

FA(I)R: Feeling all Rights in Digital World

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Legal norms are commonly absorbed and reproduced in daily life through physical cues such as: barriers and walls, people's stories, and observing others' behavior, among other things. In digital environments, this bodily notion of law is limited, giving the impression that it is a place of disorder and lawlessness. To raise awareness of rights and create a safer space for users, we use the Digital Services Act, and its protection on fundamental rights as a base for our research goal: create a multimodal AI-based prototype to warn users about a potential right violation and enable them to respond and take action. For this, the research is based on an interdisciplinary team from computer science, law, and design, and aims to use a transdisciplinary participatory design approach with communities in Linz, Austria.

CCS COEPTS • •Human-centered computing~Interaction design~Empirical studies in interaction design•Human-centered computing~Human computer interaction (HCI)~Empirical studies in HCI•Human-centered computing~Interaction design~Interaction design process and methods~Participatory design

1 INTRODUCTION

Although laws are written down, most people do not actually read them in daily life. Instead, people follow the law by picking up on things they see (like how public spaces look different from private properties) and physical clues (like barriers that make you leave a supermarket through the checkout). People also learn what is legal by copying others behaviors, hearing stories, and getting feedback from those around them. People are always shaping and keeping up with what is legal in their everyday lives [4, 10]. Digital platforms do not have these ways for people to see and learn the law. If there are any barriers, they cannot be crossed (like the checkout process in online shopping), and while social media has some social feedback, the main way rules are enforced is by removing or blocking content [5]. This gives all the power to the companies that run the platforms and usually hides any rule-breaking, so people cannot learn from it. Recently, two big platform companies (X and Meta) even chose to cut back a lot on their rule enforcement, which makes people wrongly think that digital platforms have no rules [9]. If people

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make sense of the law through real-world actions and situations, then digital spaces need to give them social and physical clues to help them understand what is allowed [2, 6].

Taking this in consideration and thinking in a way to take the power from big techs to enforce law and give it to users, we started Fa(I)r project on January of 2026 aiming to develop a multimodal interaction artifact that responds dynamically to user behavior, translating abstract legal concepts into tangible, experiential encounters. We consider diverse sensory modalities—including voice, haptic feedback, and visual representation—our artifact aims to render legal dimensions of online activity perceptible and comprehensible. The design challenge centers on determining appropriate responsive forms: whether textual notifications, visual cues, vocal alerts, auditory signals, or tactile feedback can most effectively communicate rights-related information in context. Such interventions would function not merely as warnings but as a form of raising awareness, illuminating how user actions intersect with fundamental rights frameworks, both as potential violations and as sites of rights protection.

2 CHALLENGE

The central challenge of our research lies in the asymmetry of legal awareness in digital environments. In the EU, digital platforms are governed by two regulatory frameworks: The Digital Services Act (DSA) [12] and the Digital Market Act (DMA)[11]. One of their goals is “to create a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected” [12]. To achieve this, the DSA enumerates systemic risks in Article 34, including “any actual or foreseeable negative effects for the exercise of fundamental rights,” with explicit references to the EU Charter: human dignity (Art. 1), respect for private and family life (Art. 7), protection of personal data (Art. 8), freedom of expression and information (Art. 11), non-discrimination (Art. 21), rights of the child (Art. 24), and consumer protection (Art. 38). This is complemented by fundamental values beyond the Charter: civic discourse and electoral processes, public security, gender-based violence, public health, minors, and physical and mental well-being.

However, unlike physical environments where legal boundaries are often materially inscribed and socially reinforced, online spaces lack visible regulatory markers. Consequently, users typically acquire legal consciousness through reactive mechanisms or through direct experiences of harm, including privacy violations and fraud. This reactive model of legal learning undermines informed consent, as users remain unaware of their rights until after transgression or injury. Rather than delegating the architecture of choice to corporate actors, we propose enhancing user legal literacy as a precondition for meaningful agency and autonomous decision-making. By foregrounding rights awareness, users can exercise informed consent rather than navigating pre-determined options designed primarily to serve platform interests.

3 METHODOLOGY

To safeguard against technocratic imposition and ensure genuine empowerment, we will adopt participatory design as a foundational principle. The construction of taxonomies, in particular classifications of harmful content, poses significant risks of marginalizing minority perspectives and reproducing dominant power structures [1]. Therefore, we want to build the design process democratized from inception, incorporating community stakeholders not merely as research subjects but as co-designers with epistemic authority [3, 7, 8]. Through building a connection with the affected community we will collaboratively determine which fundamental rights warrant prioritization and which dimensions of online experience demand intervention. Crucially, participants will also shape the materiality and modality of the intervention itself, suggesting which artifact forms, whether physical objects, digital interfaces, or hybrid configurations, and which sensory modalities prove most useful and contextually appropriate for their specific needs and practices. This approach recognizes that communities possess situated knowledge not only about the rights violations they encounter but also about the most effective and culturally resonant means of intervention, ensuring that meaningful protection requires centering these experiential insights rather than imposing externally defined frameworks.

4 DESIRED OUTCOMES

Through our research, we aim to increase discussion of online fundamental rights and improve understanding of the communities around this topic. Additionally, foster a collective capacity to identify, discuss, and respond to rights violations with a common framework and vocabulary, moving beyond isolated individual experiences to recognize systemic patterns. Create a technology-based AI tool that gives the user autonomy and awareness of risk scenarios and possible reactions. As the ultimate goal, establish connections among participants to continue learning and take action against harmful behavior and rights violations in the digital environment.

Since our research is still at an early stage, we believe the workshop would be an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge, and to connect with a network of researchers working on similar topics.

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