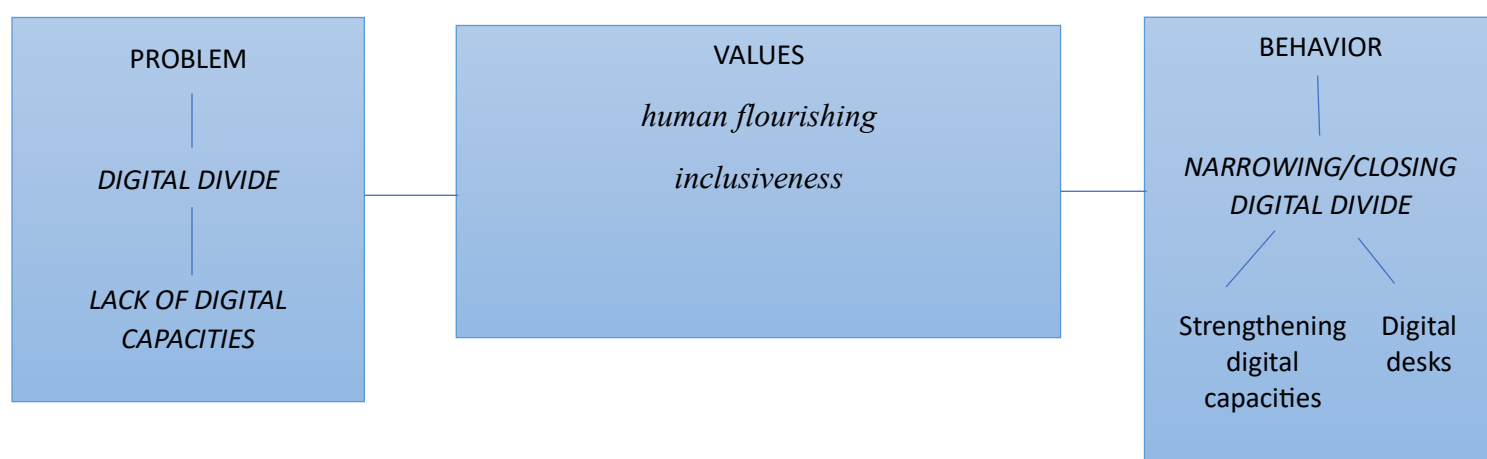
¹³⁸ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.25-26

¹³⁹ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 5:

“Digital Capacity Building, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-capacity-building>

with an aim of meeting the demands of the digital world, unlocking the benefits of technology, and attaining *Sustainable Development Goals*, this norm proposes strengthening *digital capacity* (skill development and effective training) by tailoring it to individual and national circumstances, as well as improving coherence and coordination by establishing regional and global *digital help desks*.¹⁴⁰

With respect to *the tripartite structure*, the major problem here is indisputably *the digital divide*, i.e. lack of digital capacities crucial for the digital era. Therefore, the solution to the problem is seen in *narrowing/closing the digital divide* by strengthening these digital capacities through the aforementioned steps, while adhering to the well-established value of *human flourishing* and *inclusiveness*.



3.3.2.1 Digital Capacity Building - Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁴¹

Roadmap for Digital Cooperation [New York]: 12:
https://www.un.org/techenvoy/sites/www.un.org.techenvoy/files/general/Roadmap_for_Digital_Cooperation_9June.pdf

United Nations, “Digital Capacity Building.”

¹⁴⁰ United Nations, “Digital Capacity Building.”

United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 12

¹⁴¹ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Non-profit Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of the Netherlands (key constituent)	European Union (EU) (key constituent)	International Telecommunication Union (ITU) – (champion)	Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	ARM Holdings – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Russia (key constituent)		United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – (champion)	Diplo Foundation – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	Microsoft (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
3.	The Government of Singapore (key constituent)		International Trade Centre (ITC) (key constituent)	Overseas Development Institute (ODI) (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	
4.	The Government of the United Arab Emirates (key constituent)		United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (key constituent)	Oxford Blavatnik School of Government (epistemic community - university) (key constituent)	
5.	The Government of Uganda (key constituent)		UN-HABITAT (key constituent)		
6.	The Government of the United Kingdom		United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) (key constituent)		

	(key constituent)				
7.			UN Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)		
8.			World Health Organization (WHO) (key constituent)		
9.			World Bank (key constituent)		
10.			IndustriALL Global Union (key constituent)		

3.3.3 Digital Public Goods



The third norm within the analysis is designated as *the norm of Digital Public Goods*. The norm in question is a remodeled digital version of the previous *meta-analog norm of (global) public goods*. Namely, public goods, the term that originates from economics, are goods that are *non-rivalrous* (the use of the goods by some individuals does not cause a reduction in their availability to others) and *non-excludable* (nobody can be specifically excluded from using the goods).¹⁴² In other words, these goods are understood as commodities and services that benefit all society members by being available and accessible to everyone. On top of it, the adjective global signifies access to public goods that transcend national borders, with an aim of leaving no one behind and making people everywhere better off.¹⁴³ For that reason, (global) public goods have been a key component of the analog normative system and its documents. With respect to *Agenda2030*, this norm is present in SDG 3 (*Good Health and Well-Being*, Target 3.7 and 3.8), which emphasizes the importance of access to healthcare services and items, likewise, in SDG 4 (*Quality education*, Target 4.1, 4.2) that refer to access to education. Last but not least, the aspect of public goods could be seen in SDG 7 (*Clean Water and Sanitation*, Target 6.1, 6.2) as well as in SDG8 (*Affordable and Clean Energy*, Target 8.1,8.2).¹⁴⁴

After explaining the essence of *(global) public goods*, the author is properly equipped to elaborate on *digital public goods*. According to the definition, *digital resources* are characterized as *public goods* whenever *they are freely and openly available, with minimal restrictions on how they can be distributed, adapted, and reused*.¹⁴⁵ In that vein,

¹⁴² Brian Nicholson et al., "Digital Public Goods Platforms for Development: The Challenge of Scaling," *The Information Society* 38, no. 5 (October 20, 2022): 365, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2022.2105999>.

Johan Ivar Sæbø, Brian Nicholson, Petter Nielsen, and Sundeep Sahay, "Digital Global Public Goods," (paper presented at the 1st Virtual Conference on Implications of Information and Digital Technologies for Development, May 2021), accessed April 20, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351871362_Digital_Global_Public_Goods
United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 5.

¹⁴³ Nicholson et al., 365; Molly Molloy, "Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century," *Journal of Government Information* 27, no. 6 (November 2000): 915, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1352-0237\(00\)00246-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1352-0237(00)00246-X); Inge Kaul et al., *Global Public Goods: A Concept for Framing the Post-2015 Agenda?*, Discussion Paper 2/2013 (Bonn: Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik, 2013), 13. Johan Ivar Sæbø et al., "Digital Global Public Goods," 2021,891

¹⁴⁴ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 1992. 16,17,19

¹⁴⁵ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 11

digital public goods include *open-source software, open data, open artificial intelligence models, open standards, and open content*.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the *problem* that gave rise to this *digital norm* is twofold. On the one hand, a substantial proportion of the Internet is neither open source nor public due to copyright regimes and proprietary systems, making useful information not easily accessible; on the other hand, access could be hindered because of uneven distribution with regard to the language, content, required infrastructure and investment.¹⁴⁷ In that vein, with the aim of unlocking a more equitable world as well as the full potential of digital technologies and data for achieving Sustainable Development Goals, the norm in question recommends a *global effort to encourage and invest in the creation of digital public goods*.¹⁴⁸ Likewise, this should be followed by the establishment of a platform for sharing digital public goods; by doing so, digital public goods must not inflict any harm and should adhere *to privacy and other applicable laws, standards, and best practices*, while ensuring inclusion.¹⁴⁹

With respect to the *tripartite structure of norms*, the norm of *Digital public goods* could be envisioned in the following manner. Namely, the obvious *problem* that gave rise to this norm is of course the *digital divide*. In this case, the *digital divide* is caused by either the insufficient amount of open and public *digital resources* or the uneven distribution of *digital public goods*. Thus, the logical possible behavior is to *narrow and close the digital divide* by creating digital public goods via the aforementioned steps: promotion, investment, and setting up a platform. This should be done by adhering to well-established values of *human flourishing, inclusiveness, and respect* (full value).

¹⁴⁶ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 35

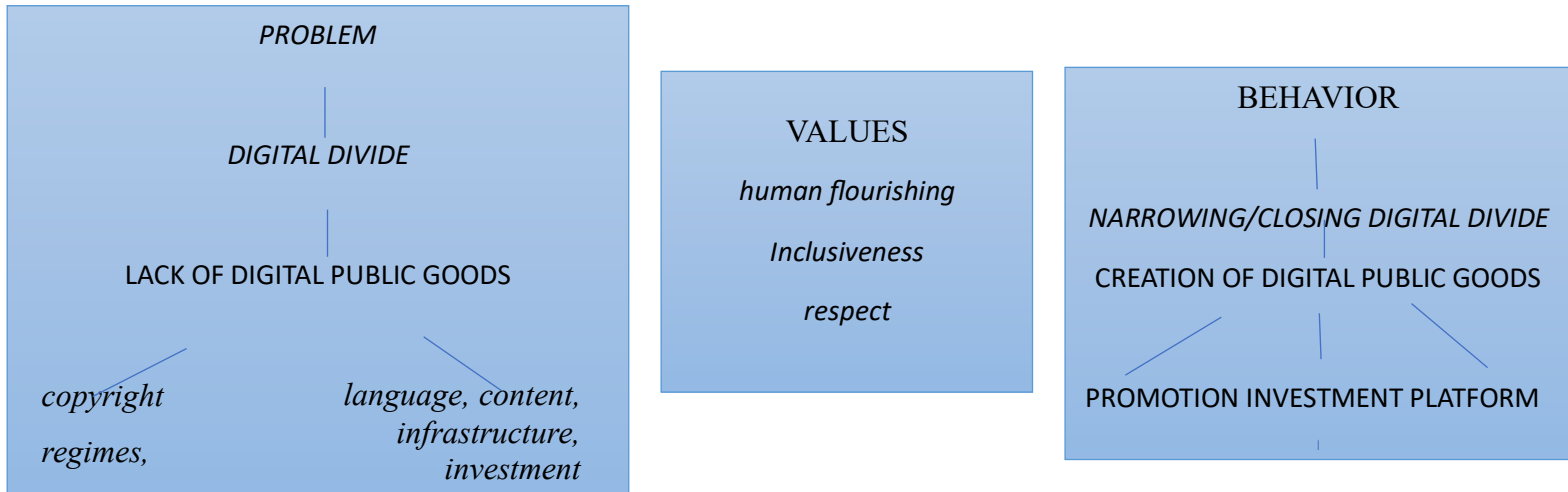
“Digital Public Goods - Digital Public Goods Alliance,” Digital Public Goods Alliance - Promoting digital public goods to create a more equitable world, February 29, 2024. Accessed June 9, 2024 <https://digitalpublicgoods.net/digital-public-goods/>

“Digital Public Goods, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-public-goods>

¹⁴⁷ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 8-9

¹⁴⁸ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 9

¹⁴⁹ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 29
United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 9



3.3.3.1 Digital Public Goods – Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁵⁰

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of Norway – (champion)	STOA (Chair of the European Parliament’s Science and Technology Options Assessment body) (key constituent)	UNICEF – (champion)	Indian Software Product Industry Roundtable (iSPIRT) – (epistemic community – think thank) – (champion)	Facebook - (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Sierra Leone – (champion)	African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) (key constituent)	UN Global Pulse – initiative – (champion)	Botnar – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	Microsoft – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
3.	The Government of Belize (Alliance of Small Island States Chair) (key constituent)		International Trade Centre (ITC) (key constituent)	Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	CISCO – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
4.	The Government of Finland (key constituent)		International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (key constituent)	Digital Impact Alliance (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	ARM Holdings (private sector-multinational technology corporation)

¹⁵⁰ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

					(key constituent)
5.	The Government of Niger (key constituent)		Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (key constituent)	Future Society - (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	
6.	The Government of the United Arab Emirates (key constituent)		United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (key constituent)	Graduate Institute Geneva - (epistemic community - university) (key constituent)	
7.	The Government of the United Kingdom (key constituent)		United Nations Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) (key constituent)	Mozilla Foundation – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	
8.			UN Secretary-General’s Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	Wikimedia Foundation – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	
9.			World Health Organization (WHO) (key constituent)	The Global Partnership to End Violence – (multistakeholder initiative) (key constituent)	
10.			World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (key constituent)	Digital Public Goods Alliance (multistakeholder initiative) (Champion)	
11.			World Economic Forum (WEF) (key constituent)		
12.			European Broadcasting Union (EBU) (key constituent)		
13.			World Meteorological Organization (WMO) (key constituent)		
14.			World Bank (key constituent)		

3.3.4 Digital Inclusion



The fourth analyzed norm is labeled as *the norm of Digital inclusion*. Undoubtedly, this norm is *a remodeled digital version* of the previous *meta-analog norm of social inclusion*. Namely, the norm of *social inclusion* was institutionalized at the 1995 World Summit on Social Development in its *Report*. Namely, paragraph 66. in chapter IV defines an inclusive society as *a society for all, in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play; inclusive society must be based on respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural and religious diversity, social justice and the special needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, democratic participation and the rule of law*.¹⁵¹ This particular norm finds itself as a prominent part of the 2030 Agenda, as the very slogan of the *Agenda* is *Leaving no one behind*.¹⁵² Nevertheless, it is of utmost importance to name specific goals that refer to the norm in question. Namely, SDG 5 (*Gender Equality*) deals with the social inclusion and empowerment of women and girls, whereas SDG 4 (*Quality Education*) is dedicated to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all; SDG 10 (*Reduced Inequalities*, Targets 10.2, 10.3, and 10.4) aims for the social, economic, and political inclusion of all within countries, regardless of socioeconomic status; SDG 11 (*Sustainable cities and human settlements*) and its Targets 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, and 11.7 aim to achieve social inclusion of all citizens within cities and other human settlements; last but not least, SDG 8 (*Decent work and economic growth*) and its Target 8.5 refer to social inclusion in the area of work and employment.¹⁵³

The digital counterpart of this analog norm, *the norm on digital inclusion*, is defined as *equitable, meaningful, and safe access to use, lead, and design of digital technologies, services, and associated opportunities for everyone, everywhere*.¹⁵⁴ Namely, this norm

¹⁵¹ United Nations. *Copenhagen Summit for Social Development*. 1995. 65

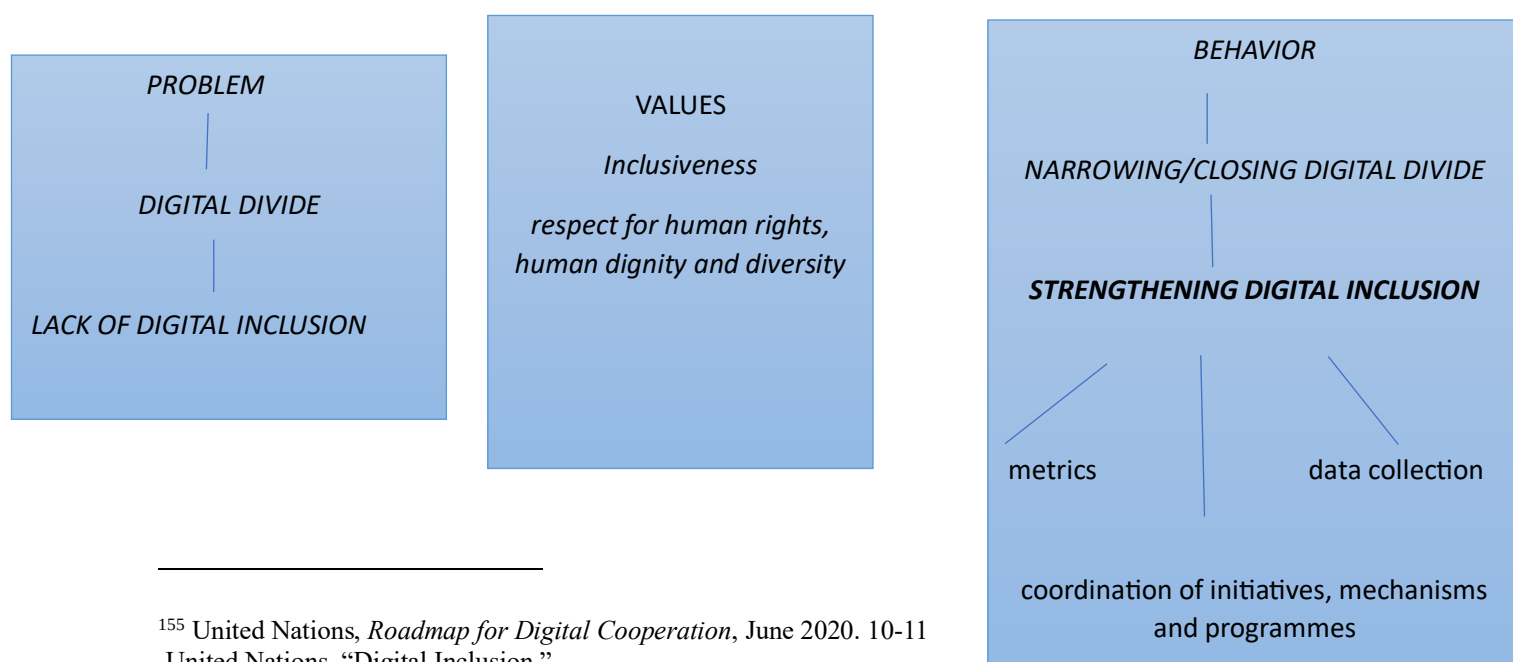
¹⁵² “Social Inclusion.” Sustainable Development Goals - Resource Centre. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://sdgresources.relx.com/social-inclusion-0>

¹⁵³ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2015. 17,18, 19,21,22 Sustainable Development Goals - Resource Centre, “Social Inclusion.”

¹⁵⁴ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 10 “Digital Inclusion, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-inclusion>.

developed as a response to the problem of unequal access to digital opportunities, especially for underserved groups (women, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, older persons, young people, children, rural populations, indigenous peoples, and people facing emergency and conflict-affected situations).¹⁵⁵ Namely, the problem in question exacerbates existing social, cultural, and economic inequalities.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, in order to *ensure that the voices of those who are not fully benefiting from digital opportunities are heard*, it is of utmost importance to strengthen digital inclusion; this should be amplified by establishing a multistakeholder coalition accountable for setting a set of metrics for digital inclusiveness and data collection, as well as coordination of initiatives, mechanisms, and programs led by the United Nations.¹⁵⁷ Last but not least, these solutions need to be implemented by adhering to human rights while guaranteeing the accessibility, availability, and affordability of *digital resources*, as well as providing equitable participation in safe, discrimination-free online spaces.¹⁵⁸

With respect to the *tripartite structure*, the *norm on Digital inclusion* could be envisioned in the following manner. The obvious problem is the *digital divide*, manifested in the lack of digital inclusion. Hence, the solution to the problem is seen in strengthening digital inclusion through the aforementioned steps. This should be done by adhering to well-established values: *inclusiveness* and *respect for human rights, human dignity, and diversity*.



¹⁵⁵ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 10-11
United Nations, “Digital Inclusion.”

¹⁵⁶ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 10

¹⁵⁷ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 29

United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 10

¹⁵⁸ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 11
United Nations, “Digital Inclusion.”

3.3.4.1 Digital Inclusion – Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁵⁹

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of Canada – (champion)	European Union (EU) (key constituent)	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (key constituent)	The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	Microsoft (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Mexico (champion)	African Development Bank (AFDB) (key constituent)	International Labor Organization (ILO) (key constituent)	Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) - (a multi-stakeholder initiative) (key constituent)	Groupe Spéciale Mobile Association (GSMA) – (Business Association - International Trade and Policy) (key constituent)
3.	The Government of Denmark (key constituent)		International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (key constituent)	Code to Change (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
4.	The Government of Finland (key constituent)		International Trade Centre (ITC) (key constituent)	Data2x – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	

¹⁵⁹ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

5.	The Government of France (key constituent)		Internet Society (ISOC) (key constituent)	Digital Future Society – (epistemic community - think thank) (key constituent)	
6.	The Government of Japan (key constituent)		OHCHR Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy (key constituent)	First Nations Technology Council – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
7.	The Government of Malawi (key constituent)		Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (key constituent)	Global Partners Digital (GPD)- (epistemic community – think thank) (key constituent)	
8.	8. The Government of the Netherlands (key constituent)		UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) (key constituent)	The Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict) – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
9.	The Government of Sweden (key constituent)		United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (key constituent)	National Autonomous University of Mexico – (epistemic community - university) (key constituent)	

10.	The Government of Switzerland (key constituent)		United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (key constituent)	Omidyar Network– (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	
11.			UN Secretary General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development (UNSGSA) (key constituent)	Research ICT Africa – (epistemic community-university) (key constituent)	
13.			UN Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	World Benchmarking Alliance – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
14.			World Bank (key constituent)	Wikipedia/Wikimedia Foundation – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
15.			Young UN (key constituent)	Web Foundation (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
16.			UN Women – (champion)		

3.3.5 Digital Human Rights



The fifth norm under scrutiny of analysis is ***the norm of Digital Human Rights***. Without any doubt, this norm is a *remodeled digital version of the meta-analog human rights norm*, whose key components are the right to life, liberty, and security; the right to privacy; freedom from discrimination; and freedom of expression. Needless to say, this very norm was institutionalized by *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: Article 3 addresses *the right to life, liberty, and security of a person*; Article 12 deals with privacy: *No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks*; Article 19 refers to freedom of expression: *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers*; discrimination is addressed in Article 2: *Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status*; as well as Article 7: *All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination*.¹⁶⁰ With respect to Agenda 2030, although human rights are mentioned in most of the goals, they are particularly addressed in SDG 16 (*Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions*, Target 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.10, 16. b)¹⁶¹

The digital counterpart of the analog norm refers to respect for human rights in the digital realm in accordance with the time-honored human rights frameworks and conventions.¹⁶² Thus, the problem that gave rise to this norm pertains to the potential suppression, limitation and violation of human rights by digital technologies.¹⁶³ More

¹⁶⁰ United Nations, “Universal Declaration on Human Rights,” 1948. 2-5

¹⁶¹ United Nations, *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* 2015.25-26

¹⁶² United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 17

¹⁶³ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 14

specifically, the problem encompasses privacy, on the one hand, and online violence and harassment, on the other. First and foremost, regarding the former, privacy in the digital realm is defined as *an individual's right to decide who is allowed to see and use their personal information*.¹⁶⁴ Namely, new digital technologies are particularly invasive of privacy, as they have given governments and private actors opportunities for surveillance, tracking, and monitoring.¹⁶⁵ That being said, the obvious solution to this problem should be effective personal data protection and protection of the right to privacy in accordance with internationally agreed standards; more specifically, domestic human rights laws and practices, i.e. enforcement mechanisms, including judicial review and well-resourced data protection authorities, are of utmost importance for addressing the use of data by governments and private actors.¹⁶⁶ Secondly, with respect to the second issue, online violence and harassment encompasses hate speech, death threats, threats of sexual and gender-based violence, defamation, and disinformation campaigns, as well as discrimination and erosion of freedom of expression.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, the obvious possible solution to the problem would be transparent and accountable *content governance* which would address illegal and harmful online content with the aim of providing *a safe space for information-sharing, education, expression, mobilization, and participation*.¹⁶⁸

With respect to *the tripartite structure*, the norm of *Digital Human Rights* could be structured in the following ways. The major problem that gave rise to the norm in question could be seen in *digital challenges* characterized by potential impact on human rights violations. Thus, the solution to this problem is found in *addressing/preventing* these challenges in order to protect human rights in aforementioned ways, while adhering to the well-established value of *respect* (full value).

“Digital Human Rights, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-human-rights>.

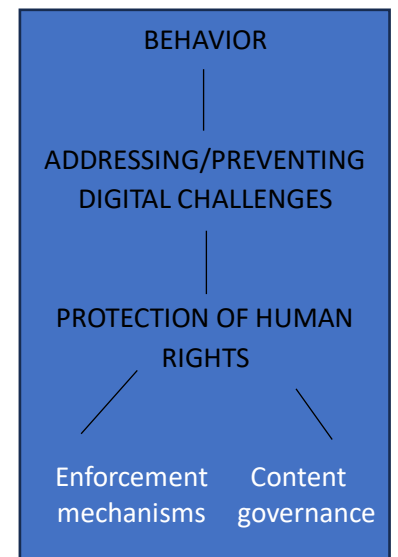
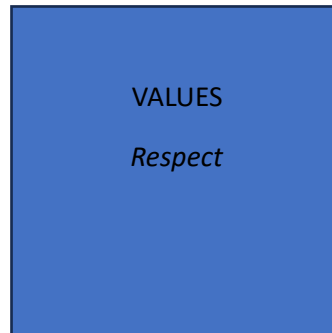
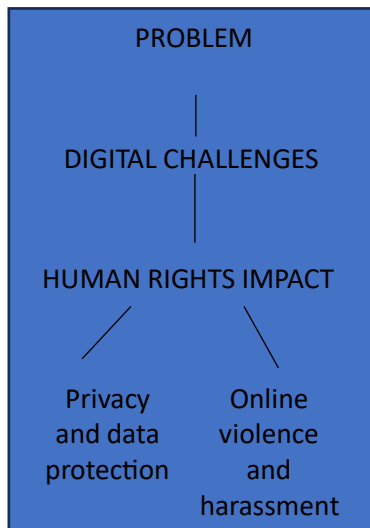
¹⁶⁴ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 18

¹⁶⁵ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 18

¹⁶⁶ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 15

¹⁶⁷ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 16

¹⁶⁸ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 16



3.3.5.1 Digital Human Rights – Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁶⁹

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of the Republic of Korea – (champion)	European Union (EU) – (champion)	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) – (champion)	Access Now – (non-governmental organization) – (champion)	Amazon – (private sector-multinational E-commerce corporation) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Denmark (key constituent)		International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (key constituent)	Association for Progressive Communications – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	Facebook – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
3.	The Government of New Zealand (key constituent)		International Labor Organization (ILO) (key constituent)	Atlantic Council Digital Forensic Research Lab (DFRL) – (epistemic community – think tank) (key constituent)	Google – (private sector-multinational technology corporation)

¹⁶⁹ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

					(key constituent)
4.	The Government of Switzerland (key constituent)		International Trade Law Division, Office of Legal Affairs (key constituent)	Carnegie UK Trust – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	Microsoft – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
5.			OHCHR Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy (key constituent)	Derechos Digitales – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	Verizon – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
6.			Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (key constituent)	European Center for Not-For-Profit Law Sighting (ECNL) – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
7.			UN Global Pulse (key constituent)	Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul – (epistemic community – university) (key constituent)	
8.			UN Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	Foundation Botnar – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	
9.			Forum on Information and Democracy (key constituent)	Global Partners Digital – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
10.			Freedom Online Coalition (key constituent)	Gov Tech Lab Lithuania – (epistemic community – research and development center) (key constituent)	
11.				Graduate Institute Geneva – (epistemic	

				community – university) (key constituent)	
12.				ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) – (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	
13.				ICT4Peace Foundation – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	
14.				Internet Commission – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
15.				Internet Governance Caucus – (multi-stakeholder platform) (key constituent)	
16.				MITRE – (epistemic community – research and development center) (key constituent)	
17.				Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
18.				New America – (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	
19.				Omidyar Network – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	
20.				OpenNet Korea – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
21.				Paradigm Initiative – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
22.				Tech Policy Tank – (epistemic community – think tank) (key constituent)	
23.				Web Foundation – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	

3.3.6 Digital trust and security



The sixth norm that is going to be analyzed is *the norm of Digital Trust and Security*. Needless to say, this very norm represents a *remodeled digital version* of the previous *meta-analog norms of trust and security*, institutionalized by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Namely, Article 3 addresses *the right to life, liberty, and security of a person*.¹⁷⁰

Although the norm of trust is not explicitly mentioned in the article above mentioned articles, it goes without saying that trust is inextricably linked to the norm of security, as trust in Governments, private companies and multilateral institutions cannot exist without guaranteed security. With respect to Agenda 2030, the norm in question is present in SDG 16 (*Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions*).¹⁷¹

How this digital norm can be explained? Namely, on the one hand, *digital security* is defined as protecting *data, on servers and in communication via digital networks*; on the other, digital trust refers to *societal trust in the existence of digital security* upheld by governments, multilateral institutions, and companies.¹⁷² Therefore, the obvious problem that gave rise to this norm has been the malicious use of digital technologies, epitomized in cyberattacks, as both state and non-state actors are rapidly increasing their cyber capabilities and developing increasingly sophisticated cyber arsenals.¹⁷³ Consequently, all of this undermines societal trust in governments, multilateral institutions, and private companies.¹⁷⁴ Having defined the problem(s), it is necessary to elaborate on possible solutions. Namely, the main solution would be the establishment of a multistakeholder Global Commitment on Digital Trust and Security whose main objective would be to present a shared vision on digital trust and security, as well as monitor its implementation;

¹⁷⁰ United Nations, “Universal Declaration on Human Rights,” 1948. 2

¹⁷¹ United Nations, *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* 2015. 25-26

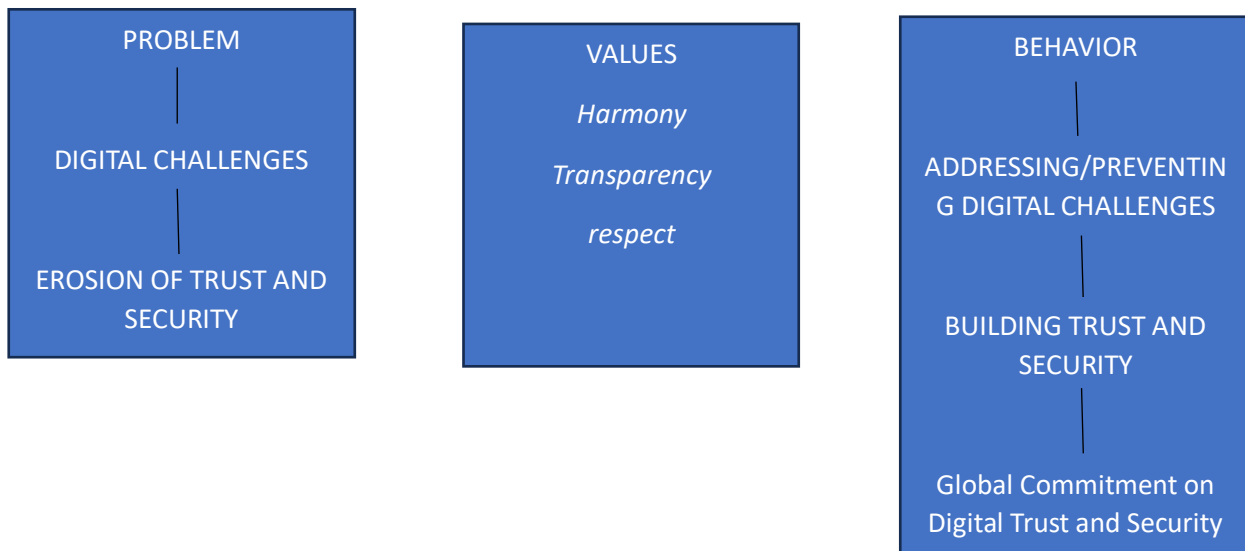
¹⁷² United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 18

¹⁷³ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 19

¹⁷⁴ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 19

on top of that, it would encourage transparency by sharing information, practices, and tools.¹⁷⁵

With respect to the *tripartite structure*, ***the norm of Digital Trust and Security*** could be structured in the following way. Namely, the problem that gave rise to the norm is obviously related to *the digital challenges* characterized by the erosion of trust and security. Thus, the solution to the problem in question could be found in the behavior that addresses/prevents these challenges by building trust and security in the aforementioned ways. All of this has to be done by adhering to the well-established values of *harmony* and *transparency* and *respect* (*for the safety and security of personal data and devices*).



¹⁷⁵ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 20,31; "Digital Trust & Security, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology," United Nations. Accessed June 10, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-trust-security>.

3.3.6.1 Digital Trust and Security – Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁷⁶

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of Uruguay – (champion) –		United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) – (champion)	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	Microsoft – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) – (champion)
2.	The Government of Estonia – (champion) –		United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (key constituent)	Internet Commission – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	Facebook – (private sector-multinational technology corporation) (key constituent)
3.	The Government of the Netherlands – (champion) –		United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) (key constituent)	The State University of New York (SUNY) – (epistemic community – university) (key constituent)	Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) – (Business Association - International Trade and Policy) (key constituent)
4.	The Government of Bangladesh (key constituent)		UN Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	Web Foundation – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
5.	The Government of Canada (key constituent)		World Economic Forum (WEF) (key constituent)	ICT4PeaceFoundation – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	
6.	The Government of Finland		World Bank (key constituent)	Gov Tech Lab Lithuania – (epistemic community – research	

¹⁷⁶ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

	(key constituent)			and development center) (key constituent)	
7.	The Government of France (key constituent)		World Food Programme (key constituent)	Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) – (epistemic community – think tank) (key constituent)	
8.	The Government of Japan (key constituent)		World Health Organization (WHO) (key constituent)	The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE) – (multi-stakeholder platform) (key constituent)	
9.	The Government of Kenya (key constituent)		International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (key constituent)	Future of Life Institute (FLI) – (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	
10.	The Government of Kiribati (key constituent)		Internet Society (ISOC) (key constituent)		
11.	The Government of the Republic of Korea (key constituent)		The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (key constituent)		
12.	The Government of Mexico (key constituent)				
13.	The Government of New Zealand (key constituent)				
14.	The Government of Switzerland (key constituent)				
15.	The Russian Federation (key constituent)				

3.3.7 Digital Environmental Sustainability

The seventh norm within the analysis is designated as *the norm of Digital Environmental Sustainability*. As it is obvious, this norm is a *remodeled digital version* of the previous *meta-analog norm of environmental sustainability*. Namely, the analog norm was institutionalized within the UN system by *the Rio Declaration* at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. More specifically, among the other ones, Principle 4 of the declaration is of vital importance for understanding the essence of the norm: *environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it*.¹⁷⁷ Likewise, environmental sustainability was the major topic of all subsequent sustainable development frameworks. Thus, taken all together, the norm on environmental sustainability could be understood as the harmonization of economic advancement with environmental quality, i.e., ensuring that the biophysical thresholds of the ecosystem as a whole are not exceeded.¹⁷⁸ Within *the Agenda2030*, the norm on environmental sustainability is present in all Goals that deal with the environment and its protection: SDG6 (*Clean Water and Sanitation*), SDG7 (*Affordable and Clean Energy*), SDG12 (*Responsible consumption and production*), SDG13(*Climate Action*), SDG13(*Life Below Water*), SDG15(*Life on Land*).¹⁷⁹ Thus, its digital version slightly changes this norm making it suitable for a digital world and its problems.

This digital norm is still under development. Although it was not explicitly mentioned in *the Age of Interdependence* and only partially explained in *the Roadmap*, the framework of *the Envoy* gives us a broader insight, especially the initiative CODES.¹⁸⁰ Namely, *Digital sustainability* could be defined as *the design, development, deployment, and regulation of digital technologies to accelerate environmentally and socially sustainable development while mitigating risks and unintended consequences*.¹⁸¹ As it can

¹⁷⁷ United Nations. *Rio Declaration*.1992. 2

¹⁷⁸ Tom Kuhlman and John Farrington, "What Is Sustainability?," *Sustainability* 2, no. 11 (November 1, 2010): 3441, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su2113436>.

¹⁷⁹ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2015. 18-19, 22-25

¹⁸⁰ Coalition For Digital Environmental Sustainability (CODES), "Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age" (Zenodo, June 2, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.6573509>.

¹⁸¹ Coalition For Digital Environmental Sustainability (CODES), 3.

be inferred, the major reason that gave rise to the emergence of this norm can be found in the environmental impact of the massive expansion in the adoption of digital technologies and related infrastructure.¹⁸² On the one hand, this effect could be negative and the problem is related to the potential risks that digital technologies bear. In that case, the obvious solution to this kind of problem is found in mitigating negative effects in the following steps: 1) reducing energy consumption and related CO2 emissions; 2) preventing an exponential rise and thus minimizing electronic e-waste; 3) addressing the impact of minerals and mining.¹⁸³ On the other hand, the impact could be indeed positive and thus the problem encompasses the potential benefits as well. Thus, the problem refers to the question of how these technologies should be harnessed with the aim of steering the digital revolution to advance global sustainability, environmental stewardship, and human well-being.¹⁸⁴ In that regard, this norm proposes the following: 1) prioritizing innovations to facilitate measuring, monitoring, and modeling the health of the planet's biosphere and interactions with economic and social systems; 2) prioritizing innovations that empower sustainable lifestyle and behaviors (digital tools that provide users with making and demanding sustainable choices and receiving feedbacks); 3) prioritize innovations towards an inclusive, net zero, sustainable circular economy (digital product passports to hold data and relevant sustainability information on their lifecycle).¹⁸⁵

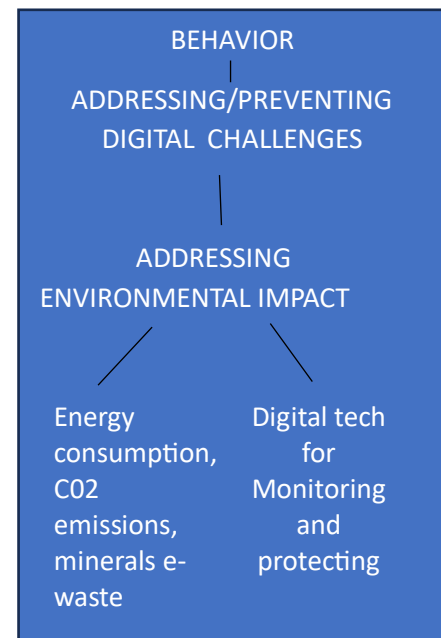
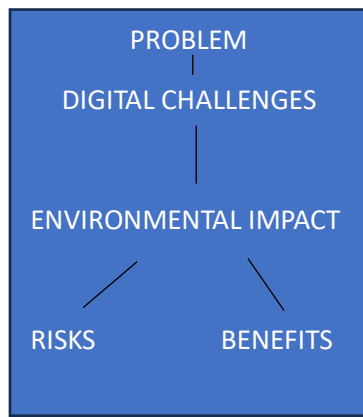
With respect to the tripartite structure of the norm, the norm on *Digital environmental sustainability* could be structured in the following way. Namely, the obvious problem that led to the establishment of this norm could be understood as *digital challenges*, seen in both the risks and benefits of digital technologies. Thus, the obvious solution is found in *addressing/preventing these challenges* by taking into consideration environmental impact for the sake of the environmental sustainability of the planet, while adhering to the well-established value of *sustainability*.

¹⁸² “Digital Environmental Sustainability, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/digital-environmental-sustainability>

¹⁸³ CODES, *Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age*. 2022. 20-21; United Nations, “Digital Environmental Sustainability.”

¹⁸⁴ United Nations, “Digital Environmental Sustainability.”

¹⁸⁵ CODES, *Action Plan for a Sustainable Planet in the Digital Age*. 2022. 24-27



3.3.6.1 Digital Environmental Sustainability - Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁸⁶

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of the Republic of Kenya – Ministry of Environmental and Forestry (champion)		United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (champion)	International Science Council (ISC) The Global Voice for Science (champion) – a non-governmental organization	
2.	The Government of the Republic of Germany – <i>Umweltbundesamt</i> – (specialized governmental agency) – (champion)		United Nations – Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology (champion)	Future Earth Research, Innovation, Sustainability (champion) – (epistemic community – research center)	
3.			UN Environment Programme (champion)	Sustainability in the Digital Age (SDA) (champion) – (epistemic community – think thank)	
4.				The Coalition for Digital Environmental Sustainability (champion) – (multistakeholder initiative)	

¹⁸⁶ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

3.3.8 Digital Cooperation



The eighth and last norm in question is *the norm of Digital Cooperation*. This norm is a remodeled digital version of the previous meta-analog norm of cooperation and partnership. Namely, the analog norm was institutionalized within the UN system by *the Rio Declaration* at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. More specifically, Principle 9 stipulates that *States and people shall cooperate in good faith and in a spirit of partnership in the fulfillment of the principles embodied in this Declaration and in the further development of international law in the field of sustainable development*.¹⁸⁷ Likewise, *Agenda21* addresses it, especially in Chapter 39 which deals with international legal instruments and mechanisms.¹⁸⁸ Apart from these early documents, all the other frameworks have put this norm on a pedestal of sustainable development endeavors. With respect to *Agenda 2030*, SDG17 (*Partnership for Goals*) elaborates on how the *Agenda's goals* need to be implemented through global cooperation and partnership.¹⁸⁹ Thus, *the digital version* of this norm represents the fundamental and overarching principle of the digital normative system that entails new means of cooperation in response to the emergence of the digital world.

The norm on digital cooperation refers to the *ways of working together to address the societal, ethical, legal, and economic impacts of digital technologies in order to maximize benefits to society and minimize harm*.¹⁹⁰ The norm in question emerged as a consequence of the existing gaps in global cooperation: although the existing global

¹⁸⁷ The United Nations. *Rio Declaration*. 1992. 5

¹⁸⁸ United Nations. *Agenda 21*. 1992. 343-351

¹⁸⁹ United Nations. *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 1992 28-31

¹⁹⁰ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 29

cooperation architecture has become highly complex and diffused, it is unfortunately not on a satisfactory level.¹⁹¹ On the one hand, national, regional, and global political agendas often overlook and neglect issues related to digital technologies.¹⁹² On the other hand, global discussions and processes are often not inclusive enough which in turn prevents the variety of stakeholders from making their voices heard.¹⁹³ With the aim of bridging these gaps, the norm proposes three possible solutions. Firstly, the enhancement and extension of the existing *Internet Government Forum (IGF PLUS)*, the main global space convened by the UN for addressing internet governance and digital policy issues.¹⁹⁴ The second proposition refers to the establishment of the distributed co-governance architecture (COGOV) that fills gaps with new mechanisms while building upon the preexisting ones, aiming to accomplish *a distributed, yet cohesive digital cooperation architecture*.¹⁹⁵ Thirdly, it proposes the establishment of *Digital commons architecture* (DCS) which aims to synergize efforts by governments, civil society, and businesses to ensure that digital technologies promote the SDGs and address risks of social harm.¹⁹⁶

Concerning the tripartite structure of norms, *the norm of Digital Cooperation* could be structured in the following way. The apparent problem that led to the establishment of the norms is the existing *gaps in global cooperation* on this issue, epitomized in the underdeveloped global cooperation architecture. This should be addressed by the behaviors that *narrow/close gaps* by building a more effective architecture for digital cooperation through the aforementioned steps. This should be done by adhering to the well-established value of *collaboration*.

¹⁹¹ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 21
United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 23

“Global Digital Cooperation, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.” United Nations. Accessed June 9, 2024. <https://www.un.org/techenvoy/content/global-digital-cooperation>.

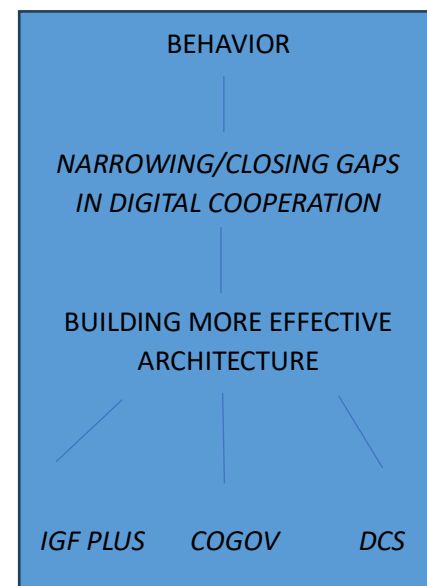
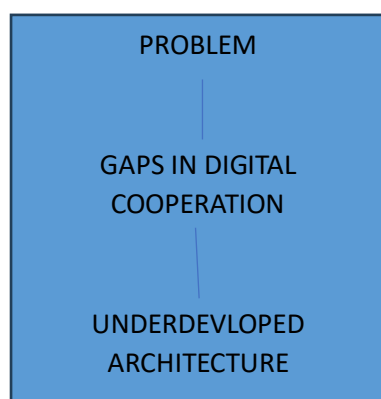
¹⁹² United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 22

¹⁹³ United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 21

¹⁹⁴ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 24
United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 20

¹⁹⁵ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 25
United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 20

¹⁹⁶ United Nations, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, 2019. 26
United Nations, *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*, June 2020. 20



3.3.8.1 Digital Cooperation - Norm Entrepreneurship¹⁹⁷

	<i>State norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Supranational norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>International bureaucratic norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational non-profit Advocacy Network norm entrepreneurs</i>	<i>Transnational Private sector norm entrepreneurs</i>
1.	The Government of the United Arab Emirates – (champion)	European Union (EU) (key constituent)	The Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology – (champion)	Robert Bosch Stiftung – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	United States Council for International Business (USCIB) – ((Business Association - International Trade and Policy) (key constituent)
2.	The Government of Germany- (champion)		United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (key constituent)	Ford Foundation – (philanthropic foundation) (key constituent)	

¹⁹⁷ United Nations, “Roundtables key constituents, Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Technology.”

3.	The Government of Canada (key constituent)		United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (key constituent)	Diplo Foundation – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
4.	The Government of Denmark (key constituent)		United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) (key constituent)	New America- (epistemic community – research center) (key constituent)	
5.	The Government of France (key constituent)		United Nations Secretary-General's Task Force on Digital Financing of the Sustainable Development Goals (DFTF) (key constituent)	Global Partners Digital – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
6.	The Government of Japan (key constituent)		International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Support the Information Society (ICC BASIS) (key constituent)	Groupe Spéciale Mobile Association (GSMA) – (Business Association - International Trade and Policy) (key constituent)	

7.	The Government of Malawi (key constituent)		International Trade Law Division, United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (key constituent)	Association for Progressive Communication (APC) – (non-governmental organization) (key constituent)	
8.	The Government of Paraguay (key constituent)		International Telecommunication Union (ITU) (key constituent)	Ushahidi – (nongovernmental organization) (key constituent)	
9.	The Government of Switzerland (key constituent)		Internet Society (ISOC) (key constituent)	Internet Governance Forum Multistakeholder Advisory Group (IGF MAG) – (multistakeholder platform) (key constituent)	
10.	The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (key constituent)		World Bank (key constituent)	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) – (multistakeholder platform) (key constituent)	
	JSC National				

<i>11.</i>	ICT Holding Zerde – (state-owned technology corporation-the Government of Kazakhstan) (key constituent)		European Broadcasting Union (EBU) (key constituent)	Brazilian Internet Steering Committee (CGI.br) – (multistakeholder platform) (key constituent)	
<i>12.</i>			World Economic Forum (WEF) (key constituent)		

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of the Master's Thesis has been to provide a thorough analysis of *the digital normative system* within the United Nations. More specifically, the thesis has aimed to provide an explanation of how the previous normative system, the so-called analog or pre-digital, has been transformed into the new one and whether newly emerged norms are linked to the previous ones. Regarding the cause-and-effect relationship, the independent variable in this very analysis has been the normative system, and the specific norms in question have been dependent variables, as the changes on the systemic level have had a lasting effect on the individual level.

Having laid out a comprehensive literature review on the research of the theory of norms in the first section, the author has been properly equipped with the knowledge to develop a particular model in the theoretical framework. Thus, in the third section, relying on the aforementioned model, the author has conducted a qualitative descriptive analysis of the specific documents issued by the United Nations, as well as of the statements of the UN officials. Upon the completion of the analysis, the most obvious finding of the thesis is that the norms of the digital normative system could be understood as *remodeled digital versions* of the previous meta-analog norms that have been transformed by structural and agency-oriented factors: *tangible development-----global (universal) digital connectivity; capacity building (intangible development) -----digital capacity building; public goods-----digital public goods; social inclusion-----digital inclusion; human rights-----digital human rights; trust and security ----- digital trust and security; environmental sustainability ----- digital environmental sustainability, cooperation(partnership) ----- digital cooperation.*

The Master's Thesis represents a unique piece of work from the nascent discipline of *digital international relations*, a subfield of IR. More specifically, the thesis could be perceived as an original study that seeks to examine the digital normative system by relying on the existing theories of norms and norm dynamics. Thus, it makes a fundamental contribution to the field of *digital international relations* which is still in its infancy. Nevertheless, the main limitation of the Master's Thesis refers to the scope of the study. Namely, the pace of scientific development and advancement of digital technologies entail the future convention of new summits and conferences, as well as the issuance of new

documents. Therefore, these processes are definitely going to have an immense effect on the digital normative system by changing existing digital norms and potentially creating new ones. In this regard, the main recommendation for future research is to build upon the content and findings of the Master's Thesis by including all future frameworks with the aim of properly explaining the potential future digital normative system and its intrinsic components, the digital norm.

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