

## **A POLICY REVIEW: Building Digital Citizenship in Asia-Pacifc through Safe, E-ective and Responsible Use of ICT**

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### **A Policy Review:**

*Building Digital Citizenship  
in Asia-Pacific through  
Safe, Effective and  
Responsible Use of ICT*

Information and communications technology (ICT) has brought numerous, unprecedented opportunities and benefits to our lives. The Internet and mobile telephone applications allow easy and quick access to people, ideas and information, link communities across continents, and boost innovation across sectors. ICT has made the world more connected, where an increasing number of people are actively using various forms of technology every day. Today, ICT is no longer an optional addition but an integral part of our lives that younger generations cannot imagine life

without. Simultaneously, however, concerns have been growing on the drawbacks and risks of using ICT. Some of the challenges include health and mental hazards, breaches in data security and safety, misuse of information, or more socially critical issues such as digital inequality, or online propaganda and radicalization.

Alarming reports on the negative effects of ICT have prompted authorities to set up risk-reduction measures – as rigid as national-level content filtering and blocking. While precaution and safety are crucial factors to the general wellbeing of a society, such drastic actions have the potential to impede the full exploration and participation in the digital world that could have educational and personal value. While it is tempting to assume that risks can be mitigated and prevented concurrently with ensuring maximized and uninhibited opportunities, the truth is that opportunities and risks are two sides of the same coin. A growing body of research suggests that although learners who seek opportunities in the digital space do face greater risks, they are also able to learn to cope with them, in which case the benefits they gain can ultimately outweigh the risks. However, it is also evident that the line between risk and danger can be thin, potentially exposing learners to detrimental consequences, such as trauma and an overall unfavourable experience in the digital world.

The Education 2030 Agenda identifies the acquisition of ICT skills as an essential requirement for citizens to confidently thrive in this rapidly evolving society. Considering that ICT is the dominant means by which we can participate in and contribute to the knowledge society, it is of paramount importance that citizens are equipped with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. Users need to learn to leverage and enjoy the countless benefits of using ICT while also becoming resilient in the face of potential risks. ([Please Click here for full text of Report](#))