

Workshop International Relations in the Digital Age: Governing – and Being Governed by – Technology

University of Bremen • 26 and 27 March 2026

Vision: A workshop that brings together researchers from International Relations, political science, and adjacent disciplines to examine how new and emerging digital technologies interact with political processes, institutions, and ideas across domestic, international, and transnational contexts. The workshop aims to foster a joint, multi-layered understanding of how technologies shape – and are shaped by – power relations, governance arrangements, actors, and normative frameworks in global politics, as well as the theoretical, empirical, and methodological challenges these dynamics pose for the study of International Relations.

Organized by the Centre for Media, Communication and Information Research (ZeMKI) and the Institute for Intercultural and International Studies (InIIS) at the University of Bremen, and the International Relations Section (*IB-Sektion*) of the German Political Science Association (DVPW)

In cooperation with the World International Studies Committee (WISC), the Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS), the Digital Constitutionalism Network and the EU Horizon Europe project to “Reignite Multilateralism via Technology” (REMIT, grant agreement No 101094228)

Organizers: Berenike Prem, InIIS and Dennis Redeker, ZeMKI/BIGSSS, University of Bremen; Cedric Bürke and Nikolas Pfannenschmidt (student research assistants)

Early-career researcher travel support: Stiftung Bremer Wertpapierbörse (BWB) and Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS)

10:00-10:30	Welcome and round of introductions	Room 2.009
10:30-12:30	Session 1A: Cybersecurity <i>Chair: Berenike Prem</i> Navigating cybersecurity through women's networks: Between neoliberal inclusion, solidarity, and transformative potential Clara Perras, Leibniz Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) Knowing cybersecurity: The epistemic infrastructural power of big tech Tobias Liebetrau, University of Copenhagen Cyber norm dynamics and transnational actors amidst geopolitical tensions Lena Herbst, TU Braunschweig	Room 2.009
10:30-12:30	Session 1B: Digital sovereignty <i>Chair: Dennis Redeker</i> Beyond digital empires: Reassessing digital sovereignty through the arab-speaking world Gertjan Hoetjes, University of Amsterdam; Mauro Santaniello, University of Salerno; Jamal Shahin, Vrije Universiteit Brussel/University of Amsterdam Digital sovereignty - Turning to the materiality of discursive claims Laura M. Meyer, European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) Switzerland by design: The co-shaping of secure messaging and national identity among geopolitical controversies Samuele Fratini and Francesca Musiani, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) Fragmenting the chip stack? The structural limits of EU digital sovereignty Armando Ferrara, University of Salerno	Room 2.012
12:30-14:00	Lunch (self-paid)	Markthalle Acht, Domshof 8-12
14:00-16:00	Session 2A: Mediating global governance: perceptions, norms, and the construction of digital objects <i>Chair: Berenike Prem</i> Talking at cross purposes: A research approach to untangle meanings of digital sovereignty Jamal Shahin, Vrije Universiteit Brussel/University of Amsterdam and Stephanie Teeuwen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel Platforming norm circulation: Chinese normative influence in ASEAN countries through online content Riccardo Nanni, French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) Three worlds of democratic platform governance? Public opinion and the politics of regulating foreign social media apps Damian Raess, Université Laval and Ka Zeng, University of Massachusetts Amherst The quiet conquest: Autocratic capture in global digital governance Benjamin Daßler and Nadia El Ghali, LMU Munich Governing from the distance: The mediating role of technology for the emergence of cislunar space as an object of global governance Christina Zschieschang, Bielefeld University	Room 2.009

14:00-16:00	<p>Session 2B: AI governance <i>Chair: Dennis Redeker</i></p> <p>Governing digital sovereignty in artificial intelligence: A comparative study of how China and the European Union pursue autonomy and self-determination in the AI stack Marielle Düh, WZB/Hertie School of Governance</p> <p>Competing models of AI governance: Neoliberalism, digital sovereignty, digital constitutionalism and their global implications Nicola Palladino, University of Salerno</p> <p>Rethinking AI policy-making from below Adio-Adet Dinika, Distributed AI Research Institute (DAIR)</p> <p>From digital dependency to digital diplomacy: Africa's emerging agency in the global governance of artificial intelligence Emmanuel Elolo Agbenonwossi, Consultant</p>	Room 2.012
16:00-17:00	<p>Coffee break and walk to Haus der Wissenschaft</p>	Room 2.009
17:00-18:30	<p>Public panel: Governing digital technologies in a new era of global politics: Contested norms and geopolitical competition</p> <p><i>A Conversation with Marianne Franklin (University of Groningen)</i> <i>Moderator: Dennis Redeker</i></p> <p>Hosted by the project "Reignite Multilateralism via Technology" (REMIT). REMIT is funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 101094228.</p>	Haus der Wissenschaft, Sandstr. 4/5
19:00	<p>Dinner (self-paid)</p>	Bandonion, Gertrudenstraße 37

Friday, 27 March 2026

9:00-9:30	<p>Welcome Back</p>	Room 2.009
9:30-11:00	<p>Session 3A: Military AI <i>Chair: Berenike Prem</i></p> <p>Who acts? Rethining agency in military AI Hendrik Huelss, University of Southern Denmark</p> <p>Hegemonic ambiguities in European Union digital bordering regime discourse Douglas Ian Becker, Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg</p> <p>Algorithmic warfare and the global south - necropolitical violence and its contestation Ishmael Bhila and Jens Hälterlein, University of Paderborn</p>	Room 2.009
9:30-11:00	<p>Session 3B: Digital technologies, international organizations, and global Inequalities <i>Chair: Dennis Redeker</i></p> <p>Mapping the structural transformation of Syrian human rights networks (2011–2023) Lama Ranjous, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg</p> <p>Algorithmic afterlives: A postcolonial-feminist critique of technology in international relations Akira Itebogeng Modise, University of Bremen/Constructor University (BIGSSS)</p> <p>The Making of the UN Global Digital Compact: Mapping Advocacy Coalitions Dennis Redeker, ZeMKI, University of Bremen</p>	Room 2.012
11:00-11:30	<p>Coffee break</p>	Room 2.009

11:30-13:00	<p>Session 4A: Technology and global environmental politics</p> <p><i>Chair: Berenike Prem</i></p> <p>Research and (un)sustainable archives: The global environmental politics of polycentric internet governmentality Marianne Franklin and Malcolm Campbell-Verduyn, University of Groningen</p> <p>Mapping climate communication infrastructures across the Global South: Platform governance and misinformation dynamics Ruishi Yang, University of Bremen/Constructor University (BIGSSS)</p> <p>Digital Climate Security Delf Rothe, University of Hamburg (ISFH)</p>	<i>Room 2.009</i>
11:30-13:00	<p>Session 4B: Tech companies</p> <p><i>Chair: Dennis Redeker</i></p> <p>The inclusion and omission of Big Tech in (military) AI strategies Johanne Jensen Skeie, Norwegian University of Science and Technology</p> <p>Microsoft as a global authority Matilde Bro Hansen, Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Kristin Eggeling, University of Copenhagen</p> <p>Corporate sovereignty in the digital age Mauro Santaniello and Chiara Spiniello, University of Salerno</p>	<i>Room 2.012</i>
13:00-14:00	<p>Lunch (self-paid)</p>	<i>Mensa Domshof</i>
14:00-15:00	<p>Concluding discussion: What have we learned? Where do we go from here?</p>	<i>Room 2.009</i>
15:00	<p>End of workshop</p>	