



Mapping the Maps: A Review of Online Global Media Policy Repositories

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The first step towards a coherent and comprehensive mapping of global media policy is to understand what initiatives exist that gather, categorize and provide information on media policy; what types of data they process; what themes and areas they focus on; and how their approaches may differ from, or overlap with, the concept of the 'Mapping Global Media Policy' project. The aim of this report is thus to review existing repositories and databases on media policy, in order to map the landscape of global media policy data collection and to identify its strengths, weaknesses and possible spaces for intervention¹.

This report is based on a sample of 10 databases that are overtly focused on media and communications across the globe with an explicit policy orientation. Some of these repositories adopt a very specific policy focus whereas others adopt a broad and comprehensive approach; furthermore, the report includes databases created and hosted by civil society, academic institutions, and international organizations. A fully comprehensive mapping of all existing initiatives is beyond the scope of this report, but the chosen sample provides a relevant picture of how different stakeholders have attempted to “map” relevant aspects and dimensions of global media policy. This report includes the following repositories (in alphabetical order):

1 For an overview of the theoretical background of the Mapping Global Media Policy project, including the adopted definitions and terminology, see Raboy & Padovani (2010), available at www.globalmediapolicy.net. For an overview of the project goals and concepts see <http://www.globalmediapolicy.net/node/20>.

Citizen Media Law Project	http://www.citmedialaw.org/
Communication Initiative: ICT Policies and Studies	http://www.comminit.com/en/ictpolicies.html
Cybersecurity Organization Catalog	http://www.cistp.gatech.edu/catalog
Global Media Law & Policy	http://www.globalmedialaw.com
IBAHRI Media Law and Freedom of Expression	http://www.probono.net/medialaw/
ICT Regulatory Decisions Clearinghouse	http://www.ictdec.org
Information Society Watch	http://www.is-watch.net
Nordicom: Media Trends and Statistics	http://www.nordicom.gu.se/eng.php?portal=mt
SSRC Media Research Hub	http://mediaresearchhub.ssrc.org
UNESCO Observatory of the Information Society	http://www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/portals/information-society/page.cgi?d=1

In the present review, we analyze each of the above repositories according to nine different dimensions, testing if, and how far, such dimensions are relevant to existing repositories, with the aim of understanding the specific approach and focus of each repository. These dimensions reflect the ways in which the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project conceptualizes key aspects of a global media policy approach (see footnote 1). In our investigation, we neither aim to evaluate existing initiatives nor cast judgments on successes or failures; rather, we use these nine dimensions to identify gaps in the landscape of global media policy-related initiatives that the 'Mapping Global Media Policy' project and platform could fill, new aspects that should be considered, and potential connections to be developed amongst existing repositories. We analyze the existing repositories according to the following dimensions:

1	Conceptual framework	How explicit is the theoretical and conceptual framework that informs the initiative and, in effect, the architecture and structure of the database?
2	Global approach	Is the repository global in its approach? “Global” means that it reflects the multi-level interconnectedness that characterizes contemporary media policies, including a variety of policy levels from local, regional and national to supranational.
3	Policy issues	What is the initiative’s understanding of “media” and of related policy issues? How broad and comprehensive is the repository’s thematic approach?
4	Organization of data	How articulate and clear is the repository’s data classification system? According to which criteria and variables are data classified?
5	Data types	Does the repository consider a broad range of data types, such as organizations, documents, resources, etc., or does it focus on a particular type?
6	Multi-stakeholder approach	Does the repository consider a multiplicity of actors, including state, private sector and civil society actors? Does it reflect a multi-stakeholder approach, both in terms of actors as sources of data and as interested audiences/users?
7	News, commentary, analysis	Does the initiative focus on gathering and classifying data in a database, or does it also produce other output, such as news, commentary and analysis?
8	Visual component	Does the repository include options to visually represent data through the use of graphic design and/or mapping tools?
9	Accessibility, navigability, usability	How user-friendly is the repository? How easy is it to find and access data?

In the following pages, we briefly introduce each of the repositories and analyze them according to these nine dimensions. Our analysis includes a summary table for each repository in which its relation to each dimension is marked as “low,” “medium,” or “high.”

In the conclusion, we highlight relevant findings as well as aspects that are not comprehensively covered by existing initiatives, and thus, we provide a rationale for the choices – conceptual, stylistic, and organizational - made by the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project.

Citizen Media Law Project
(<http://www.citmedialaw.org/>)

Citizen Media Law indicates that its “mission is to provide assistance, training, research, and other resources for individuals and organizations involved in online and citizen media. [It] aim[s] to serve as a catalyst for creative thinking about the intersection of law and journalism on the Internet.” Harvard University’s Berkman Center for Internet & Society hosts this database. This initiative is also affiliated with the Center for Citizen Media. It receives financial support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the Philip L. Graham Fund. The targeted audiences of this project are lawyers and scholars. The repository can be used to build a network among interested participants as well as retrieve information relevant to media law.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is developed explicitly. In a “Frequently Asked Questions” section, the project explains key terms and fields, such as legal claims and publication medium. It also defines overarching theoretical concepts that guide the database, including legal threats and online speech. Additionally, a glossary provides definitions of important legal terms.

Global Approach

This initiative develops a global focus. However, it is focused primarily on the national and state (i.e., sub-national) levels.

Policy Issues

Although this initiative considers a variety of legal threats, its thematic approach is mainly focused on Internet-related legal threats (e.g., lawsuit, subpoena, correspondence). This intentionally specific focus leads the initiative to not consider themes, such as trade-related issues or mass media-related issues.

Organization of Data

The repository is organized into a variety of fields: threat type; date; parties; categories; court and lawyers; location; publication medium; legal claims; status; and disposition. Citizen Media Law justifies this organizational approach in its “Frequently Asked Questions” section.

Data Types

This repository contains a limited number of data types; the data consist of mostly case and complaint information, even though the repository also contains basic information about, and links to, actors that are involved, as well as relevant resources.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative adopts a multi-stakeholder approach. It includes data about several

stakeholders: individuals, small and large organizations, governments, intermediary groups, media companies and schools. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience of lawyers and scholars.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

This initiative includes a database as well as commentaries via blogs. It does not, however, include recent news.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The repository is generally easy to access, navigate, and use. This ease could be attributed to the following features: an advanced search option (by multiple key fields); dropdown menus; a section with “new threat entries” and “most viewed threat entries”; and a frame that includes database resources, recent threats, threat comments, and a legal threats blog.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework			X
Global approach		X	
Policy issues	X		
Organization of data			X
Data types	X		
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis		X	
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability			X

The Communication Initiative Network: ICT Policies and Studies Theme
<http://www.comminet.com/en/ictpolicies.html>

This repository aims to provide “an online space for sharing the experiences of, and building bridges between, the people and organisations engaged in or supporting communication as a fundamental strategy for economic and social development and change.” The ICT Policies and Theme site was developed through a partnership between the Communication Initiative Network and the International Institute for Communication and Development. The intended audiences of this repository are ICT policymakers and scholars to retrieve ICT policy information.

Conceptual Framework

The initiative does not provide a clear theoretical approach, and it does not explain key terms and phrases (e.g., ICT, democracy and governance) in a glossary or an introductory section.

Global Approach

This initiative attempts to adopt a global approach, but it is focused mostly on the national level.

Policy Issues

The initiative's thematic approach is broad with regard to ICT, as it considers ICT in the context of many topics, including development, education, and the environment. However, as a result of its specific focus, the initiative does not articulate ICTs in connection to other media-related issues (e.g., mass media, trade, intellectual property).

Organization of Data

The repository is divided into several “knowledge categories” (e.g., democracy and governance, education, the environment). The project lists national policies within each category, and these policies contain numerous fields, including date; country; region; policy status; sectors; lead organization; overview; policy date; strategies; contact; and source. Criteria for data organization are not made explicit.

Data Types

This repository includes two main data types: organizational actors and policy documents. As regards the organizational actors, the database includes the organization's basic information, information about the organization's activities, and the organization's links and collaborations with other organizations. The repository also contains basic information about national policies, along with a description and context about the policy, and relevant links. However, people (i.e., individual actors) and other policy resources (e.g., books, journal articles) are not included..

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative develops a multi-stakeholder approach (e.g., one of the knowledge categories is “Country ICT4D Policies - Multi Stakeholder”). It includes information about the following policy stakeholders: governments, businesses, and civil society organizations. However, it is centered mainly on governments. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience of policymakers and scholars.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

In addition to the database, this initiative includes user commentary and ratings. It does not include news or blogs, though.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

This repository is generally difficult to access, navigate, and use. It is challenging to access because it is embedded in the Communication Initiative's broader website, with only a small link in a frame at the right-hand side of the main page. The repository is also hard to navigate and use because it does not include an advanced search feature with which users could find specific information. As well, this initiative organizes the national policies in a random order. All of these shortcomings may affect the amount of time that users need to complete tasks.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach		X	
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types		X	
Multi-stakeholder approach		X	
News, commentary, analysis		X	
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability	X		

Cybersecurity Organization Catalogue

(<http://www.cistp.gatech.edu/catalog/>)

Released in June 2007, this repository was created as “a web-based database of documented cyber security organizations...[t]o assist with cyber security cataloguing efforts.” Michael Portnoy and Seymour Goodman, the authors of *An emerging landscape: Global initiatives to secure cyberspace*, collaborated to create this site. The Georgia Institute of Technology Center for International Strategy, Technology, and Policy (CISTP) hosts this repository. The targeted audience is mainly scholars. The repository could be used predominately to retrieve information.

Conceptual Framework

This initiative articulately develops its conceptions of the different organization types that make up the database. However, it uses key terms, such as global and ICT, without explicitly defining them.

Global Approach

This initiative adopts a clear global approach. It includes multiple levels: global, regional, national, and local.

Policy Issues

The thematic approach is intentionally specific, as this repository is only focused on ICT cyber security. It therefore does not consider other issues, such as development, trade, and mass media more broadly.

Organization of Data

The repository is divided into three main organizational categories: international, regional, and private-public & NGO. It describes these categories and, thus, justifies their inclusion in introductory statements. It also breaks down the categories by region.

Data Types

This repository includes a narrow selection of data types. It considers only organizational actors and does not include other categories, such as people and policy documents.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative adopts a multi-stakeholder approach. It considers policy from and about the following actors: international intergovernmental organizations, regional intergovernmental organizations, private-public & non-governmental organizations. However, it does not address a multi-stakeholder audience, as it is aimed mainly at scholars.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

This initiative includes only a database, with no attempt to incorporate news or commentaries.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The repository's information is easy to access and navigate, and it is easy to use. This repository contains a simple navigation menu on the left-hand side of the screen as well as a search feature at the top right of the page. However, its search feature is basic and does not contain an advanced option.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework		X	
Global approach			X
Policy issues	X		
Organization of data			X
Data types	X		
Multi-stakeholder approach		X	
News, commentary, analysis	X		
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

Global Media Law

<http://www.globalmedialaw.com>

Global Media Law “was created to bring together media lawyers, academics, journalists, students and other practitioners and provide access to assistance, information, news, and resources on media law and policy matters worldwide.” The initiative’s partners include the International Media Lawyers Association, the Programme in Comparative Media Law & Policy at the University of Oxford, the Center for Global Communication Studies at the Annenberg School for Communication, the Center for International Media Assistance at the National Endowment for Democracy, the Howard M. Squadron Program at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and the Center for Media and Communication Studies at Central European University (CEU), Budapest. This repository attempts to address multiple audiences: policy stakeholders, researchers, scholars, and students. It may be used in the following relevant ways: to access a “media law resource library,” which includes an “index of documents, forms, guides, briefs, case law, books, and other publications related to media law across a wide range of regions and topics,” and to view blogs with news and updates.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework that informs the architecture of the project is not explicit. In particular, this initiative does not conceptualize key terms, such as “global” and “media.”

Global Approach

This initiative contains policy information at different national, regional, and local/municipal levels. However, it does not refer to the global level at which policy is made. Also, most of this information regards North America and Western Europe; data regarding other areas, including Central Asia and South Asia, are limited.

Policy Issues

The initiative identifies the following themes: communications and telecommunications in general, “access to information,” “freedom of expression,” “intellectual property,” “Internet law,” and “media ethics.” The initiative is also focused on several platforms: broadcast, print, telecommunication, and the Internet. It identifies several broad thematic areas, but it does not include other relevant issues related to global media governance, such as development-related, culture-related, and trade-related issues.

Organization of Data

This initiative organizes its information by region (e.g., North America, Western Europe, Asia) and then by theme.

Data Types

The repository contains many types of policy and policy-related documents (e.g., guides, briefs, books), including several legislation and regulation documents. However, it does not collect nor classify other data types, such as organizations and people.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This repository includes data about and from the following stakeholders: governmental, intergovernmental, civil society organization, and public organization. It thus adopts a multi-stakeholder perspective. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience of policy stakeholders, researchers, scholars, and students.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

The initiative houses a database, with some blogs, depending on the region; users also are able to comment in the database. It temporarily hosted a newsletter but, at the time of writing this report, it was discontinued. Instead, it hosts an email discussion list.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The repository is easy to access and use, and data can be retrieved quickly, as links to the resources appear both on the top of the page and at the right-hand side. While the information is organized by theme, the headings are not always consistent (e.g., some headings appear in some regions but not in others).

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach		X	
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types		X	
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis		X	
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

IBAHRI Media Law and Freedom of Expression
[\(http://www.probono.net/medialaw/\)](http://www.probono.net/medialaw/)

This project aims for “the creation of a strong global network which will allow media lawyers to support and learn from each other.” The project is associated with the International Bar Association, IBA Media Law Committee, and the IBA Human Rights Institute. The targeted audiences of this repository include law practitioners, organizations concerned with media law, and students. This repository could be used to share and retrieve information as well as to build a virtual network of multiple stakeholders concerned with media law and freedom of expression.

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework that informs the architecture is not made explicit. The initiative does not elaborate on key terms, such as media law and global.

Global Approach

This initiative adopts a global focus. It includes actors at not only the global level but also the regional and national levels. However, it does not consider local-level actors.

Policy Issues

This initiative's thematic approach is intentionally specific, as it is focused on only one major theme in the context of broadcast, print, and Internet media: freedom of expression. As a result of this focus, the initiative does not consider other media-related themes, including development- and trade-related issues.

Organization of Data

The initiative organizes its resources into 8 unique categories: links to other organizations; reports; cases; guarantees of freedom of expression; amicus

briefs & interventions; journals and newsletters; training materials; and podcasts and videos. The links, guarantees, and cases sections include subfolders, which are divided by region. However, Media Law does not describe or justify these particular categories.

Data Types

This repository contains a variety of data types: resources, policy documents, and organizational actors. However, it provides non-members with open access to only some of these data, and the accessible data are basic (e.g., organizational actors include only links). Additionally members can create profiles and view other members' profiles.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative adopts a multi-stakeholder approach. It includes information about the following actors: governments, non-governmental organizations and associations, and inter-governmental organizations. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience, which includes law practitioners, organizations concerned with media law, and students.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

In addition to the database, this initiative considers news and member input. It includes news in a separate section as well as in a "news updates" section on the main page. The member input section consists of a space in which users could ask for help or respond to other members' comments. However, this initiative does not include blogs or other commentary.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

This repository is easy to access and use. The data can be obtained quickly, and a button at the top of the page allows users to link to the resources. However, the database does not include a search feature, which could enable users to access and navigate the information more efficiently.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach		X	
Policy issues	X		
Organization of data		X	
Data types		X	
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis		X	

Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

ICT Regulatory Decisions Clearinghouse
(<http://www.ictdec.org/>)

According to this initiative, “The purpose of [its] database is to facilitate the global exchange of information, experience and precedents among stakeholders in order to promote the application of effective decision making techniques.” The partners of this initiative are the International Telecommunication Union, the World Bank, and LexUM. Although this initiative does not explicitly state its intended audience, we could infer that its audiences include policy stakeholders, researchers, scholars, and students. Its database could be used as a “search engine of websites” of decision-making stakeholders as well as a “repository of ICT regulatory decisions.”

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is not made explicit, as this initiative does not elaborate on and justify key terms, such as ICT and new technologies.

Global Approach

This initiative includes multiple national contexts, but it covers only the national level: it does not consider policy that is made at the global, local, and regional levels.

Policy Issues

This initiative identifies several main themes related to ICT policy and regulation (e.g., competition policy, consumer protection, and interconnection and price regulation). However, due to its specific focus, it does not consider other themes, such as development-related issues and trade-related issues, and it does not consider the convergence of telecommunications issues with traditional broadcast media.

Organization of Data

The repository is organized by theme (e.g., competition policy, consumer protection, and interconnection and price regulation) as well as by region and member countries (e.g., Africa, Arab States, the Americas). However, it does not justify this way of organizing data.

Data Types

This repository includes only one main category: policy decisions. It classifies these decisions by date, reference, database, ICT decision-making body, and language. It does not contain other categories, such as policy resources and

information about organizational actors.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative is focused on documents produced by one main actor: governments. It does not consider other actors, such as civil society organizations and intergovernmental organizations. It nevertheless addresses a diversified audience of policy stakeholders, researchers, scholars, and students.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

Although this initiative contains a database and up-to-date decisions, it has neither news, nor commentaries, nor analysis.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

This repository is generally easy to use, access, and navigate, as it contains few categories. It is placed on the site's main page. It also includes a dropdown menu so that users could search by country (but not by region), and provides an advanced search option through which users can type keywords, references, or dates, as well as check off from a list countries, databases, and themes.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach	X		
Policy issues	X		
Organization of data		X	
Data types	X		
Multi-stakeholder approach	X		
News, commentary, analysis	X		
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability			X

Information Society Watch

(<http://www.is-watch.net/>)

Information Society Watch (ISW) aims to provide an alternative platform “in the context of [ICT] development needs of the South. It is intended for developing learning and knowledge-sharing platforms to help build perspectives for analysis, advocacy and action.” ISW is part of the “Information Society for the South”

project of “IT for Change” which is a non-profit organization. This repository’s intended audience is “policy-makers,” “civil society organizations,” “the media,” “researchers,” and “educators.” This repository, then, could be used as an information resource.

Conceptual Framework

This initiative does not explicitly develop its conceptual framework. It does not define keywords, such as global, national, and ICT.

Global Approach

This initiative adopts a global focus. It considers actors at the global, national, and local levels.

Policy Issues

This initiative identifies several themes, including content; development sectors; E-governance; agriculture & rural development; community media; access to knowledge, diversity, and free expression. It adopts a converged media approach, considering not only ICT but also traditional media and broadcasting. Yet, the initiative does not explain or justify its rationale for selecting these themes.

Organization of Data

The initiative organizes its data into three categories: information society policies, ICT for development, and society & culture. Although it elaborates on these key categories, it does not justify the inclusion of these categories as opposed to others. As well, it does not consider other possible categories, like organizational actors and people. Although the thematic approach is broad and comprehensive, consistency across the three categories may be problematic, as the themes within each category are different. In other words, this repository does not consider the ways in which themes could overlap among the categories. Is diversity only relevant to “society & culture,” or could it also be relevant to “information society policies”? Is community media only relevant to “ICT for development,” or could it also be relevant to “society & culture”?

Data Types

This repository includes policy resources, such as scholarly journal articles, as well as some policy documents. It also relies heavily on news sources. However, the initiative does not consider other data types (e.g., organizations, people).

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative considers a range of stakeholders, including governments, civic organizations, independent public organizations, and corporations. As well, it addresses a multi-stakeholder audience of policymakers, civil society, the media, researchers, and educators.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

Aside from the database, this initiative includes information society news, with a list of articles with headlines and links to full texts. As well, it incorporates blogs with bloggers' responses.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The repository is easy to access, as it is contained on the initiative's main page. Yet the repository's ease of use is moderate. As its organization of data is not always consistent, users are unable to quickly retrieve data by organization type or by country and region. Although this repository contains a search feature, it does not include an advanced search feature that could provide users with a clearer guide to navigate.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach			X
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types	X		
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis			X
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

Nordicom

(<http://www.nordicom.gu.se/eng.php?portal=mt>)

Nordicom “aims at developing media studies and at helping to ensure that research results are made visible in the treatment of media issues at different levels in both the public and private sector.” It tracks recent developments in the Nordic media environment. It also follows other European and international media policies to situate the Nordic policy landscape in a broader context. Nordicom is a collaborative effort among the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, and Sweden. The targeted audiences are policy makers, media practitioners, and scholars. The repository can be used to retrieve resources.

Conceptual Framework

Nordicom develops some of its conceptual ideas (e.g., differentiation among organizations); it does not, however, explain some of the basic terms, including media and information society.

Global Approach

Nordicom adopts a global focus: it includes global, regional, and national levels; yet, it does not include a local level.

Policy Issues

The initiative adopts a broad and comprehensive thematic approach. As regards the Europe and international sections, a sample of their themes include audiovisual; copyright; digitization; telecom/electronic communication; protection of minors; media literacy; protection of privacy; advertising; international; and trade in services. The Nordic region section contains the following themes: copyright; freedom of speech and media pluralism; audiovisual media; print media; and information society.

Organization of Data

The initiative organizes its data by theme, country, and region. However, it does not justify this organizational structure or explain the selected themes. It includes some of these themes in some categories but not in others (e.g., trade in services is included in international agreements & organizations but not in Europe policy documents).

Data Types

Nordicom's repository contains a variety of data types such as policy documents, organizational actors, and resources. It provides detailed information about these data types (e.g., policy documents include basic information, description, context, and a link to the text).

Multi-stakeholder Approach

Nordicom employs a multi-stakeholder approach. It considers governments, intergovernmental organizations, professional and business organizations, non-governmental organizations and informal networks, and professional associations. The audience it addresses is also multi-stakeholder: policy makers, media practitioners, and scholars.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

In addition to the database, Nordicom includes a newsletter, which is focused predominately on news at the international level. It aims to produce this newsletter two to three times per year.

Visual Component

This initiative neither includes a visual component nor attempts to present the information visually.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The accessibility, navigability, and usability of the database are moderate. Nordicom provides explicit introductory explanations, which strengthen the site's navigability and usability. The information is also easy to find, as Nordicom includes a frame with links on the left-hand side of the page. However, the database excludes a search function, which could increase users' search time to retrieve information. Finally, the Nordic data information is not easy to find because Nordicom does not place it on the main page.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework		X	
Global approach			X
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types			X
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis		X	
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

<p>SSRC Media Research Hub (http://mediaresearchhub.ssrc.org/)</p>
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The Media Research Hub is a component of the Social Science Research Council's "Necessary Knowledge for a Democratic Public Sphere" program. It aims "to ensure that debates about media and communications technologies are shaped by high-quality research and a rich understanding of the public interest." The program operates in conjunction with the Center for International Media Action (CIMA) and the Donald McGannon Communication Research Center at Fordham University. Its targeted audiences are scholars, advocates, practitioners, and policymakers. This repository includes a resource database, which people could use not only as a tool but also as a collaborative device to enhance user participation in the production of content.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that informs this database is not made explicit: the database does not provide conceptualizations of key terms, such as global and media, particularly in connection to governance issues.

Global Approach

This initiative adopts a clear global focus. It considers multiple policy levels including global, regional, national, and local.

Policy Issues

This initiative considers numerous themes: diversity/inclusion rights; media industries; media and communications policy; public media; governance; e-Government; intellectual property; regulated content; politics/political communication; public sphere; radio; telephony; spectrum; television; commercial broadcasting; public broadcasting; print media; funding; journalism; music; digital media; art; globalization; trade; development; health; migration; education; media literacy; technology/technological change; software; Internet; games (electronic/online); information science; social movements and sectors; privacy; security; language and discourse; methods; and several user-generated topics. However, this initiative neither includes explanations of these themes nor justifies their organization into the database.

Organization of Data

This initiative organizes its data into multiple diverse categories: topics; disciplines; location; role; gender; type; and current. However, these categories are not consistent in regard to the different themes and data types.

Data Types

This initiative includes several distinct and relevant data types: people; institutions; resources; projects; and networks.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

This initiative adopts a multi-stakeholder approach. It considers information from and about the following actors: academic, civil society/NGO, governmental, intergovernmental, and private sector. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience of scholars, advocates, practitioners, and policymakers.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

In addition to the database, this initiative includes news (e.g., program news, opportunities, updates) and commentary (e.g., blog aggregator). It should be noted that this information is not up-to-date.

Visual Component

This database does not contain an explicit visual component; however, it attempts to display some of the information visually. It includes a simple search tool with buttons: when users click on of their search criteria, they can see their criteria mapped on the right-hand side of the screen.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The repository's accessibility, navigability, and usability are moderate. Users are able to search by keywords, filter according to multiple subcategories, and use a

checkbox to select multiple themes. At the right-hand side of the screen, users can see their search criteria (see visual component, above) and they are provided with “show me” links to common search phrases (e.g., community radio resources, people in Italy). As well, the database contains 10 frequently asked questions so that users can make better use of it. However, users can access the data only through the search feature.

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach			X
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types			X
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis		X	
Visual component		X	
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

UNESCO Observatory on the Information Society

<http://www.unesco-ci.org/cgi-bin/portals/information-society/page.cgi?d=1>

In the context of globalization, the Observatory aims to “monitor...the development of knowledge societies.” One of the ways in which the Observatory aims to meet that goal is to collect, identify, and organize “information on the evolution of ethical, legal, socio-cultural and policy issues of the Information Society at the national, regional and international levels, with particular attention to education, science, culture and communication.” The Observatory was introduced in October 1998, at the second International Congress on Infoethics. The intended audiences include policymakers, researchers, scholars, students, and organizations that work in information society policy. According to the Observatory, its repository is intended to provide a “joint platform for UNESCO’s clearing houses related to the Information Society issues” as well as build a participatory community of content providers and content retrievers.

Conceptual Framework

The initiative's conceptualization of key terms is underdeveloped. In particular, although it purports to adopt a global information society focus, UNESCO does not clearly explain that focus or discuss its theoretical underpinnings.

Global Approach

UNESCO adopts a global approach, as it considers not only global actors but

also regional, national, and local actors.

Policy Issues

The Observatory contains a broad and inclusive thematic approach. It includes the following themes: access to information and knowledge; capacity building; cultural diversity and multilingualism; enabling environment; information and communication infrastructure; measuring the information society; special focus: children, developing countries, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, etc.; and towards knowledge societies: ICT for all aspects of society. However, the predominant focus on ICT sidelines other media-related issues, particularly those related to traditional broadcast media.

Organization of Data

UNESCO organizes its information into three main groups: categories, types of information, and region and country. However, this grouping is not justified. Also, it is unclear how the themes are situated within the types of information or region and country.

Data Types

The Observatory contains a diverse range of data types: national policies and legislations; institutions, organizations, associations, etc.; events; tools; resources; and networks. However, some similar data types are divided into separate categories (e.g., publications and studies are two categories). These entries contain basic information, description and context, and links to relevant documents or contributors.

Multi-stakeholder Approach

The Observatory adopts a multi-stakeholder approach of information about the following actors: governmental; civil society/NGOs; IGOs; private sector; associations; charitable organizations; and university/research. It also addresses a multi-stakeholder audience, which is comprised of policymakers, researchers, scholars, students, and organizations that work in information society policy.

News, Commentaries, Analysis

This initiative includes only the database. It does not attempt to provide current information or commentaries.

Visual Component

The Observatory does not present the information visually. Although it contains a map with regions, it uses the map only as a guide for users to select an appropriate area.

Accessibility, Navigability, Usability

The accessibility, navigability, and usability of the database are moderate. The repository contains a keyword search option as well as a basic advanced-search feature (users can search by keyword or by phrase). It also includes a dropdown

menu so that users can search by country. However, some of the data are difficult to find, as some types of information are divided into categories without justifications or explanations (e.g., users may not know if they are looking for “studies” or “publications”).

	Low	Medium	High
Conceptual framework	X		
Global approach			X
Policy issues		X	
Organization of data		X	
Data types			X
Multi-stakeholder approach			X
News, commentary, analysis	X		
Visual component	X		
Accessibility, navigability, usability		X	

Concluding remarks

To conclude, we provide a synthesis of the analysis in relation to the 9 questions that we posed at the beginning of this report, we illuminate the main gaps that the ‘Mapping Global Media Policy’ project could fill, and we discuss the relevance of the 10 repositories in connection to our project.

Few of the initiatives in our sample explicitly outline their underlying theoretical frameworks. Two of the repositories —Cybersecurity and Nordicom — elaborate on organizational types, whereas Citizen Media Law outlines in detail its conceptual framework, using both a Frequently Asked Questions section and a glossary to define terms. The ‘Mapping Global Media Policy’ project could use similar tools to conceptualize key criteria, such as global, media, and mapping.

Many of the databases (e.g., Cybersecurity, Information Society Watch, SSRC Media Research Hub, and UNESCO Observatory) adopt a global focus, as they consider actors and activities at global, regional, national, and local levels. Some of the databases, however, attempt to address the global at the expense of other levels: IBAHRI Media Law and Nordicom do not focus on the local level, while the Communication Initiative Network focuses mainly on the national level. To implement a global approach, as expressed in the project overview, the Mapping project’s platform should consider policy-relevant data at multiple levels: from the global to the local.

The majority of the initiatives do not explicitly justify their thematic approach.

Some of them adopt an intentionally specific (and therefore narrow) focus of a particular ICT-related theme, such as cyber security (Cybersecurity) or freedom of expression (IBAHRI Media Law). Other databases consider multiple ICT-focused themes, such as competition policy, consumer protection, and interconnection and price regulation (ICT Regulatory Decisions), or development, education, and the environment (The Communication Initiative Network). However, these databases do not account for broader media themes in connection to ICTs and telecommunications (e.g., development, trade, and mass media). One database, SSRC, outlines multiple themes (e.g., development, trade, and mass media), but it does not provide theoretical or organizational clarity for including those themes. These gaps provide a challenge for the “Mapping Global Media Policy” to make explicit the rationale for its thematic structure.

As regards the organization of data, most of the databases classify data by region (Global Media Law, IBAHRI, ICT Regulatory Decisions, Nordicom, UNESCO Observatory); theme (Global Media Law, ICT Regulatory Decisions, Nordicom); or type of information (Information Society Watch, SSRC, UNESCO Observatory). Again, these choices are seldom justified. Databases with a more explicit rationale for data organization (Citizen Media Law, Cybersecurity) divide the information, at least in part, by policy level and by region, and use an introductory statement to justify their approach. Overall, most of the repositories use a limited number of criteria to organize and classify data. The “Mapping Global Media Policy” project should provide an articulate and justifiable organizational approach, on the basis of its explicitly global theoretical framework, which comprehensively covers a range of media policy-related themes.

Next, we looked at the diversity of data types in the repositories’ presentations. Most of the databases incorporate between one and three main data types: policy documents (The Communication Initiative Network, Global Media Law, IBAHRI Media Law, ICT Regulatory Decisions, Information Society Watch, Nordicom); resources (Citizen Media Law, Global Media Law, IBAHRI Media Law, Information Society Watch, Nordicom); and organizational actors (Citizen Media Law, The Communication Initiative Network, Cybersecurity, IBAHRI Media Law, Nordicom). Although some of the above repositories include more than one type, several of them are heavily focused on one type of data (Citizen Media Law, Cybersecurity, IBAHRI Media Law). The “Mapping Global Media Policy” project could learn from repositories such as SSRC and the UNESCO Observatory, as they include sufficient data in at least 4 or 5 main categories: people; organizations or institutions; resources; policy documents; and networks. However, the Mapping project could articulate data using visualization tools rather than pre-established connections. Additionally, as regards the people category, the Mapping project could add a field that allows persons to provide their stories and cyberpresence.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the considered repositories implement a multi-stakeholder approach. They employ many of the same stakeholder information types or variations of them: government or governmental (Global Media Law, IBAHRI Media Law, Information Society Watch, Nordicom, SSRC, UNESCO); civic, civil society, or non-governmental organization or association (Cybersecurity, Global Media Law, IBAHRI Media Law, Information Society Watch, Nordicom, UNESCO); intergovernmental (Cybersecurity, Global Media Law, IBAHRI Media Law, Nordicom, SSRC, UNESCO); and public organization (Global Media Law, Information Society Watch). Some of these databases provide qualifiers to the above stakeholders: The Cybersecurity repository distinguishes between international and regional intergovernmental organizations, whereas Information Society Watch differentiates between independent and non-independent public organizations. Some initiatives, like the Communication Initiative Network, adopt a multi-stakeholder approach but then focus mostly on governments. Others, like Nordicom, consider informal networks a relevant stakeholder. The relevance attributed to a multi-stakeholder approach confirms the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project's rationale for stakeholders' inclusion both as sources of information and data as well as potential audiences.

Some of the initiatives include not only a database but also news and blogs (Information Society Watch, SSRC). Here we see difficulties in keeping the platforms updated. Other sites provide some additional current information: Citizen Media Law incorporates blogs; the Communication Initiative Network and Global Media Law allow users to add comments; and Nordicom includes a newsletter. IBAHRI offers not only news updates but also users' commentaries. These news updates and commentaries help make the repositories more dynamic and connected to actual debates and trends. These findings suggest that, in addition to a database, the ‘Mapping Global Media Policy’ project could organize a section for commentaries in due consideration of the challenge of keeping such a section active and updated.

As for visual representations of data, it should be highlighted that most of the sites fail to include a visual dimension. Only SSRC incorporates a visualization tool, but this is mainly a mechanism connected to search functions. We believe that the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project has enormous potential to develop a set of tools to visually represent data inserted in the database to illuminate connections amongst actors, documents, and knowledge discourses.

Finally, we examined the overall accessibility, navigability, and usability of existing repositories. Only two sites—Citizen Media Law and ICT Regulatory Decisions—include an advanced search feature and dropdown menus. Citizen Media Law contains additional features that strengthen its ease of accessibility, navigability, and use: a section with new entries, a section with most viewed entries, and a frame that includes pertinent information such as database resources, comments, and a blog. Most of the sites, however, include only a basic search feature (Cybersecurity and Information Society Watch); some do not

include a search feature (IBAHRI Media Law, Nordicom); or are not clearly organized (Global Media Law, UNESCO Observatory). On this aspect, the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project could benefit from an advanced search feature and could provide links on the main page to new and frequently viewed entries, as well as frames that link users to recent commentaries and blogs.

This review has provided useful insights to better ground the basic choices and future activities of the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project: it has indicated common concerns shared by existing initiatives that contribute to “mapping” the field; it has highlighted specific approaches that some initiatives have chosen; and it has helped to identify gaps to be filled in the attempt to make relevant information available, accessible, and understandable.

Overall, the “Mapping Global Media Policy” project should consider and value these initiatives from a variety of perspectives: textual (i.e., the individual parts of which they are composed and the data they have collected and made available); contextual (i.e., as components of broader projects or organizational efforts, the goals of which, in many cases, are consistent with those of the Mapping project); and global (i.e., as implicit global knowledge resource networks). By connecting the infrastructures, as well as the knowledge and people behind such initiatives, the ‘Mapping Global Media Policy’ project could provide a better understanding of, and intervention into, media policy in a global context.