

Cover note- Objectives and tasks of the HLIG sub-group on Governance of Virtual Worlds

The HLIG sub-group on Virtual World Governance is established with the objective of *“providing input on global internet governance issues as regards virtual worlds and Web 4.0, as well as support the creation of a technical multi-stakeholder forum to address certain aspects of virtual worlds and Web 4.0 beyond the remit of existing internet governance bodies and liaise with the Expert Group on the transition to Web 4.0 and Virtual Worlds in relation to these topics”*¹.

Moreover, the sub-group will also contribute to the overarching HLIG objective of *“discussing new policy and technical Internet developments or relevant cross-cutting themes, in areas such as ... emerging Internet technologies (including Virtual Worlds) ... and assessing their possible implications for Internet Governance”*².

An indicative list of tasks for the sub-group is provided below:

- a) Contribute to the **definition of the agenda and of the main themes for the first High-Level Multi Stakeholder Conference on governance of Virtual Worlds** which will be organized by DG CNECT at the end of Q1 2025. The objective of the conference will be to *establish the first guiding principles of the virtual world’s global governance architecture*.
- b) Contribute to the **identification of high-profile speakers and participants** for the High-Level Conference.
- c) **Discuss and advise the European Commission as regards key issues concerning governance of virtual worlds**. In this context, the European Commission has launched a procurement for consultancy work with the overall task of producing **technical papers to steer the discussions during the High-Level Conference**. The subgroup will provide guidance, sharing knowledge and contacts and provide feedback to material produced by the contractors (i.e., on existing initiatives on governance of virtual worlds, key internet related standards, values and rights that would shape virtual worlds, ...).
- d) **Discuss the outcomes of the High-Level Conference** and contribute to the definition of possible next steps including a roadmap for dissemination of the guiding principles emerging from the event.
- e) **Share information, knowledge, and resources** on developments regarding Virtual Worlds global governance architecture and analysing their implications on the existing internet governance architecture.

In view of the above tasks and the need to coordinate with the Expert Group on the transition to Web 4.0 and Virtual Worlds, Member States are invited to consider participating in the subgroup with representatives covering both internet governance and virtual worlds policies.

¹ Article 2.1, paragraph (d) of the HLIG updated Terms of Reference

² Article 2.1, paragraph (c) of the HLIG updated Terms of reference