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Social Networks Technical Committee

Metaverse, Online Social Media and Networks

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Abstract: Metaverse, in addition to its virtual features, is a full-fledged social media: It integrates in the virtual space: chat and encountering features, gaming, co-working and befriending and many other social activities. Thus, it inherits the very same business model of social media, grounded on users engagement and (mis-)information spread. In social media, users leave digital footprints on a daily basis, and this makes more easy to spread harmful content and attack their privacy. All such risks – like privacy, security, profiling, harmful content, etc. – are already present in the current metaverse, but we can expect that this negative situation would be further amplified with the immersive and massively interconnected multiverses, such as the one envisioned by Meta.
When using the virtual reality equipment, the digital footprint of a user is enormously bigger and even more in the spotlight as, not only user's exchanged data and profile, but also its behavior and physical data (movement, body, etc.) are exposed and accessible to attacks. Which new issues is raising the metaverse? How can we face the known and unknown challenges? We have seen that the reluctance of social media companies to mitigate digital footprint related risks and the lack of transparency in their moderation policies have led to calls for regulation of social media platforms. This need of regulation is even more paramount in the new social media virtual space of metaverse.

Bio: Prof. Silvia Giordano, Ph.D. from EPFL, is at SUPSI University in Lugano, Switzerland since 2003. She is the head of the Trustworthy and Security group and of the Complex Systems research Area and direction member of the SUPSI Strategic Research Group. She is CNR associate researcher, and Distinguished professor at Tianjin University. Her research interests include Social Computing, Pervasive Computing and Networking, Security and Privacy, Industry4.0, MANETs, QoS and Traffic Control. She is IFIP-WG6.3 chair, ACM Distinguished Committee chair 2021, ACM Distinguished Scientist 2014, ACM Stars in Computer Networking and Communications 2017..

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