

# Internet and Human Rights: The Netherlands UNESCO Commission experience

Sjoera Nas, UNESCO & WSIS conference  
St. Petersburg, 18 May 2005

# Agenda

- About the NL Unesco Commission / EDRI
- Background & objectives UNESCO Conference in Paris and the NL NatCom Conference
- 4 major NL conclusions access to information

# NL UNESCO Com. / EDRI

- NL National UNESCO commission appointed by NL government to advise on policy, involve relevant professional networks and inform the general public about mission
- Strong involvement with WSIS, in close collaboration with the Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs
- EDRI - European Digital Rights, 17 members from 11 European countries, bi-weekly newsletter EDRI-gram (in English/Italian/Ukrainian)

# www.edri.org

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### EDRI-gram

Subscribe to the bi-weekly newsletter about digital civil rights in Europe.

European Digital Rights was founded in June 2002. Currently 17 privacy and civil rights organisations from 11 different countries in Europe have EDRI membership. Members of European Digital Rights have joined forces to defend civil rights in the information society. The need for cooperation among European organizations is increasing as more regulation regarding the internet, copyright and privacy is originating from the European Union.

## News & announcements

### EDRI-gram - Number 3.9, 4 May 2005

[-note about the next EDRI-gram-](#)

[Industry and civil society agree against data retention](#)

[NGOs against international surveillance and policy laundering](#)

[EP takes position on softpats for second reading](#)

[Strong protest Dutch libraries against access to data](#)

[French court forbids DVD copy protection](#)

[Danish debate about privacy in municipal administrations](#)

[Report on journalism, civil liberties and the war on terror](#)

[Italian prosecutor demands take down Indymedia Italy](#)

[Initiative European libraries to digitise books](#)

[Recommended Reading](#)

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# UNESCO conference in Paris

- February 2005: focus on freedom of expression as the core issue at stake at WSIS
- Opened by the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura: *"It is dangerous to establish rules for the flow of information. Not only does it hinder the free flow of ideas and opinions but it may also force "unwanted" ideas to be expressed underground only, making it impossible to openly counter hate speech and propaganda with informed arguments."*

# UNESCO conference in Paris

- Large and very diverse audience
- No recommendations
- Summary conclusions: Online freedom of expression includes privacy, freedom to impart & receive information and the right to a fair trial

# NL NatCom, CoE and WSIS

- NL NatCom focus on human rights at WSIS
- NL ministry initiated broad debate in Council of Europe about new international framework for Internet and human rights (CAHSI)
- Successful NL Unesco conference: some recommendations adopted in new CoE declaration Human Rights and Internet (13 May 2005)

# Recommendations access to information

## 1/4: gov info and heritage

- Distinguish between 2 types of access
- GOV: Promote effective public participation, local to international
- GENERAL: Ensure broad & equitable access, prevent attempts to curtail access and usage rights

# Recommendations access to information

## 2/4: the right to communicate

- Freedom of expression: send and receive
- Affordable access for all
- Roles of governments and private parties

# Recommendations access to information

## 3/4: censorship, filtering & blocking

- ISPs should not judge legitimacy of expression
- States should secure the right to a fair trial
- Harmful content is not illegal
- No mandatory filtering or blocking

# Recommendations access to information

## 4/4: privacy, DRM and surveillance

- Privacy indispensable prerequisite to FOE
- Profiling by DRM may result in self-censorship
- Limits to Internet surveillance by governments

Unesco NL conference

[www.unesco.nl/main\\_6-2.php](http://www.unesco.nl/main_6-2.php)

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