AMBIVALENCE OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGIES WITHIN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

At the beginning of the 21st century, our world faces enormous pressures on the environment, as a consequence of competition for economic growth and profit, which are the basis of the market economy model. This is a time of praising material wealth and technologies, including the information one. The development of social relations lags behind the rapid development of technologies. It is also a time of desperate endeavours for retaining and even expanding the acquired benefits and monopolies, a time of information hiding and enforcing of a single model of development upon the whole world, which is thus put into a more and more dependent position. Fortunately, opposite aspirations have emerged, too. They go for withstanding the monopolies, altruistic shearing of knowledge, and co-operation in behalf of the whole society. Until now, information society technologies did not sufficiently contribute to the sustainable development, but in the process of transformation into the information society, we put all our hopes into them. In the era of Internet, they comprise a tremendous potential for replacement of physical consumption. But mere wishes won't come true. A global consensus about the definition and measuring of progress, values swap, and change of the direction of development are needed to regain control over the progress. Information science is able to contribute in many ways: by awareness raising and education, by development and usage of open standards and open source software, by inclusion of all the parties willing to co-operate, by dematerialization and immaterialization, by production of stable, safe, economical and universally friendly technologies and knowledge systems, by design, assessment and full life-cycle management of products and services, by monitoring the state of the environment and reporting to the decision-makers and to the public. But first of all, we have to establish a peaceful coexistence of the commercial and the non-commercial principle, at least in the public administration.