



**POLICY FUTURES**  
EU-Aotearoa New Zealand

**SEMINAR**

# **DIGITAL FUTURES:** **accountability for online platforms?**

Join us for an insightful panel discussion with Gerard de Graaf, the European Union's Senior Envoy on Digital, during his visit to Aotearoa New Zealand. Mr de Graaf will be joined by a number of New Zealand panellists delving into the topic of online platform accountability, with a focus on approaches employed by the EU and Aotearoa New Zealand in the regulatory domain. This event is organised in collaboration with the Delegation of the European Union to Aotearoa New Zealand, Brainbox Institute, and Te Herenga Waka - Victoria University of Wellington.



Wednesday,  
30th August 2023



Te Herenga Waka - Victoria  
University of Wellington

**RSVP NOW**

**OR Register Online**

5.15pm to 6.30pm followed by networking reception



# SUMMARY

Online platforms are part of our daily lives and bring many opportunities, both professional and private. However, they can also negatively affect the rights and lives of users (and even non-users) in a number of ways, such as facilitating the spread of illegal or harmful content.

Join the European Union's Senior Envoy on Digital, Gerard de Graaf, for this discussion during his visit to Aotearoa New Zealand to hear about how the EU is approaching online platform accountability. He will discuss how platform regulation is currently occurring along parallel tracks: The Digital Services Act, which targets online platforms and search engines with "due diligence" obligations, and The Digital Markets Act, which designates "gatekeepers" to ensure consumer rights and fair competition in the digital marketplace. These regulations will have a significant impact on how platform companies operate and behave, and will influence global discussions about platform impacts on human rights.

Mr de Graaf will be joined by a number of New Zealand panellists to learn about the country's role in this regulatory space, both nationally and internationally. New Zealand, as the co-lead of the Christchurch Call with France, New Zealand has made a strong contribution to articulating the responsibilities of online platforms through a global, multi-stakeholder approach. With input from civil society, companies and governments, the Call has pushed for the safeguarding of human rights and the upholding of internet freedom. Currently, New Zealand is also exploring how to introduce its own regulation of online platforms, in light of its unique history and domestic context. A draft proposal has been published by the Department of Internal Affairs, and a group of industry signatories have also published the Aotearoa New Zealand Code of Practice for Online Safety and Harms in partnership with Netsafe, a New Zealand NGO.

This panel discussion presents an opportunity to explore the evolving landscape of online platform accountability in both the EU and Aotearoa New Zealand. Amidst their global influence and shared commitment to human rights, the discussion will explore the feasibility, relevance, and necessity of global regulatory alignment among jurisdictions.



# MEET THE PANEL



**Gerard de Graaf**

*Senior Envoy for Digital to the U.S. and head of the EU office in San Francisco*

[Learn more](#)



**Paul Ash**

*Prime Minister's Special Representative on Cyber and Digital, Cyber Coordinator at Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, New Zealand*

[Learn more](#)



**Tom Barraclough**

*Director  
Brainbox Institute*

[Learn more](#)



**Anjum Rahman**

*Founder & Project Co-Lead  
Inclusive Aotearoa  
Collective Tāhono*

[Learn more](#)



**Panel Chair:  
Prof. Alistair Knott**

*School of Engineering and  
Computer Science, University of  
Wellington, Member of Global  
Partnership on Artificial  
Intelligence*

[Learn more](#)



# BACKGROUND



**POLICY FUTURES**  
EU-Aotearoa New Zealand

The European Union and Aotearoa New Zealand are like-minded partners with shared values and interests. In an increasingly challenging world, this drives us to seek new and stronger ways of collaboration. The EU-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, which includes digital trade, and New Zealand's association to the [Horizon Europe](#) research programme, which includes joint digital research, will further deepen our relationship. Both the EU and Aotearoa New Zealand have set out their digital policy visions in recent years: 'Shaping Europe's Digital Future' and the 'Digital Strategy for Aotearoa'.

This is the third seminar in the [EU Delegation to New Zealand](#) Policy Futures: EU-Aotearoa New Zealand initiative to deepen policy dialogue on issues of mutual relevance, such as climate action, digital and the future of multilateralism. This series of compact seminars/webinars supports exchanges between New Zealand and EU researchers, practitioners and decision-makers across government, business, academia and civil society. The first seminar, Sustainable Cities, focused on actions implemented jointly by EU and NZ partners via the [International Urban and Regional Cooperation \(IURC\)](#) project.

The second, What research policy futures for Aotearoa New Zealand and the EU? delivered in partnership with Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) was part of the launch of the Horizon Europe associate status for Aotearoa New Zealand. Policy Futures also comprises a bi-monthly newsletter curating the latest EU policy news for a New Zealand audience.

This seminar is delivered in partnership with the [Brainbox Institute](#), a New Zealand public interest think tank and consultancy working at the intersection of technology, law and public policy. Since 2018, Brainbox has been following domestic and international developments in the use of human rights frameworks for the constructive governance of emerging technologies. It currently acts as the project lead for the Action Coalition on Meaningful Transparency, a global multi-stakeholder coalition devoted to enhancing meaningful transparency by technology companies and governments, while protecting and promoting human rights.



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EU-Aotearoa New Zealand

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on campus or online**

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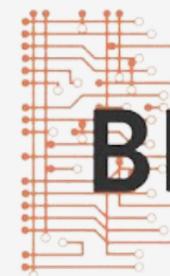
**OR**

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WELLINGTON**  
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