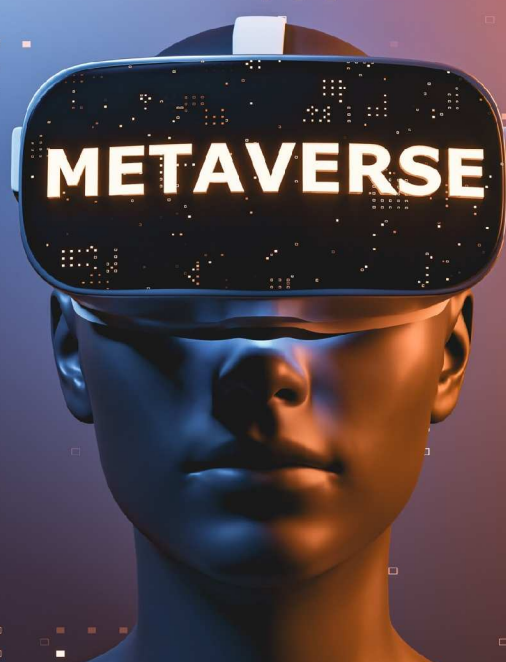


# HOW TO BUILD A “RESPECT & DIVERSITY BY DESIGN” AI-OPERATED METAVERSE



## A TOOLKIT-REPORT 2023



- 44 Experts consulted, 28 question **Survey**
- 35 **Proposals**
- 1 **Charter** for your avatar
- 1 **Call** to action
- 1 youth **Survey**

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# REPORT OBJECTIVES

*In quest of a Respect 'by Design' Metaverse*

*" Interoperability, open standards, privacy, and safety need to be built into the metaverse from day one, and with all the novel technologies that are being developed, everyone who's building for the metaverse should be focused on building responsibly from the beginning."*

**Mark Zuckerberg, Meta**



## 1. In search of realistic and easily applicable recommendations

Digital technologies are evolving rapidly, and positive law is struggling to keep pace and to provide a framework for such accelerated innovation. It is therefore necessary to reflect on the measures to be implemented to guarantee a trustworthy Metaverse, to build its foundations and to protect its users, whether they are natural or legal persons. There are currently several metaverses, neither interconnected nor interoperable. Each operator is in charge of defining its conditions of use (internal rules such as general terms of use) and is subject to rules that may vary, depending on applicable law (texts such as the DSA<sup>1</sup>, DMA<sup>2</sup>, GRPD<sup>3</sup>) and on the choice of applied soft law rules (e.g.; terms and conditions and standardizations) to these digital spaces. Metaverse law remains largely undefined. It is up to us to think of a suitable framework. Every user of the Metaverse should be guaranteed the right to respect for their person and integrity, in a world of diversity and inclusion, and deemed to be cyber-violence free. This collection of rights to be defined is not self-evident given the particularities of Metaverse construction.

To achieve this ambitious goal, the place of ethics must be anticipated upstream of the final construction of metaverses. It is an opportunity for civil society to take on such a participative and prefigurative study. This reflection aims not only to fuel the design process of Metaverse architects, but also to help civil society and public authorities to think about solutions which could pacify the digital environment.

In order to guarantee trust and security, particularly with regard to the respect of human rights in metaverses, it seemed essential to us to understand the stakes, challenges, advantages and perils of the Metaverse. Remedial paths are necessary for the construction of a Metaverse in which the respect of human rights is intrinsic to its design: for a Metaverse that is respectful and diverse '*by design*'. This approach is not unprecedented in the digital world at large: the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000/C364/01) as well as a draft European regulation issued by the European Commission on April 21, 2021 do combine in an innovative way, rights, standards, compliance and ethics in the interest of European citizens.

## 2. What this report is not

To understand the objectives of this report and its scope, it is also important to define the objectives that it does not aim to fulfill. This Report is not an analytical study to describe the concept of the Metaverse and its issues. Other reports address these preliminary issues, for example the "*Exploratory Mission on Metavers*"<sup>4</sup>. This report addresses the topic of "*what should we concretely do here and now*

<sup>1</sup> European Commission, [Digital Services Legislation](#), (2020/0361), 15 December 2020.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, [Digital Markets Legislation](#), (2020/0374), 15 December 2020.

<sup>3</sup> European Parliament and Council of the European Union, [General Data Protection Regulation](#), (2016/679), April 27, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> BASDEVANT, Adrien, FRANÇOIS, Camille, RONFARD Rémi, 2022, "[Mission exploratoire sur les métavers](#)", Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty.



*to cure this new digital space by anticipation?"*. We therefore looked at how best to anticipate suitable regulations, beyond the GDPR, DSA and DMA, to address topics such as the issue of digital identity.

Indeed, this study analyzes the best practices and practical tools to be designed and outlines an action plan. The prospective subject of the ethics of the Metaverse is of interest to all users, and stakeholders including platforms, companies, brands and public authorities, particularly with regard to the impact of ethics and reputation. Many users, companies or even States are already wondering whether they should be present in one or more metaverses. Building a Metaverse that is respectful and responsible in terms of human rights, child protection and diversity is a major challenge for our digital society. Cyber-violences (harassment, hatred, fake news, discrimination, glorification of terrorism, human exploitation, etc.) pollute our digital planet, and this pollution is not a predetermined.

Thus, it is proposed here to reflect on how best to include respect and diversity in the design of the Metaverse, from its conception. This objective, deduced from an expert consultation and a specially commissioned study among young people in France, is to provide a practical framework for respecting and defending digital human rights adapted to the particularities of metaverses (immersion, increased difficulty in separating the virtual world from the real world). Most of the experts interviewed by Respect Zone insist that metaverse creators and political decision-makers should give priority to the construction of metaverse(s) in which human rights are integrated 'in series' and not as an option. For a decade now, the non-governmental organization Respect Zone has been committed to the defense of these rights. This report is therefore part of a general framework for cyber-violence prevention, touching on the prevention of online hate, cyber-bullying and fake news.

This report is thus the logical continuation of our decade-long work and reflects our *think-and-do-tank* philosophy. The study lists a selection of concrete action points (formulated by Respect Zone) in order to build ethical metaverse(s), in the respect of individual liberties and in the respect of the universe of Information and Communication Technologies tools. The goal is not to try to restrain the freedom of creation nor the commercial freedom of operators and platforms but to provide a human framework and a minimum diversity to this "Virtual Meta" universe with new characteristics).

This report is meant to be regularly updated, as metaverses evolve and new ideas emerge, with the ultimate goal of creating a trusted Metaverse for all. This is why Respect Zone does welcome contributions and public discourse that will allow us to keep this study alive and to monitor its implementation.

### **3. Building a 'respect and diversity' Metaverse**

The positive laws in place remain ineffective in harmonizing the understanding of cyber-violence. This conceptual awkwardness is worrying because of the risks of cyber-violence in metaverses and the deleterious climate that it could produce, and the possible psychological and legal impact. The potential for interaction in the Metaverse raises the question of the ethics of relationships between individuals and their extensions in an immersive world fueled by augmented reality. In addition to the

ethical aspects of protecting human rights, preventing violence and ensuring that the Metaverse is a world in which diversity, inclusion and respectful values are spread, the legal and technical aspects are also important. It is useful to start thinking now about issues related to accessibility, moderation, accountability and punishment of undesirable behavior in the Metaverse, as well as the fight against exclusion.

This report proposes a set of recommendations, both pragmatic and ready to use, that will help fuel the imagination of designers and regulators of advanced technologies that may be endowed with artificial intelligence. Metaverses are also environments that can undoubtedly bring positive contributions to our society. The report seeks to identify and highlight these benefits, but also the potential threats, and finally to propose remedies.

#### 4. Avoiding the pitfalls of over-regulation

Depending on the way regulation and self-regulation are designed, our society runs the risk of generating pitfalls that we do not want to underestimate, such as: over-censorship, citizen tracking, non-consensual user rating, over-commerciality, political correctness, discrimination bias or limitation to narrative writing of content in the Metaverse. In order to ensure that diversity is respected, we are aware of the risk of artificiality that lies in '*ticking boxes*' to achieve what might be a semblance of diversity. These considerations have been with us constantly throughout the different phases: from the formulation of the questionnaires to summaries and reflections, the basis of our concrete proposals.

Thus, by hearing the experts listed in the appendix, and by exchanging with our various partners, including Meta France, we are in a position to submit our conclusions, presented in the form of 35 proposals for thinking about a Metaverse of respect and diversity.

Finally, the date chosen for the delivery of our report is symbolic: February 7, 2023, date of the 20th anniversary of Safer Internet Day .

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The objective is to identify the mechanisms allowing to foresee upstream "ethical by design" devices, adapted to the immersive nature of metaverses. The aim of this report is not only to prevent the dangers of tomorrow by anticipating the risks but also to integrate the opportunities offered by this innovative technology. This is why we have decided to propose concrete tools in the form of innovative and immediately applicable recommendations. This *toolkit report* is intended for users, companies, platforms and public authorities to help them better manage and regulate this technology. The report's deliverables are essentially designed as soft law instruments, incentives and recommendations.

The questions, surveys and analyses were carried out by Respect Zone after consulting 44 experts, the Meta company and a panel of 589 young people (16-25 years old) in order to find ways to build a metaverse of trust, security, diversity and respect. These young people are interested in and lucidly demand clear, protective rules and a high minimum age to enter the Metaverse.

Through this report, which is the result of a holistic approach, the authors position the ethics of the metaverse as a condition for its conception and viability. Metaverses are called to become places of (second) life, of dreams, games, business, consumption and work.

The 35 "*practical*" proposals resulting from the synthesis of the questionnaires and the NGO's experience are explained one by one, with a particular emphasis on prevention, education and training. This is a "*Design thinking*" approach, participative, agile, tool-based, focused on uses, and nourished by the testimonies of experts from different multidisciplinary sectors. The report also offers methodological guidelines for operators and structures interested in securing metaverses and wishing to place digital ethics at the heart of their organization and their systems. Finally, the co-rapporteurs open the discussion on the role that digital ethics can play in the strategic decisions of companies and their ecosystems, with a method allowing the implementation of this measurable ethics through the signature of a Charter with specific, responsible and measurable commitments, for users and their avatars, based on the experimentation already carried out in the practice of positive actions and *nudges* useful to social networks.

Our report aims to build "*Respect by Design*" metaverses (which include the notion of respect in its design and ergonomics). The objective and philosophy of our work consists in reconciling living together, responsible freedom of expression and protection of minors and vulnerable people at once.

The authors warn that the report aims to avoid certain pitfalls: the risks of over-censorship, political correctness, the temptation of circumvention by users, the over-control of citizens by operators or public authorities, as well as risks related to the protection of privacy. To achieve this balance, the emphasis is placed on the empowerment, education and awareness of users (who are no longer in front of but 'in' the screens) and on a safer, more responsible, respectful and informed use of metaverses and on the joint empowerment of operators.

Among the emblematic proposals presented is an interactive Metaverse user guide, to serve as a basis for acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain a Metaverse user license (a form of *edutainment* tutorial for violence-free browsing). The second key proposal among the 35 is to set up an educational program accessible to all (programmers, platforms, parents, minors, companies, states, civil society actors, educators, etc.), focused on digital ethics in the Metaverse. The respect of ethical criteria is fundamental in several respects, not only to satisfy the users and clients but also to protect the reputation of their company and the trust of their users. Ethics therefore becomes a prominent factor in strategic business decisions.

A second crucial aspect is the protection of users, especially minors. In this sense, Respect Zone proposes the creation of areas dedicated exclusively to minors, whose access will be controlled by unintrusive age verification. Respect Zone also insists on the creation of labeled areas in the Metaverse, which can be considered as safe spaces for all users who wish to be protected from cyber-violence in the Metaverse. It is equally important to ensure that victims have the necessary tools to protect themselves and can alert moderators in case of attacks. Thus, we propose the creation of an alarm/respect button, unique to all metaverses, easily identifiable and simple to use. It is about providing the functionality to activate a logout bubble. The activation of the respect button by any user who is the victim of an aggression automatically isolates them from the aggressor and warns the moderators. Regarding the factors that can encourage aggression, the issue of anonymity was raised by many experts. The majority of them are in favour of lifting anonymity to avoid impunity for perpetrators of misconduct. Moreover, lifting anonymity would help to avoid disrespectful behaviour by making users more responsible.

More generally, the authors insist on the importance of moderation to create trusted metaverses. Indeed, just as for a trusted AI, it is also necessary to determine the parameters allowing to build a breathable and secure metaverse. Thus, it is recommended to set up certification training for moderators (able to use semi-automatic tools if necessary) in metaverses. Such certification is recommended after a training course given by experts, specific and adapted to the metaverse. In addition to professional moderators, the empowerment of users is thus also essential. Therefore, it is recommended to actively and directly involve users in the moderation process and in the resolution of conflicts between users, in order to create a participatory, communal and citizen-driven moderation system.

To achieve the objectives of this study, the legal framework is an indispensable tool. The adaptation of the legislative and regulatory framework to the specificities of metaverses is therefore necessary at both the European and international levels, even if it must be completed by standards and rules of soft law. This is why the report allows users and operators to commit themselves and participate collectively in the influence of the fundamental principles of our society in the Metaverse.

Finally, sound governance is essential for ensuring respect and diversity in the Metaverse. This study proposes the creation of a supranational *Metaverse Ethics Commission*, composed of independent experts from different backgrounds and representing all stakeholders. In addition to this proposal, an

*Independent International Agency* should be set up to regulate the metaverse and to ensure that its development and operation are consistent with respect for digital human rights.

The report also raises questions about the issues that will be linked to interoperability in the future and therefore to the involvement of each private and public operator. Respect Zone proposes here to forestall the risk of toxic user behavior in metaverses by defining minimum common standards of metaverses protection to responsibly guarantee respect and diversity. In the spirit of our holistic approach, Respect Zone is calling for a Public-Private-Civil Society partnership, in order to build an international, interdisciplinary, intersectoral, integrative and sustainable architecture.

# PREAMBLE & SUMMARY







## 35 PROPOSALS

### To build Metaverses of Respect and Diversity

Practical proposals and pre-mediation tools to ensure respectful, diverse and inclusive metaverses.

#### 1. All user awareness

##### Proposal 1

ENCOURAGE A SHORT, **MANDATORY ONBOARDING TRAINING/NAVIGATION PERMIT** IN THE METAVERSE FOR AVATARS - Permits, mandatory tutorial and best practices guide for avatars in metaverses

##### Proposal 2

GENERALIZE ACCESS TO TRAINING & **LABELING** FOR GREATER COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS OF RESPECT AND DIVERSITY WITHIN **METAVERSES** - Implementation of a generalized labeling program and learning path on metaverses in schools (training by professionals, labeling), sports centers and extracurricular establishments

##### Proposal 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF **AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS** IN METAVERSES ON THE DANGERS OF CYBER-VIOLENCE AND EXPOSURE TO HARM TO DIVERSITY- Awareness-raising campaigns.

## 2. Moderation

### Proposal 4

BASELINE **CERTIFICATION TRAINING FOR MODERATORS** PROVIDED BY INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATIONS - Certification of training for human moderators and definition - define a means to monitor the reliability and trustworthiness of human AI moderation algorithms (categorization of the different AI systems and compliance with directive 28/09/2022)

### Proposal 5

APPOINT **"RESPECT AMBASSADOR AVATARS"** IN THE METAVERSE

Create a specific unit of "avatar watchers" made up of avatars in the Metaverse whose role would be to ensure that avatars behave in a human and peaceful manner, and to report the conduct of violent avatars to the Metaverse regulatory system when they act abusively or break the rules

### Proposal 6

BUILD A CIVIL AND PARTICIPATORY **METAVERSE** FOR METAVERSES OF COMPLIANCE AND RESPECT - For a civil Metaverse: implementation of a participatory system for users via community-based moderation, with competent users trained to recognize toxic behavior and thus fight against the passive bystander effect, by giving users a sense of duty to the community

### Proposal 7

BUILD METAVERSES PROTECTED BY **SYSTEMS PREVENTING FAKE NEWS AND DISSEMINATION OF NON-CONSENSUAL NUDE IMAGES** - Inclusion of minimal fact checking tools to curb fake news and deep fakes and to detect (via coding) non-consensual intimate content and fight against Nudes/sextortion posts etc.

## 3. Effective and appropriate standards

### Proposal 8

HOLDING STAKEHOLDERS ACCOUNTABLE VIA **SIGNATURE OF THE #METARESPPECT CHARTER** - Development of the Respect Zone #MetaRespect Charter

### Proposal 9

**SCALE OF SANCTIONS** ADAPTED TO THE METAVERSES, AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO DISSUADE CYBER-VIOLENT USERS - Development of a scale of sanctions: from warning to banning and according to a classification of cyber-violence in the Metaverse

### Proposal 10

SET OUT AMBITIOUS METAVERSE **MODERATION STANDARDS** - Development of an ambitious content moderation standard

### Proposal 11

**REGISTRATION OF CYBER-VIOLENT USERS** - Development of a common, up-to-date blacklist of violent and previously convicted users to prevent cyber-violence in metaverses

### Proposal 12

PROVIDE A **STANDARDIZED CLASSIFICATION** OF CYBER VIOLENCE - Standardization of cyber-violence typologies in metaverses

### Proposal 13

**ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES** IN THE PREVENTION OF RISKS RELATED TO LACK OF RESPECT AND DIVERSITY IN METAVERSES - Involvement of public authorities in the implementation of security-related rules in metaverses

### Proposal 14

**PROHIBIT** TOTAL **ANONYMITY** IN THE METAVERSE - NEED TO AUTHENTICATE USERS, AS A CYBER RESPONSIBILITY MEASURE - Supervised registration process of a user in the metaverses (creation of a user account similar to the one linked to the opening of a bank account - ID, biometrics) in order to avoid anonymity-enabled cyber-violence due to the feeling of total impunity

### Proposal 15

BUILD AN **INTERNAL AUDIT TEMPLATE** FOR PLATFORMS TO IMPROVE THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIVERSITY REPRESENTATION IN METAVERSES - Regular audits of metaverse operators, according to a benchmark linked to the respect of human rights and diversity operated by trusted third parties

### Proposal 16

**ADAPT** DIGITAL **STANDARDS TO** CHECK THEIR COMPATIBILITY **WITH METAVERSE ISSUES** - Development of a European and international legal framework to adapt as needed

#### 4. User protection

##### Proposal 17

CREATE AN **ERGONOMIC RESPECT BUTTON** - A prominent alarm button for respect and assistance that can be activated at any time (information, mediation, reporting and psychological help provided by independent entities)

##### Proposal 18

STANDARDIZE **THE DETECTION OF CYBER- VIOLENCE**

##### Proposal 19

ALLOW **MULTIPLE AVATARS** PER USER - A single digital identity but several possible avatars, thus encouraging diversity: towards interoperability and traced access to different metaverses

##### Proposal 20

PROVIDE **DIGITAL DISCONNECTION SHELTERING BUBBLES** TO SEEK PROTECTION AGAINST CYBER-VIOLENCE IN THE METAVERSE - Create digital shelters

##### Proposal 21

PROVIDE ACCESS TO **PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE** AS NEEDED - Creation of specialized psychological and legal units to support victims of cyber harassment or cyber violence

#### 5. User responsibility

##### Proposal 22

**REMIND** USERS OF THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS AT REGULAR INTERVALS - Create a code of conduct for users and require acceptance at every login (cookies and GDPR)

## 6. Rating and labeling tools

### Proposal 23

**LET USERS RATE METAVERSES** ON RESPECT AND DIVERSITY - Create a rating system for metaverses

### Proposal 24

CREATE **EXPERT AGENCIES TO RATE RESPECT AND DIVERSITY** IN THE METAVERSE - Create independent rating agencies that will evaluate the quality of platforms according to defined criteria (consent, rating and reasoned transparency of the algorithms used, inclusion and diversity).

## 7. Help to resolve conflicts between users/avatars

### Proposal 25

PROVIDE USERS WITH DIVERSE **CONFLICT RESOLUTION METHODS** - Offer outsourced, independent and mutualized mediation

## 8. Diversity

### Proposal 26

GUARANTEE A **MINIMUM STANDARD OF GOVERNANCE AND DIVERSITY** FOR EACH METAVERSE - Creation of multidisciplinary governing bodies within the metaverse platforms, offering guarantees of diversity

### Proposal 27

**MULTIPLE INTEROPERABLE METAVERSES** TO ENSURE GREATER DIVERSITY AND COMPLIANCE WITH DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS - A multiplicity of interoperable metaverses is necessary to guarantee open competition: towards interoperability

### Proposal 28

GENERATE A **DIVERSE-BY-DESIGN METAVERSE** : DEVELOPING FRAMEWORKS FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION - Helping users to accept their differences using the Metaverse by conceptualizing a Metaverse compatible with this objective

## ***9. Governance of the Metaverse (interoperability, decentralization, regulation of metaverses)***

### **Proposal 29**

CREATE A SUPRANATIONAL METAVERSE **ETHICS COMMISSION** - Creation of a Metaverses Ethics Commission with possibility of referral (parallel with the European Artificial Intelligence Board foreseen in the text) within the International Agency of Metaverses

### **Proposal 30**

CREATE AN **INTERNATIONAL METAVERSE REGULATORY AGENCY** FOR THE RESPECT OF DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIVERSITY - Creation of an Independent International Agency for metaverses whose mission is to regulate, anticipate abuses, define the legal framework and be able to sanction operators (e.g.; via Pharos in France) to which the Metaverse Ethics Commission is attached

### **Proposal 31**

DEFINE A **STANDARD ALGORITHM** TO GUARANTEE RESPECT FOR DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS FOR HEALTHY MODERATION PRACTICES - Preventing cyber-violence and diversity violations to eliminate the risk of discrimination bias

### **Proposal 32**

DEVELOP AN **INCENTIVE GRID FOR OPERATORS TO VALUE RESPECT AND DIVERSITY** - Creation of an incentive/penalty grid for metaverses

## ***10. Protection of minors and other vulnerable persons***

### **Proposal 33**

CREATE **PROTECTION ZONES** FOR MINORS AND REQUIRE APPROPRIATE PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR EACH METAVERSE - Minors Only Respect Zones (metaverses adapted to allow various age groups) + age verification

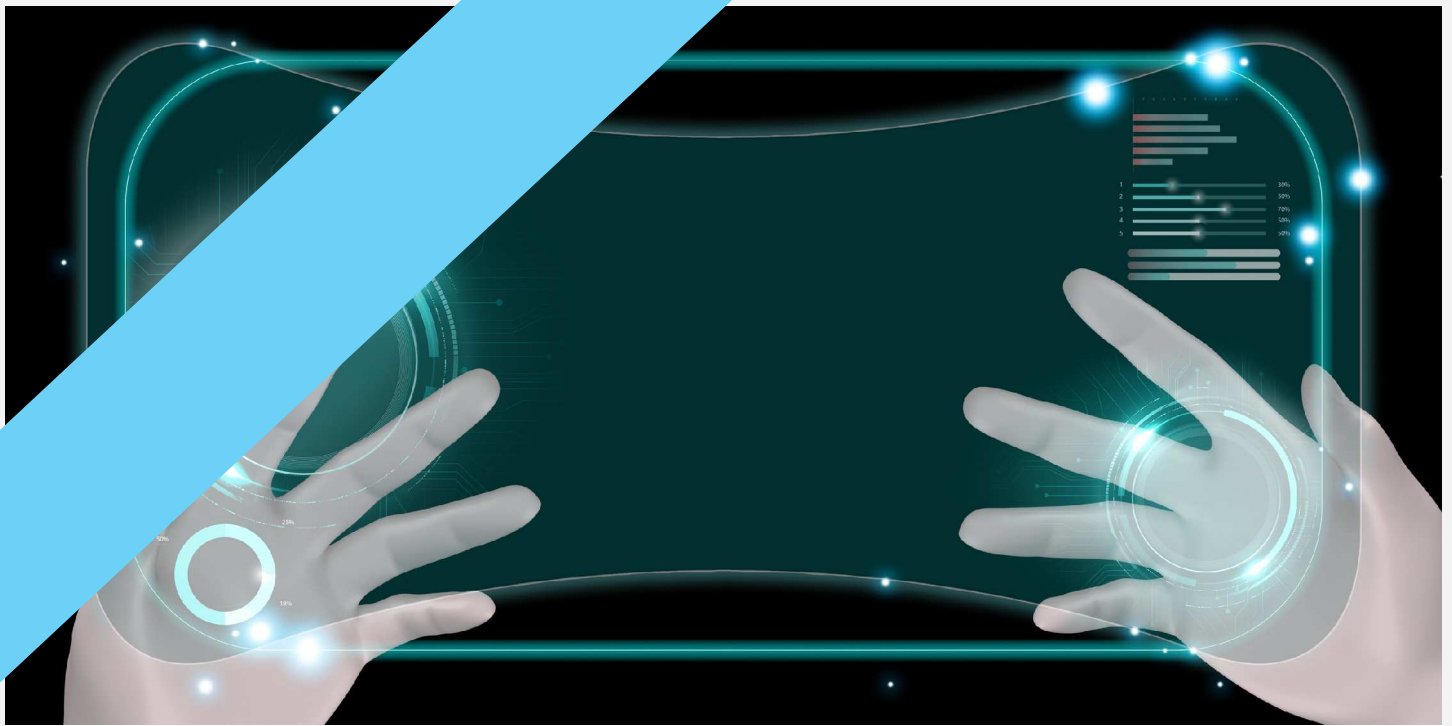
### **Proposal 34**

TRAIN, INFORM AND EQUIP PARENTS: **ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS** TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN USE THE METAVERSE SAFELY AND RESPECTFULLY- Responsible and accountable involvement of parents in their child's use of metaverses

## Proposal 35

IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT **ONLINE ADDICTION AMONG MINORS**. Introduction of legal and technical frameworks introducing "age-appropriate design" in social metaverse areas targeting minors





## RESPECT ZONE'S CHARTER

### AVATAR'S CHARTER FOR A METAVERSE OF RESPECT

***WE : MY AVATAR AND I, DO  
COMMIT TO #METARESPPECT***



### **PREAMBLE**

Metaverses are immersive digital spaces offering the sensation of navigating via one's avatar through three-dimensional, immersive worlds.

To respond to the evolution of our ever-changing society in the digital domain, the NGO Respect Zone proposes to develop a Charter of Respect and Diversity in the Metaverse.

Building on the Respect Zone Charter initiated in 2014, this derivative Charter aims to recall and create positive commitment to benevolence and kindness from its signatories. The goal is to

contribute building trust in metaverses and positive values for the common good, for the respect of human rights and diversity (via a diverse reflection of society). The need for moderation to enable free and responsible expression, a fundamental principle in the digital sphere, must be respected by platforms, brands, companies and users alike (principles of self-moderation).

Self-discipline and respect for others develops empathy and prevents cyber-violence, including harassment, hate speech, disinformation and cyber-radicalization. Cyber violence can have psychological consequences on one's health and can also harm cognitive development (especially with young people.)

By fighting against cyber-violence, we fight against potential damage to reputation.

Human respect between users via their avatars is far from being a given in the digital sphere and web

- 2.0. Respect is essential to societal evolution, especially to progress in education, health, and the environment, work, economy, culture and science. Disrespect undermines inter-human communication and cooperation, and creates a toxic environment. The Metaverse ought not to be a no-go zone and must remain a zone of respect.

None of the principles stated in the Charter can be interpreted as pursuing an objective of over-censorship, of infringing on the essential freedom of expression, nor as being a restriction to participate in video game experiences or fictional immersion in metaversal entertainment areas.

The scope of the practices referred to in the Charter is limited to interactions between users. This should not be aimed at reducing the video games or fiction standards nor experiences. When entering into digital spaces, the protection of minors and vulnerable people ought to be respected.

My avatar in the Metaverse being an extension of my personality, the use of "I" in this Charter refers to the behaviors of the person and of my avatar. The following commitments of effort and attention are linked to my own consent and are without obligation of result.

The following are the principles of commitment that govern the #Metarespect Charter and are intended to collectively participate in building a respectful and diverse Metaverse by design.

## **1. RESPECT OTHER AVATARS**

I express myself in the metaverse and publish content (voice, texts, hashtags, visuals, videos...) in a respectful manner and I refrain from infringing on the fundamental rights and freedoms of other individuals and their avatars, both in the digital space (online) and in the public space (offline). I therefore refrain from disseminating or relaying "Cyber-violent Contents": harassing, racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic (LGBTQ+), sexist, discriminating or stigmatizing because of origin, belief, religion or disability, or inciting to the rejection of diversity, hatred, violence or terrorism.

## **2. MY AVATARS ARE NON VIOLENT: I MODERATE THE GESTURES AND THE EXPRESSION OF MY AVATARS**

I take care to control the respectful expression of my avatar so as not to broadcast, issue, make available, share nor support cyber-violent content.

## **3. I PROTECT MINORS' AVATARS / I PROTECT MYSELF AS A MINOR VIA MY AVATAR**

I declare that the protection of minors is essential. When interacting with minors, I do not encourage the registration of those under the required age to access certain features of the Metaverse or metaverse areas. I encourage the activation of parental controls when a minor is concerned. If necessary, I protect myself as a minor.

## **4. I MODERATE THE CONTENTS POSTED BY THIRD PARTY AVATARS ON THE METAVERSE SPACES FOR WHICH I AM RESPONSIBLE**

If I receive or witness content that is contrary to this Charter (cyber-violent, cyber-discriminating or cyber-harassing), I act as soon as possible, in an appropriate manner, by moderating within the limits of my means and abilities: by making my disapproval known, by removing the disrespectful content when possible, or by reporting it if I cannot moderate them.

## **5. I AM COMMITTED TO PROMOTING META-RESPECT**

Thus I commit myself - when I have the opportunity - to respect the principles of the present MetaRespect Charter, in particular to promote a Metaverse in which anonymity in Metaverse platforms is proscribed in order to contribute to lowering the potential level of cyber-violence. As a user, I am free to choose my avatar(s) and pseudonym(s) in their diversity. I also commit myself to follow the training that would be reasonably proposed to me to make me aware of respectful behavior in metaverses.

## **6. I AM COMMITTED TO ENCOURAGING THE REPRESENTATION OF SOCIETY'S DIVERSITY**

In order for the Metaverse not to become a diversity-free zone, I pledge to remain mindful of these issues and to encourage more diversity when my Avatars and I have the opportunity to do so.

## **7. I COMMIT TO ENDEAVOR TO PREVENT AND TRAIN MYSELF IN THE PREVENTION OF CYBER-VIOLENCE AND ONLINE ADDICTION**

Each signatory undertakes to prevent, identify, report and, if necessary, act against all forms of cyber-violence, whether moral or physical, as specified in the preamble, in order to contribute to making social networks, the digital world and specifically Metaverses spaces of trust in diversity and respect, without encouraging addiction of minors.

## 8. I DISPLAY THE RESPECT ZONE LABEL WITHIN METAVERSES

In order to contribute to building respectful metaverses by design, I display the Respect Zone label visibly and if possible on my Avatar and in the Metaverse spaces that I control in whole or in part, and on my spaces in metaverses, and I refer to the best practices proposed by Respect Zone:

[www.respectzone.org](http://www.respectzone.org).



**First signatories (individuals, entities) :**



**Name of your avatar(s) :**

*Note: individuals are encouraged to mention their avatar's name in each metaverse*



## **CALL FOR METAVERSES OF RESPECT** **AND DIVERSITY**

**Call to action by Respect Zone (NGO) to guarantee a metaverse of ethics of Respect and Diversity**

We, the signatories of this Appeal, call for the establishment of respectful and diverse metaverses .

Through our actions, we aim at building metaverses in which one can feel safe of violence and metaverses caring to protect in a diversity manner, all users while protecting vulnerable users, especially minors and their avatars .

The signatories are committed to promoting digital education and preventing fake news in metaverses whenever possible .

To achieve this goal, we hereby subscribe to the terms of the MetaRespect's Respect Zone's Avatar Charter and its associated 35 Proposals for a safe and diversity, welcoming and cyberviolence-free metaverse .

**[www.respectzone.org](http://www.respectzone.org)**



**First signatories (individuals, entities) :**



**Name of your avatar(s) :**

*Note: individuals are encouraged to mention their avatar's name in each metaverse*

*“ The metaverse is coming. Metaverse is not only a place to game. Future worlds will be photorealistic, obey the laws of physics, and be inhabited by human avatars and AI beings. We will create a future in these metaverses before actually downloading the blueprints to be fab'ed in the physical world. ”*

**Jensen Huang, Nvidia.**

# FOREWORD

*"A massively scaled and interoperable network of real-time rendered 3D virtual worlds that can be experienced synchronously and persistently by an effectively unlimited number of users with an individual sense of presence."\**

**Matthew Ball**, Author, formerly Amazon





## PLURALITY OR SINGULARITY OF “METAVERSE(S)”

Currently, there are several immersive digital universes that meet the definition of Metaverse (Meta Horizon Worlds, Sandbox, Roblox, Decentraland, Axie Infinity, etc.).

**Important note:** By convention and for the sake of simplifying language only, we will refer to the notion of "**Metaverse**", consequently, we will use the **singular** (hereafter in this study: "**The Metaverse**") to facilitate the reading of this study. Indeed, the question of the Metaverse or metaverses is not yet decided by the experts.

# GLOSSARY OF THE METAVERSE AND CYBER VIOLENCE

**Avatar :** The 3D representation of a user in the Metaverse.<sup>5</sup>

**Blockchain :** A distributed ledger in which information about transactions is stored in blocks. A new block is linked to the chain of existing blocks through a computerized process that validates the transactions.<sup>6</sup>

**Artificial Intelligence:** Artificial intelligence is any tool used by a machine to "*reproduce human-related behaviors, such as reasoning, planning and creativity*"<sup>7</sup>

**Interoperability :** Interoperability refers to the ability of tools to communicate with each other<sup>8</sup>.

**Metaverse :** A set of immersive virtual universes allowing a collective experience. It is the access to a digital space called 'virtual', expansive, immersive and in three dimensions, in which users interact via their digital avatars<sup>9</sup>.

**Community moderation:** A system that considers including players in the moderation of games to combat the spread of liability<sup>10</sup>.

**NFTs :** An NFT is a unique non-fungible digital token, a **certificate of authenticity of an asset classified on a blockchain and which can no longer be deleted**. It can concern a physical object or not<sup>11</sup>.

**Nudge:** The "Nudge" is one of the main communication tools. Its objective is to incite individuals to act as prompted by the nudge. Nudges are calls to action that can concern, for example, environmental protection, cleanliness, safety or the fight against incivilities.

**Respect by Design:** Technological universe that includes the notion of respect in its design and ergonomics.

**Immersive technologies (VR, AR, XR):** Immersive technologies aim to put the user in a digital environment with which he is able to interact. These technologies include virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Lilia, 2022, "[Avatar: What does this term really mean?](#)", *Virtual Reality*, July 2022.

<sup>6</sup> IMF, 2022, "[Small glossary of digital currencies](#)", *International Monetary Fund*, September 2022.

<sup>7</sup> CNIL, 2022, "[Artificial Intelligence, what are we talking about?](#)", CNIL, April 5.

<sup>8</sup> Sage, [Definition : Interoperability \(digital\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> CAR, Polona, MADIEGA, Tambiama André, NIESTADT, Maria, 2022, "[Metaverse - Opportunities, risks and policy implications](#)", European Parliamentary Research Service, June 24th.

<sup>10</sup> DILCRAH, 2022, [Civism and video games: insights from the behavioral science](#).

<sup>11</sup> HUBERT, Michel, 2022, "[La nature juridique des NFT](#)", *LALDPE Actualité Juridique*, August 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, 2022, "[Immersive Technologies](#)", *The Enterprise Directorate General Portal*, June 23.

**Cyberstalking** : Potentially obsessive stalking through the Internet. The perpetrator regularly sends "clues" of his or her whereabouts to the victim, which makes the victim feel very unsafe .

**Deepfake** : Audiovisual manipulation technique that relies on artificial intelligence and that allows the insertion of faces, voices and speeches or gestures in already existing videos. Often used to produce pornographic videos, this digital trickery consists in harming by faking the image of a person.

**Doxing** : The practice of searching for and collecting personal data and information about an individual from open sources and then publishing it online without their knowledge for the sole purpose of exposing them to intimidation, humiliation, threats, etc.

**Fisha** : Groups that meet on social networks to disclose and share sexual photos and videos of young, often underage girls (or more rarely of boys ) without their knowledge. Personal information about the victims is revealed .

**Flaming** : A series of hostile and insulting online messages directed at a person or group of people that affect their physical or psychological well being.

**Sextorsion** : Threats to share intimate images with the primary purpose of coercing the person to send more sexually explicit images, obtaining sexual favors without free consent, extorting money, and in some cases even pursuing a romantic relationship with them, etc.

**Slut-shaming** : A practice that particularly affects young girls and consists of blaming and discrediting those whose appearance, dress, makeup, attitude, and even social and sexual behaviors, whether real or assumed, do not correspond to the gendered norms in force in their groups.

**Upskirting** : Voyeuristic practice that aims to take a picture of a woman's crotch by placing a camera under her skirt, without her knowledge, often to broadcast it on the Internet through social networks, video platforms or mobile to mobile.

<sup>13</sup> Definitions from [Cyberneticproject.eu](https://cyberneticproject.eu)

## RESPECT ZONE : WHO WE ARE ?

This study is a summary of a consultation conducted and written by **the non-governmental organization Respect Zone, an independent, non-profit association**. Founded in 2012 in France (established in France, Belgium and the United States), it is managed by volunteers in the fight against cyber violence, harassment, fake news and online hate. In 2017, Respect Zone published its "*50 Proposals for detoxifying social networks*" which serve since then as its public policy road map.

Among its statutory missions, Respect Zone prioritizes :

- ◆ **THINK AND DO TANK** : Producing and sharing knowledge: we conduct studies, particularly on the causes and effects of cyber-violence (harassment, hatred, misinformation), and provide information on user rights and on digital best practices.
- ◆ **PREVENTION** : Raising awareness and providing training (especially for young people): we open up spaces for collective discussions and provide tools designed to prevent and (re)act against cyber-violence. Our initiatives are for all audiences: schools, universities, families, companies, associations, sports and cultural centers, local authorities, etc
- ◆ **ASSISTANCE** : Supporting victims and taking legal action: the association provides legal assistance to victims of cyber-violence and their families, and acts as a civil party in cases related to its social purpose via its Circle of Jurists with the support of the Respect Zone Legal Clinic hosted at the University of Paris Dauphine.
- ◆ **ADVOCACY** : Bring the causes of the association in the public debate and participate in legislative projects, to disseminate these proposals and "detoxify" the digital space (Internet, social networks, and now AI run metaverses).

Thanks to this advocacy, the NGO is recognized and consulted by public authorities. It is also a partner of various forums, associations, companies (including Accuracy, TF1) and social networks or platforms (such as Meta, Amazon or Yubo).

At the international institutional level, Respect Zone is: Member of the Executive Committee of the *Online Child Protection Lab* installed by the French President during the *Peace Forum* on November 10, 2022



**Metaverse  
STANDARDS FORUM™**

Member of the  
*Metaverse Standard Forum*



DÉLÉGATION  
INTERMINISTÉRIELLE  
À LA LUTTE CONTRE  
LE RACISME, L'ANTISÉMITISME  
ET LA HAINE ANTI-LGBT

Partner of the  
*Dilcrah* since 2012



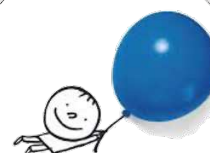
Founding member of the  
*Observatory of online hate* -  
Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel  
(ARCOM)



**MINISTÈRE  
DE L'INTÉRIEUR**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

Member of the Parents Against  
Harassment Committee -  
Ministry of the Interior



**COFRADE**  
conseil français des associations pour  
les Droits de l'Enfant

Member of the French Council  
of Associations for the Rights of  
the Child (COFRADE)

**Dauphine | PSL**  
UNIVERSITÉ PARIS

In charge of the Legal Clinic Respect  
Zone of Digital Human Rights  
in connection with its Circle of  
Jurists (University of Paris-  
Dauphine)



Ethics and Integrity Partner of the  
Ministry of Sports



Partner of the  
*European Commission*



Partner of the *Council of Europe*



*Partner of UNESCO*



Member of the *CESER Auvergne  
PACA Region*

**STRATÉGIES  
GRAND PRIX**

Winner of the Grand Prix Stratégies  
Grandes Causes 2015



Member of *Safer Internet Day*

# CHAPTER 1. RESPECT AND DIVERSITY ISSUES IN THE METAVERSE

*" The Metaverse is here, and it's not only transforming the way we see the world, but also the way we participate in it, from the factory floor to the meeting room. "*

**Satya Nadella, Microsoft**





The Metaverse is often described as an unrealized and utopian concept, a world supported by new immersive technologies and meant to push the boundaries of materiality and distance. The Metaverse can be defined as an expansive, immersive, three-dimensional virtual world in which users interact via their digital avatars<sup>14</sup>. In a nutshell the Internet is about being “in front of it”, the Metaverse is about being “within it”.

Avatars offer Metaverse users the opportunity to extend their online presence by a form of personality extension into the immersive virtual world. Avatars can be customized to closely resemble us, or they can take on a completely different form. Avatars can be anthropomorphic or resemble a figment of the imagination<sup>15</sup>, and thus respond to the options offered by the chosen operator. It is also important to note that an algorithm is likely to generate and animate an avatar using artificial intelligence<sup>16</sup>.

Are avatars therefore an extension of the user's legal personality, making users responsible for their virtual behavior? According to the majority of the opinions expressed by experts, the answer is positive. In this hypothesis, several problems remain unresolved, such as the legal regime of avatars and the consequences of liability in case of offenses committed in the Metaverse. The question has already been raised during a controversy about an alleged virtual sexual assault in Horizon Worlds (a first version of the Metaverse, proposed by Meta<sup>17</sup>).

According to the World Economic Forum, this virtual space, which already allows for the creation of 3D virtual work meetings, games and get-togethers, will be powered by innovations in virtual reality<sup>18</sup>, augmented<sup>19</sup> and mixed technologies, using digital currencies<sup>20</sup>, blockchain<sup>21</sup> and NFT<sup>22</sup>. As their definition indicates, the Metaverse and the technologies that make up its parts tend to be hyper-realistic and immersive, characteristics that can pose a great threat to the privacy and security of users<sup>23</sup>. Indeed, the construction of realistic avatars and “virtual interactions” in the Metaverse involve the collection of sensitive biometric data, such as digital fingerprints, voice recognition and facial recognition, among others<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> CAR, Polona, MADIEGA, Tambiama André, NIESTADT, Maria, 2022, [“Metaverse - Opportunities, risks and policy implications”](#), European Parliamentary Research Service, June 24th.

<sup>15</sup> METAMANDRILL, [“Metaverse Avatar Guide: embody yourself in the Metaverse”](#).

<sup>16</sup> BREIA, Rachel, 2022, [“What are AI avatars: a guide to intelligent virtual beings”](#), Sensorium, June 29th.

<sup>17</sup> SINGH, Katherine, 2022, [“In the Metaverse, sexual assault is very real - So what can we do legally?”](#).

<sup>18</sup> ROSENBERG, Louis, 2022, [“Regulation of the Metaverse: A Roadmap : The risks and regulatory solutions for largescale consumer platforms”](#), ICVARS '22: Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Virtual and Augmented Reality Simulations, August 25th.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> IMF, 2022, [“Small glossary of digital currencies”](#), International Monetary Fund, September 2022.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> An NFT is a unique non-fungible digital token, a **certificate of authenticity of an asset classified on a blockchain and which can no longer be deleted**. It can concern a physical object or not. HUBERT, Michel, 2022, [“La nature juridique des NFT”](#), LALDPE Actualité Juridique, August 13.

<sup>23</sup> NAIR, Vivek, GARRIDO, Gonzalo Munilla, SONG, Dawn, 2022, [Exploring the Unprecedented Privacy Risks of the Metaverse](#), ArXiv, July 26th.

<sup>24</sup> CAR, Polona, MADIEGA, Tambiama André, NIESTADT, Maria, 2022, [“Metaverse - Opportunities, risks and policy implications”](#), European Parliamentary Research Service, June 24th.

Despite several voices arguing for a single Metaverse, at present several gaming companies (Roblox) and tech giants such as Meta (formerly Facebook) offer their own version<sup>25</sup>. The one that triggered the larger number of debates is Meta's Horizon Worlds, which can already be experienced by users in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Spain, via the Oculus Quest 2 virtual reality headset<sup>26</sup>.

The immersive nature of the Metaverse is the essential difference with Web 2.0 as we know it. However, as Meta has made clear on many occasions, Horizon Worlds is also about "replicating" to some extent most of the activities we now carry out offline, such as work, cultural activities, commercial activities, etc.<sup>27</sup>. Thanks to the Metaverse, productivity gains, better access to culture, to new and infinite experiences, a reduction of the notion of space and reduced needs to travel<sup>28</sup> are envisaged.

While this may seem like an exciting technological development that will allow for enormous advances in social interaction, immersive education, freedom of expression, and the world of work, we must be cautious about the many problems that the Metaverse can generate or amplify<sup>29</sup>. It is essential to promote a Metaverse based on key principles such as respect, diversity, inclusion and moderation. The notion of accountability in the Metaverse is relevant to our report and proposals. It must be a virtual world in which we can interact freely but responsibly, based on rules and regulations whose breach should result in proportionate sanctions. Preventing and effectively combating all forms of cyber-violence must be considered a priority while reflecting on the future of the Metaverse.

Clarifying the legal issues is essential because the Metaverse will represent a virtual community or, as one of our respondents put it, a digital city<sup>30</sup>. And all communities need a clear set of rules in order to function.

To ensure the creation of a breathable and responsible Metaverse of respect and diversity, our report proposes the following recommendations/action points for building a Respectful Metaverse by design, covering aspects such as protection of minors, moderation, legal tools and cooperation mechanisms between all stakeholders involved in the development of the Metaverse.

<sup>25</sup> KAYYALI, Adnan, 2022, "[How many Metaverses are there?](#)", *Inside telecom International telecoms business magazine*, September 9th.

<sup>26</sup> TOUZANI, Samir, 2022, "[Meta launches its Horizon Worlds metaverse in France](#)", *Les Echos*, August 18.

<sup>27</sup> NOVET, Jordan, 2022, "[Mark Zuckerberg envisions a billion people in the metaverse spending hundreds of dollars each](#)", *CNBC*, June 22nd.

<sup>28</sup> REDDY, Poondru, 2022, "[Metaverse: the multilayer reproduction of physical world](#)", *Medium*, May 28th.

<sup>29</sup> HINDUJA, Sameer, 2022, "[Metaverse: opportunities, risks and harms](#)", *TackleBullying.ie*, July 13th..

<sup>30</sup> Respect Zone 2022's hearing of Alexei Grinbaum, based on the Respect Zone's questionnaire.

## « I dream of a Metaverse of Respect and Diversity because ... »

*« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that takes the best of the real world and offers all the opportunities of the virtual, that responds ethically and digitally to the needs of users while maintaining their anchors in the physical world. »*



— • • •  
Cécile Théard-Jallu and Guillaume Jagerschmidt, lawyers - De Gaulle Fleurance



*« I dream of an open and decentralized Metaverse. »*



— • • •  
Frédéric Bardeau,  
President and co-founder Simplon.co

*« I dream of a Metaverse of equality and fraternity between actors, it's a utopia, but it's the one of my dreams. »*



— • • •  
Pascal Etain,  
Senior Lecturer at the  
University of Paris Dauphine

*« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that is conjugated in the plural and pronounced in the European way. »*



— • • •  
Henri Verdier,  
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs'  
Ambassador for the Digital Age

*« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that does not repeat the same pitfalls as Web 2.0 but on the contrary anticipates them. »*



— • • •  
David Cohen,  
Head of the Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatry Department at the Pitié-  
Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris

*« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that inspires confidence and reveals all the opportunities of the digital world. »*



— • • •  
Axelle Desaint, Directrice du pôle  
éducation au numérique de  
Tralalere et Directrice d'Internet  
Sans Crainte.

*« The Metaverse must remain a dream and not become a reality. »*



— • • •  
Christophe Torrisi, Head of the "Economic Intelligence and Security" department at IHEMI

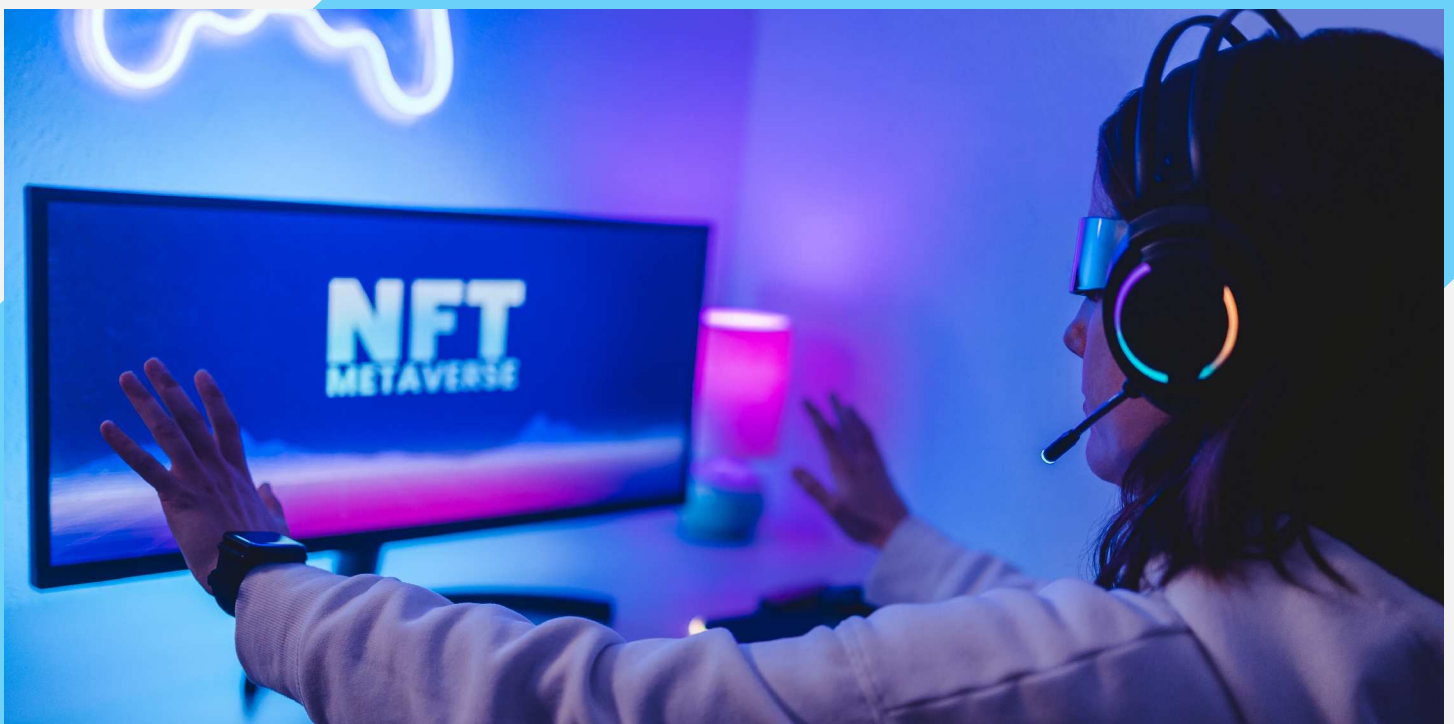
*« I dream of an inclusive Metaverse, in which individuals feel respected and protected, which is not only entertainment-oriented but also allows users to grow, acquire new knowledge and develop new skills useful in the real world. »*



— • • •  
Hugo Spiess, co-founder and CEO of Prosoon

# CHAPTER 2. PROPOSALS WITH EXPLANATIONS

Practical proposals and tools to ensure a Metaverse of Respect, Diversity and Inclusion



### Proposal 1.

#### **ENCOURAGE A SHORT, MANDATORY ONBOARDING TRAINING/NAVIGATION PERMIT IN THE METAVERSE FOR AVATARS**

> *Metaverse license, tutorial and best practices guide: a must for accessing the Metaverse.*

Web 2.0 has so far been marked by a lack of user understanding in regards to digital tools and their safe use, and by the absence of clear standards and global enforcement to make operators comply.

It is useful to learn from this experience and to insist on the need to educate and empower users in the use of this new technology. The principle of the Permit/Training is to be able to codify the fundamentals and to help users become familiar with the best practices before taking the big leap into the metaverses (which are destined to become infinite in size.) This Metaverse Permit/Training should be renewable, optional and visible to all minor users and their parents. Its objective is to assert the idea that the use of digital tools must be accompanied by training and that users must be familiar with them. The Metaverse Permit/Training would be issued by a Metaverse regulatory body that could be organized as a unit in charge of overseeing the development and use of the Metaverse on the advice of the authority in charge of online ethics in each country (see our other related proposals).

While this may seem like a restrictive measure, learning the basics is necessary to help users reduce the 'cyber-violence broadcast accidents' to be avoided. If Avatars circulate in the Metaverse, there are incentives to regulate traffic as in any public space. Self-regulating the way one behaves online is a prerequisite to ensuring the safety and protection of oneself and other users of the Metaverse. This is especially true for minors and other categories of so-called "vulnerable" users. Such a request implies training, it is a measure not of user selection, but of public safety.

Such a proposal raises the question of who could legitimately become the decision-making authority responsible for carrying out these controls and ordering sanctions. The majority of the 44 experts interviewed on the subject stressed that giving so much power to private and commercial actors could not only be dangerous but could also lead to certain abuses. Thus, public authorities, recognized public institutions and other such actors (e.g., consortium of civil society actors), for which accountability and control mechanisms are already in place, could propose to adapt their methods and thus ensure that they will limit certain possibilities of abuse. The issue of not obtaining a permit/training will arise. Should access to certain zones be denied to permitless users? How about limiting access to areas of the metaverse where content could be more toxic? The purpose of this measure aims at "training" users to respect the rule of law without restricting the freedom of movement of individuals in the digital world.

## Proposal 2.

### **GENERALIZE ACCESS TO TRAINING & LABELING FOR GREATER COMPLIANCE WITH STANDARDS OF RESPECT AND DIVERSITY WITHIN METAVERSES**

- > *Implementation of a generalized labeling program and learning path on metaverses in schools (training by professionals, labeling), sports centers and extracurricular establishments.*

The consultation of 44 expert reinforced Respect Zone's conviction that there is a need to educate users from a young age on matters of respect and diversity in the digital world through the responsible use of digital tools. It will therefore be useful to organize awareness and training sessions, as well as practical workshops in schools, social and cultural centers, clubs, universities, sports centers, communities and companies.

What we call "labeling" consists in a commitment to engage in educated preventative actions and behaviors. It is ultimately a partnership that is presented as a series of shared values, actions and activities to which specific projects can be added. Among other initiatives, the labeled entities (e.g.; a school) sign a charter, which can be amended and is based on respect, moderation and responsibility. It also involves the conduct of awareness and educational campaigns. For a label to be successful, it should also include support from the issuing body, such as legal assistance in dealing with cases of cyber-violence.

NGOs that are experts in the fight against cyber-violence and experts in educational initiatives certainly have valuable experience in the aim of pacifying the Metaverse.

The type of labeling imagined and tested since 2014 provides the labeled structures with the knowledge and tools necessary to anticipate, prevent and combat cyber-violence likely to occur in this new virtual context. More than that, it creates an atmosphere which always sends users back the basics of respect and good behavior. This is the principle of *nudges* whose effectiveness is readily perceived.

Indeed, in the absence of predefined rules, the Metaverse risks becoming a toxic and violent environment, and there are questions about the future benefits of these new "virtual worlds". According to the study conducted by Ifop for Talan entitled "*The French and Metavers*", 75% of French people express some kind of fear towards the Metaverse<sup>31</sup>. While it is undeniable that the Metaverse presents new opportunities in terms of interactive communication, freedom of expression, creativity, and scientific progress, particularly in medicine<sup>32</sup>, the fact remains that the cyber-violence we witness today on current social networks will most likely be present in the Metaverse and perhaps at a higher

<sup>31</sup> Ifop for Talan, 2022, [The French and metavers](#).

<sup>32</sup> Dawei Yang et al, [Expert consensus on the metaverse in medicine](#), Clinical eHealth, Volume 5, 2022, Pages 1-9, ISSN 2588-9141.



level. According to a study conducted in 2021 by the research center IPSOS for the association "*Feminists against cyber harassment*", 4 out of 10 French people declare themselves victims of cyber-violence<sup>33</sup>. Young people and vulnerable groups are particularly affected by online violence, according to the same study. 87% of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 said they had been a victim of cyberbullying at least once, while 85% of those identifying as LGBTQ+ said the same. The current status quo justifies public concerns about the negative potential of the Metaverse.

According to an article published by the *World Economic Forum*, security problems already existing in the virtual sphere are very likely to apply to the Metaverse as well. Moreover, because of the highly developed technology of the Metaverse, the crimes that would be committed there may become even more elaborate and their perpetrators even more difficult to apprehend and bring to justice. Some of the cybercrimes we may face are "*scams, identity theft, theft of credentials, technology debt, social engineering, espionage, vulnerabilities, disinformation*"<sup>34</sup>. In general, financially motivated attacks are expected to increase both in frequency and aggressions in this new virtual world.

Positively marking the space is a winning initiative to pacify the collective space.

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<sup>33</sup> Féministes contre le cyberharcèlement, IPSOS, 2021, [Cyberviolence et cyberharcèlement : état des lieux d'un phénomène répandu](#).

<sup>34</sup> COLLARD, Anna-Maria, "[Crime in the metaverse is very real. But how do we police a world with no borders and no bodies?](#)", *World Economic Forum*, August 18th, 2022.

### Proposal 3.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN METAVERSES ON THE DANGERS OF CYBER-VIOLENCE AND EXPOSURE TO HARM TO DIVERSITY**

The experts consulted in the preparation of this action plan report agreed that the most effective way to ensure compliance with the key principles in the Metaverse is to educate users in their spirit. A series of educational measures and campaigns for metaverse users and non-users are proposed here to ensure that the Metaverse is a safe space for all its users (with specific campaigns for demographics such as minors).

First, Respect Zone has seen the effectiveness of mandatory and frequent awareness campaigns in schools and businesses. All potential users must be made aware of the dangers of using this new technology and the tools they have to protect themselves. Private and public bodies must be responsible and work together. These campaigns should raise awareness on the "*responsible use*" of digital tools, without using a moralizing or authoritarian tone. These campaigns will be adapted to the age, skills and level of understanding of the potential users and will be conducted with regularity in and out of the Metaverse screens and with respect for the diversity of the audiences they will target. There must be continuity between the training offered in school and that offered in the professional setting.

It is also recommended that these campaigns make use of innovative and immersive technologies and all social networks in and of the Metaverse. This would enable a more effective spread of the messages concerning bullying, discrimination and adjacent issues. Virtual reality is a powerful tool, as it allows us to position the user, for example, from the point of view of a potential victim. In the long run, the use of virtual reality technology with a reasoned approach can increase empathy, because of what is called the "*Proteus*" effect of embodying the other. To embody a character is to get closer to their characteristics, thus facilitating empathy. In Belgium and France, for example, several schools are already using this technology to fight against harassment, especially sexual harassment<sup>35</sup>. For all these reasons, the development of such campaigns in public-private partnership should be made a priority among proposals for awareness raising. The metaverse platforms and operators should be obliged to finance a minimum of one campaign per year in this sense, by associating remediation experts.

<sup>35</sup> GAGNAIRE P., LOEB S., MASSARD J., 2022, "[Harcèlement : la réalité virtuelle au service de la prévention](#)", *FranceInfo*, 21 Octobre.



## II. Moderation

Probably one of the biggest challenges of the Metaverse, as its founders have noted, is moderation. It appears to be nearly impossible to moderate all interactions in the Metaverse in real time, according to Andrew Bosworth, Meta's Chief Technology Officer (CTO). In his writings, he describes this difficulty as an "existential threat"<sup>36</sup>.

Moderation is a particularly important issue because, unlike today's social networks, the Metaverse must be moderated in real time, and this moderation is delicate because it applies to behaviors, and not just to the content issued by the user. The promise of the Metaverse is that all users will be able to be connected at the same time (in line with the notion of interoperability). These two specificities of the Metaverse render effective moderation technically complex. Contrary to Web 2.0, which can be considered as a broadcasting Internet without gestures, most interactions in the Metaverse will be difficult to trace and will use more memory and broadband to do so. If it is indeed possible to record an interaction, or at least the audio, this would raise difficulties concerning a fundamental right, that of invasion of privacy<sup>37</sup>. In order to establish that an offense or undesirable behavior has taken place, it is necessary to collect evidence. In addition, there is the difficult task of defining what constitutes unwanted conduct. Cultural and other differences make it difficult to categorize human behavior into "acceptable and unacceptable", with the exception of those that are already recognized by the international community as violent. Nonetheless, ensuring the safety of users is the desired goal.

Meta, for example, has stated its concern about solving the moderation issue. Currently, two main options are being explored: (1) the creation of "*personal boundary*" and "*safe zone*" zones and (2) investment in AI technology that could be used to detect cyber-violence. Many video game operators are also taking to heart the need to protect their users and are increasingly investing in codes of conduct and guidelines informed by both experts and users to foster a creative, fun and safe gaming environment.

Respect Zone therefore proposes to bolster efforts on the improvement of AI algorithms in compliance with European directives. The so-called "*inclusive*" participation of users in the moderation process in order to strengthen bonds of "*community*" is essential. This will ensure a more "complete" moderation system, combining human moderators with artificial intelligence technologies and community-based participatory systems

<sup>36</sup>MURPHY, Hannah, 2021, "[How will Facebook keep its Metaverse safe for users?](#)", *Financial Times*, November 12th.

<sup>37</sup> Meta, [Notice of monitoring and recording to improve safety in Horizon Worlds](#)

## Proposal 4.

### **BASELINE CERTIFICATION TRAINING FOR MODERATORS PROVIDED BY INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

- > *Certification training for human moderators- define a means to monitor the reliability and trustworthiness of human AI moderation algorithms (categorization of the different AI systems and compliance with directive 28/09/2022).*

When asked about the importance of moderation, one of our experts, Jeremie Mani (former founder of Netino by Webhelp), suggested that the focus should be on investing in human moderators who are culturally familiar with the users and the actions they will moderate. This can ensure better moderation and better data to "feed" the learning of AI algorithms, which can then take over the bulk of the moderation. Indeed, the use of artificial intelligence will be necessary, as the amount of interactions made possible by the Metaverse is simply impossible for humans to handle. Another important topic related to the idea of using artificial intelligence for content moderation is the transparency of the data sets used to feed algorithms on the topic at hand. Audrey Herblin-Stoop raised this point during her hearing. She points out that algorithms are trained and thus much of *what* constitutes "*potential algorithmic bias is the basis on which the algorithm is trained*". Reasoned and responsible transparency ensures representativeness. The principle in places of public expression is to be able to verify where the data comes from and prevent potential bias with algorithms that can moderate content and behavior more effectively, and less likely to cause discrimination or other types of harm. Transparency helps curb toxic bias by allowing collaborative feedback from NGOs and authorities in charge of checking algorithms.

When it comes to algorithms more generally, such as algorithms used for targeted advertising or to provide users with certain types of content, transparency is key. We need to understand how the algorithm works and what kind of information it collects from users in order to better protect our online activities. As David Cohen points out, many users of social media and the Internet in general are not necessarily aware, despite the GDPR or equivalent rules, that their data that has been collected is being used for certain applications or online services. As a result, the data collected can influence behavior. If this data indicates an interest in a particular activity or a particular type of content, that content will be offered more frequently to the user. In practice, this can lead to users being isolated in virtual "*bubbles*" of like-minded individuals or potentially toxic content. For example, the online habits of a depressed person may lead to them being offered - by empiricism of choice - content that incites depression, thus further accentuating the mental disorder that the user is experiencing (more seriously, this was once the case with the prevalence of content that could incite suicide).

Respect Zone is actively involved in improving moderation and recognizing the training of moderators and the status that should be given to these professionals using increasingly complex techniques. Human moderators are charged with civic responsibility. In a way, they co-ensure the education of users according to the quality of the guidelines chosen by the operator and according to their ability to classify content and contextualize it. The Metaverse will reinvent the art of moderation. We cannot leave this exercise in the hands of the exchange platforms alone. It is too much of a responsibility and is not the core business of operators. Moderators need adapted, specific and appropriate training courses. They need to be recognized as a profession in the same way as educators or mediators. In order to create innovative jobs,

it is recommended here to provide specific training in order to develop real skills, and thus acquire a quality repository for moderation. Respect Zone would propose the elaboration of this reference system based on objective criteria both on a national and international scale. This training would aim to offer training leading to a diploma and enhancing the value of this emerging profession. Specialized NGOs have the vocation to engage with training organizations, to provide this type of training modules as well as online certifications (e-learning).

With respect to artificial intelligence and its role in moderating behavior in the Metaverse, it appears that the Artificial Intelligence Directive is a first legal and ethical framework, which can serve as a foundation<sup>38</sup>. While we are aware that improvements will be necessary in the months and years to come, we believe that this proposed directive is a solid basis to be used when reflecting on the development of an international standard. The European proposal on trust in AI follows a risk-based approach and establishes a uniform, horizontal legal framework for AI that aims to ensure legal certainty. The directive classifies artificial intelligence systems and applications into several risk categories. As an example, it extends the ban on private actors using AI for social rating purposes. AI systems are classified into four categories based on risk: minimal risk AI, low risk AI, high risk AI, and unacceptable AI. Social scoring, cognitive-behavioral manipulation, and remote biometric identification fall into the "*unacceptable*" category. While more effective moderation can be ensured through intrusive use of AI, policymakers and operators should always prioritize human rights and prohibit the most intrusive uses of technological developments. This is exactly what the European directive aims to do: frame AI in a way that makes it trustworthy, human-centered, ethical, sustainable and inclusive. In this line of the AI proposal, the Metaverse must also be a trustworthy Metaverse for all its users.

In addition to the proposed law on artificial intelligence, the *European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade* reaffirms the EU's commitment to ethical, accountable, transparent and human-centered artificial intelligence<sup>39</sup>. Transparency and appropriate representative databases are essential to ensure that artificial intelligence systems are aligned with the fundamental rights that the European Union protects, that the risk of discrimination resulting from the use of artificial intelligence is reduced, and that ultimately, technological development becomes a real social benefit.

<sup>38</sup> European Commission, [Legislation on Artificial Intelligence](#) (2021/0106), April 21, 2021.

<sup>39</sup> Council of the European Union, [The European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade](#) (15149/22), November 25.

## Proposal 5.

### APPOINT « RESPECT AMBASSADOR » AVATARS IN THE METAVERSES

- > *Create a specific unit of "avatar watchers" made up of avatars in the Metaverse whose role would be to ensure that avatars behave in a human and peaceful manner, and to report the conduct of violent avatars to the Metaverse regulatory system when they act abusively or break the rules.*

Stressing the importance of involving and engaging users directly in moderation efforts as a particularly effective way to hold them accountable, lawyers Chloé Delay, Maurits Dolmans and François-Charles Laprévotte of the Cleary law firm also call in this proposal for the creation of a cell represented by avatars (or a public volunteer body), with the specific mission of monitoring interactions in the Metaverse and reporting misconduct to a higher authority, which they call the Metaverse regulator. This higher authority can then decide what kind of action to take against users who break the rules. This is a form of "crowdsourcing" of detection. Like the real-life maxim that there should be "no *punishment without law*," the rules of social engagement for different areas should be clearly defined in advance.

While it is necessary to educate all users on what constitutes intolerable behavior and give them the tools to take the initiative and report it themselves, this is not enough. Combining this with automated AI moderation makes for a more effective system.

However, the creation of a special, possibly participatory (Wikipedia-type) unit to monitor and report misconduct might be a preferred solution for several Metaverse operators. Its advantage consists in specialized training, which goes beyond the instructions given to all users, thus ensuring a better and hopefully faster response in case of misconduct. This unit, which could be described as civic service or citizen engagement, volunteer or paid, will be able to detect more subtle signs of bad behavior and thus ensure that these malicious users do not escape punishment.

## Proposal 6.

### **BUILD A CIVIL AND PARTICIPATORY METAVERSE FOR METAVERSES OF COMPLIANCE AND RESPECT**

- > *For a civil Metaverse: implementation of a participatory system for users via community-based moderation, with competent users trained to recognize toxic behavior and thus fight against the passive bystander effect, by giving users a sense of duty to the community.*

Taking the need to involve users in the moderation process a step further, the report on "*Civics and Video Games*"<sup>40</sup> suggests that a community-based moderation system should be implemented in video games, which might also be appropriate for the Metaverse.

While giving users the knowledge and tools to understand why moderation is necessary, accountability is equally important. To this end, Respect Zone recommends actively encouraging users to become involved in the moderation process. Their actions in moderation should be considered an act of good citizenship, and a set of civic awards for the most involved and responsible users could even be considered. These moderators, who may be volunteers or paid, should receive in-depth training. It is also envisaged to rotate the moderators in order to involve as many people as possible in the moderation of the metaverses. It was observed that peer-to-peer moderation contributes to a more rewarding online experience and has a positive effect on the online behavior of users<sup>41</sup>. This proposition is also essential to building a respectful Metaverse.

<sup>40</sup> DILCRAH, 2022, [Civism and video games: insights from the behavioral sciences](#).

<sup>41</sup> SEO, Kay Kyeongju, 2007, "[Utilizing Peer Moderating in Online Discussions: Addressing the Controversy between Teacher Moderation and Non moderation](#)," *American Journal of Distance Education*, vol. 21, no. 1

## Proposal 7.

### **BUILD METAVERSES PROTECTED BY SYSTEMS PREVENTING FAKE NEWS AND DISSEMINATION OF NON-CONSENSUAL NUDE IMAGES**

- > *Inclusion of minimal fact checking tools to curb fake news and deep fakes and to detect (via coding) non-consensual intimate content and fight against Nudes/sextortion posts etc.*

*Fake News* and deep fakes are a growing danger of misinformation or spreading false rumors on the Internet and social networks<sup>42</sup>. The art of debunking Fake News is a very complex exercise. However, tools do exist and list, in countries where there is enough data, ways of verifying sources. This proposal aims at creating metaverses free of such quirks in Metaverse areas that include information or references to information that could be perceived as a representation of reality. The AI tools that equip source verification are now able to identify what is fiction, parody or satire, propaganda, in relation to verified information sources. Governmental information sources, for example, do not necessarily have the quality of verified sources because of the capacity of governments to exercise acts of propaganda and to spread false news. The fight against conspiracy, which often targets the same groups of people (e.g. jews, journalists or freemasons), must be at the heart of the Metaverse's architecture in order to develop critical thinking skills from a young age.

<sup>42</sup> Huchon, Thomas et Schmidt, Jean-Bernard, 2022, "Anti Fake news". First Editions.

### ***III. Effective and appropriate standards***

The Metaverse appears to be a new technology or rather a combination of new and highly innovative technologies. It is therefore imperative to contribute to defining its legal framework.

The majority of our experts emphasized that although the Metaverse does not need specific regulation for the moment, this does not exclude the need to adapt existing laws to the specificities of the Metaverse. It is therefore necessary to take into consideration the possibility of new offenses being created and therefore to prevent them. A reflection on the legal regime and the adaptation of existing regimes is therefore inevitable. Our recommendation is to found and staff a working committee including international organizations, NGOs such as the Foundation for Continental Law, In House Counsel Worldwide, ECLA, the liaison offices between the chanceries of all countries, etc

## Proposal 8.

### **HOLDING STAKEHOLDERS ACCOUNTABLE VIA SIGNATURE OF THE #META RESPECT CHARTER**

> *Development of the Respect Zone #MetaRespect Charter proposed in this report.*

Respect Zone and the majority of the experts it consulted believe that there is a need for a common charter for all Metaverses, including key rules and principles that all Metaverses developers should manage to protect and enforce.

Inspired by its own Charter of Respect on social networks, Respect Zone proposed in February 2023 a charter for users and companies, specific to the Metaverse (see the charter at the beginning of the Action Plan Report) which is based on the following principles and commitments, where possible for the signatory and without any obligation of result (soft law):

- the principle of moderation, must be respected by both platforms and users,
- a commitment to prevent, identify and act against all forms of cyber-violence,
- a commitment to interoperability and therefore harmonization,
- a commitment to collaborate with the competent authorities in the event of suspected violations by their users,
- a commitment to conduct a risk analysis on an annual basis and to systematically improve the technology they use to moderate their content.

As stated in the report on "*Civism and Video Games*"<sup>43</sup>, , and to be effective, a code of good conduct or charter must include elements of "motivation and trust" element. Apparently, this encourages users and platforms to comply with the rules.

When it comes to motivating platforms, several methods can be envisaged, including the loss of public support and funding for companies that do not comply with the rules of good conduct and existing laws (including the Charter). Respect Zone has already advocated for such measures to invite social media platforms to take moderation more seriously than they do. Of course, the incentive or motivation already exists, as the economy is shifting from a product-based to an experience-based approach. So, to attract users, Metaverse developers should align with their needs. Jeremie Mani points out that users have three main needs, (1) to feel protected from inappropriate content, (2) protected from cyber-violence, and (3) confident enough to enter into business with other users. A commitment to moderation, interoperability, and anti-violence will satisfy all three

A common charter for all metaverses will help to establish harmonized rules that apply consistently to all users.

<sup>43</sup> DILCRAH, 2022, [Civism and video games: insights from the behavioral sciences](#)



## Proposal 9.

### **SCALE OF SANCTIONS ADAPTED TO THE METAVERSES, AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO DISSUADE CYBER-VIOLENT USERS**

- > *Development of a scale of sanctions: from warning to banning and according to a classification of cyber-violence in the Metaverse.*

The need for rules implies graduated sanctions in any social universe to prevent abuse. Some of the experts consulted suggested that an effective way to collaborate between the creators of different versions of "metaverses" and to protect users, is to ensure sanctions that can go as far as temporary or permanent banning of users who behave inappropriately and probably repeatedly in metaverses.

In concrete terms, if a user is banned from a metaverse as a result of a court decision and or a decision of the platform, due to reprehensible conduct, then that user should be banned from all other metaverses.

Considering that temporary or permanent bans (which already exist for a long time in video games or social networks (see the case of Donald Trump's bans)) are a proprietary sanction, internal to a community governed by its own conditions, a sanction considered severe for online infractions. Sanctions that are internal to a community and not supported by a court decision should not be imposed lightly. For this purpose a clear set of rules should be provided that should apply to all Metaverses regardless of their "type", it seems appropriate to require that all Metaverses operators should have access to the severe sanctions imposed by their colleague (other platform). This naturally pleads for system interoperability. This proposal presents the need for guarantees of respect for personal data, individual liberties, the need to have access to the rights of defense and to a 'fair trial', and fair sanctions that are limited and proportionate and that can be appealed internally or externally to the platform.

However, there will naturally be differentiated rules of internal regulation, governing each of the Metaverse, and sanctioning a user for a behavior that is not forbidden in another Metaverse and thus triggering a collective ban would be unjust, as the behavior is not punishable everywhere. An inter-metaverse reflection will therefore be useful to harmonize guidelines about the scale and standards of sanctions taking into account the specificities of technological innovations.

To avoid this type of complication, a collective ban is needed for users who only break the rules that apply equally to all Metaverses. The idea is to develop a harmonization for certain offenses and behaviors.

## Proposal 10.

### SET UP AMBITIOUS METAVERSE MODERATION STANDARDS

> *Development of an ambitious content moderation standard.*

The volumes of interactions to be moderated are massive on social networks and they will be even more so in the Metaverse (made up of non-verbal expressions and behaviors). Today, transparency reports already exist at the European level for social networks and most large companies tend to comply with them. For metaverses, nothing is clearly foreseen and the DSA is not automatically applicable to metaverses in terms of legal qualification. As already mentioned in our proposal for a common Charter for all Metaverses, moderation is the key to a secure user experience. Thus, it is the mission of operators to collaborate and propose clear moderation standards, to be applied in the same way in all Metaverses.

First, it is necessary to define what is meant by "*inappropriate content*". While most of us can agree that some forms of content, such as child pornography, should be absolutely prohibited, for others it is not so clear, thus falling under the category of "*grey*" content.

The second step will be to decide which types of content (real-time interactions, gestures, videos, images, etc.) are subject to the moderation rules. The work done in the four working groups of ARCOM's Online Hate Content Observatory in France can serve as a basis for identifying behaviors and sanctions.

Thirdly, the type and moderation methods must be clarified to be unified and allow users to navigate in transparency of applicable rules. Respect Zone advocates a model that combines reactive and automated moderation. The reactive element ensures user participation, while automation implies the intervention of algorithms with artificial intelligence.

This proposal aims to provide a clear framework for moderation methods.

## Proposal 11.

### REGISTRATION OF CYBER-VIOLENT USERS

- > *Development of a common, up-to-date blacklist of violent and convicted users to prevent cyber- violence in the Metaverse.*

Respect Zone recommends that Metaverse operators collaborate to ensure the security of their users by relying on common definitions. Even if the Metaverse is heterogeneous and the users are therefore different or have different objectives, collaborative work should be favored and solo work avoided. Sharing best practices and information should be the priority for security and compliance purposes.

For example, they could create a registry of all users who have committed serious acts of violence while using their Metaverse. This list should include only those users whose actions are illegal and serious. Keeping evidence of serious offenders will ensure that those who engage in highly dangerous behavior will no longer be able to harm other users as they move from one Metaverse to another. This is a "legislative" harmonization for efficiency and effectiveness.

Regarding the methods of access to these registries, several levels of access are to be envisaged. Public access will necessarily pose acute legal difficulties. It is proposed here that access be reserved for regulatory operators and expert NGOs for their legitimate needs to co-regulate the Metaverse. This proposal is likely to raise social debates, but we consider it useful for the general security of the Metaverse, and the respect of individual liberties does not prohibit the careful use of such a list.

## Proposal 12.

### PROVIDE A STANDARDIZED CLASSIFICATION OF CYBER -VIOLENCE

#### > *Standardization of cyber-violence typologies in metaverses*

Another form of cooperation between operators could result in sharing typologies of deviant behavior, as proposed by Pr. Christophe Roquilly.

Indeed, based on the data they collect by monitoring and moderating behavior in their own Metaverse, creators could seek specialized help and develop typologies of deviance, to be shared among themselves. In this way, others will know what to look for, and early signs of deviant behavior could be identified and objectionable behavior more easily avoided.

This classification debate is a useful benchmark that has animated various working groups such as the one that has formed within ARCOM's *Online Hate Content Observatory*. Listing what is internationally recognized as objectionable behavior in the Metaverse is a mission to harmonize knowledge and findings useful for the prevention of cyber-violence. This will help in the classification of sanctions, procedures and programming of moderation algorithms and the training corpus of moderators for each operator or digital destination

### Proposal 13.

#### **ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES IN THE PREVENTION OF RISKS RELATED TO LACK OF RESPECT AND DIVERSITY IN METAVERSES**

> *Involvement of public authorities in the implementation of security-related rules in the Metaverse*

The involvement of public authorities in the prevention process is essential. Alone, the operators, groups, regulators and States will not be able to fight against the scourge of cyber violence and against the lack of diversity online.

When consulted about this initiative, the Ministry of the Interior told us that public authorities should be included in the development process of the Metaverse, especially to provide services such as security, health, education, etc.

As several of the expert hearings conducted as part of the consultation leading to this Action Plan Report indicated, the Metaverse should also offer and provide spaces for an immersive learning experience. Public authorities could be involved in this area. The educational aspect is very important for our experts, especially regarding minors and their use of the Metaverse. Although social activities and games have their place in the Metaverse, the focus should be on creating a caring and instructive learning environment that will ensure continuity between the real and virtual worlds. The use of new technologies to facilitate and enhance the educational process is an initiative supported by experts and very important for some operators like Meta, who have already started to invest in this area. Of course, education does not only refer to the transmission of knowledge and skills, but also to the development of ethical values, good screen practices and online codes of conduct since the ancient "Netiquette"<sup>44</sup>. The State must therefore intervene and ensure that the educational and instructive role of the Metaverse is guaranteed.

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<sup>44</sup>[Netiquette - Wikipedia \(wikipedia.org\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netiquette)

## Proposal 14.

### **PROHIBIT TOTAL ANONYMITY IN THE METAVERSE - NEED TO AUTHENTICATE USERS AS A CYBER RESPONSIBILITY MEASURE**

- > *Supervised registration process of a user in metaverses (process of creation of a user account similar to the one linked to the opening of a bank account - ID, biometrics) in order to avoid anonymity-enabled cyber-violence (often due to the feeling of total impunity).*

Taking into account numerous studies that use identity verification technologies when creating an avatar, i.e.; a digital identity on social networks, experts from Accuracy have suggested the creation of a specific standard for registering in a Metaverse. They propose a process similar to the opening of a bank account, therefore an obligation to provide documents such as your identity card or proof of residence.

These documents guarantee that the person creating the avatar is a real person and this adds to the notion of accountability. It also allows us to trace the users and to reinforce security. If the user through their avatar is obliged to provide certain information, they will be encouraged to behave responsibly and adopt an ethical behavior. As an illustration, in some Metaverses, especially those focused on professional life, these requirements therefore seem inevitable.

In the spirit of fighting against disinhibition, against the impression that acts committed in the virtual or online sphere do not have the same gravity as in the real world, it is proposed to link the avatar to the real person (digital identity) in several ways. Indeed, the issues represented by the Metaverse necessarily question some of our fundamental freedoms, the most obvious being the protection of personal data arising from our right to privacy. In this respect, the report highlights the importance of increasing the security and confidentiality of the information communicated on these new platforms, particularly with regard to the biometric data that will be used to create avatars (fingerprints, voice and/or facial recognition). With regard to the objective of this report, i.e.; to make the Metaverse a space of diversity, inclusion and respect for human rights, it might be appropriate to return briefly to the regulation of freedom of expression. Indeed, if the Metaverse is to be a space for exploration, experimentation, fun, and artistic creativity, it should not be done under the guise of a freedom of expression without limits. Although fundamental, freedom of expression ends where harm to others begins: any act of defamation, insult, discrimination, call to hatred or glorification of terrorism is criminally reprehensible<sup>45</sup> under French law and freedom of expression, including in the USA, is not unlimited (especially when it relates to decency).

As noted by many of the experts consulted, and also revealed by several studies, including the report on "*Civism and Video Games*"<sup>46</sup> published by the Interdepartmental Directorate of public transformation in October 2022, "*the blurring of the line between the 'real' and 'virtual' worlds,*" especially when it comes to immersive environments, can give the impression that the rules of one

<sup>45</sup> Voir lois sur la liberté de la presse de 1881, sur la liberté de communication de 1986 ou encore sur la liberté d'expression artistique de 2016 ainsi que les articles 431-1 et 431-2 du code pénal.

<sup>46</sup> DILCRAH, 2022, Civisme et jeux vidéo : l'éclairage des sciences comportementales.

world do not apply to the other. In the context of video games, which have long been increasingly immersive and realistic, this distinction has an important influence on player behavior, encouraging disinhibition, a key driver of online violence.

When we use words such as "*real life*" and "*the real world*", we promote the idea that what happens in the online or virtual sphere is not "*real*", so there are no consequences for actions that occur online. This language bias has direct consequences of devaluing the perception of online risks.

To combat this problem, the focus must be on the educational aspect. Users must be aware that, for example, cyber-stalking is still stalking, that it has a negative impact on the life and well-being of the victim, and that it is punishable by law. In addition, they should also be aware that they can be identified and punished in the material world for misconduct in the Metaverse.

One of the greatest promises of the Metaverse is the freedom of exploration and experimentation (e.g.; abolishing distance and travel time) that this new universe offers. Some people prefer a certain degree of anonymity and privacy, to feel free to express themselves without judgment or stigma outside the Metaverse. Their desires and needs should also be of concern to the founders and operators of the Metaverse through pseudonymity or the refusal to be tracked without shirking one's responsibilities online.

### Proposal 15.

#### **BUILD AN INTERNAL AUDIT TEMPLATE FOR PLATFORMS TO IMPROVE THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIVERSITY REPRESENTATION IN METAVERSES**

- > *Regular audits of metaverse operators, according to a benchmark linked to the respect of human rights and diversity operated by trusted third parties.*

Similar to social media audits, Accuracy advocates for regular audit protocols by trusted, impartial third parties. In this sense, Respect Zone proposes that an audit standard be developed to help companies offering their versions of the Metaverse comply with human rights requirements.

Regular audits can then be conducted, in accordance with the international standard to be developed, to ensure that companies' activities and operations are in compliance with national and international standards and laws. This means that Metaverses would be subject to due diligence and impartial experts could advise them on how to best improve their strategy to achieve this goal. The aim is to accompany them in the implementation of measures to meet the requirements of the standard and thus improve their business model. These audits will also have the purpose of highlighting the strengths and weaknesses and therefore correcting the shortcomings of the systems in place with regard to recommendations such as those in this Report-Action Plan. The most important aspect is to keep users engaged and an audit can provide the analysis needed to understand what users value and what keeps them coming back. The business model used by various digital companies may have been perceived as sometimes contradictory to a genuine commitment to human rights. As more and more users place a high value on social issues (ethics, CSR, ESG) and human rights issues, companies are adapting their strategies in order to retain their customers, investors and employees. The possibility from now on for a company to declare its *raison d'être* to the registry of commerce and companies and the means to measure its compatibility in its actions is characteristic of this demonstration.

Respect Zone proposes these awareness audits be inserted in the body of self-regulation rules because they present economic advantages for companies, in order to guide them to find their way in a world of norms, acceptance of social behavior, contextualization and technologies in perpetual evolution.



## Proposal 16.

### ADAPT DIGITAL STANDARDS TO CHECK THEIR COMPATIBILITY WITH METAVERSE ISSUES

- > *Development of a European and international legal framework to adapt to Metaverse specificities issues.*

The European Union is already looking to the Metaverse. Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton has highlighted the fact that the EU already has "*robust and future-proof regulatory tools for the digital space*", namely the DSA and DMA<sup>47</sup>. Echoing proposal number 6, included in the report "*An Exploratory Mission of the Metaverse*", Respect Zone believes that it is essential to work on adapting the EU legislative frameworks, including the DSA, DMA and GDPR, to the specificities of the Metaverse<sup>48</sup>. AFNOR and CEN/CENELEC have already set up working groups to address this issue.

In addition, in the area of criminal law, new offenses will certainly be characterized and will thus have to be treated in a harmonized manner in the Metaverse.

The European Union, through its current regulation on artificial intelligence (the A.I. Act), proposes, as previously mentioned, a legal and ethical framework to regulate this constantly evolving technology, which can be improved upon but which can already serve as a basis for the Metaverse<sup>49</sup>.

The GDPR, the A.I. Act and the proposed directive on extra-contractual liability are examples of EU-wide regulation that increases the effectiveness of standards through its homogeneous application<sup>50</sup>. The future of the EU in metaversal initiatives should aspire to achieve the same levels of relevance at the international level. As Mr. Thierry Breton pointed out, to ensure a secure Metaverse for its users, it is essential that the Metaverse incorporate European values and rules<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> KABELKA, Laura. 2022. "[European Commission prepares plan on metavers](#)," *Euractiv*, September 19.

<sup>48</sup> Proposal 6. Start now the work of adapting, in particular the GDPR, the DSA and the DMA, to metaverse issues. (BASDEVANT, Adrien, FRANÇOIS, Camille, RONFARD Rémi, 2022, "[Mission exploratoire sur les métavers](#)", Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty).

<sup>49</sup> European Commission, [Legislation on Artificial Intelligence](#) (2021/0106), April 21, 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Barnelin, Margo, 2022, "[Intelligence artificielle : une proposition de directive sur la responsabilité civile extracontractuelle](#)", *Dalloz*, 22 November.

<sup>51</sup> BRETON, Thierry, 2022, "[People, technologies and infrastructure: Europe's plan to thrive in the Metaverse](#)", *the European Commission*, September 14th.

#### ***IV. User protection***

As stated above, user safety is at the heart of the Action Plan proposed in this Respect Zone Report. After having addressed the measures to be taken to ensure the protection of minors, it is time to move on to the protection of all users, whatever their age or state of vulnerability.

Respect Zone emphasizes several measures, including professional psychological and legal support for victims of violence in the Metaverse. We also advocate the creation of an easily identifiable alarm button to prevent and stop illicit behavior or content.

## Proposal 17.

### CREATE AN ERGONOMIC RESPECT BUTTON

- > *A prominent alarm button for respect and assistance that can be activated at any time (information, mediation, reporting and psychological help will be provided by independent actors).*

There seems to be a consensus among experts that the Metaverse should be a moderated space, despite how difficult this is to achieve. To ensure that users have an easy-to-find and easy-to-use tool to report abuse and protect themselves in the Metaverse, we propose a common and possibly standardized "*red flag*" for all Metaverses to reach centralized helpdesks (much like dialing 911 in the US or 17 in France). This recommendation is inspired by the most recent legislative initiative at the EU level, the DSA, which requires social media platforms to have a common signaling method<sup>52</sup>. In our design, it can take the form of a button that will be easily identified as the online respect button thanks to clear ergonomics. It should be clearly labeled and visible to all users. The point of the word "respect" is that users don't have to wait for extreme harm to feel authorized to call. Respect is a positive term that speaks to everyone and in many languages. It is for those in need, for witnesses, and for those seeking information, mediation or simply a listening ear.

Once activated, the button simultaneously sends an alarm signal to the Metaverse moderators and connects the victim directly to a moderator. This will isolate the victim from the perpetrator (it either acts as a portal transporting the victim to a safe area, or as a "wall"/"protective bubble", making the victim inaccessible to the perpetrator). Meta's Metaverse, Horizon Worlds, already offers similar features. First, there is the "*personal boundary*" feature, which prevents other avatars from approaching within a certain safety radius (3 feet away) of the avatar that has activated this feature. The second is the "safe zone", which isolates the user in a personal bubble, where no other avatar can interact with him in any way. From this safe zone, users can report, block and disable others. We propose that similar measures be adopted by all those who offer Metaverses<sup>53</sup>.

To ensure that minors in particular receive the protection they need, Respect Zone also recommends that any interactions or content reported by minors as "violent" or "inappropriate" receive priority treatment during the review process. Essentially, we are advocating for "*fast-tracking*" signal alerts received from avatars belonging to minors. Thus, the "*respect button*" is proposed for their protection on social networks and is considered a valid solution to facilitate moderation in the Metaverse. This easy-to-use tool, which should ideally be consistent on all platforms, combined with the establishment of a joint committee, possibly co-facilitated with expert NGOs and public authorities, would be ideal for ensuring consistency and improving the assistance and reporting process.

<sup>52</sup> Public Life, 2022, "[The European Digital Services Regulation \(DSA\) aims at platform accountability](#)," *Public Life*, October 26.

<sup>53</sup> INEQUE Safeguarding Group, July 19th 2022, "[A guide to Horizon Worlds](#)".

## Proposal 18.

### **STANDARDIZE THE DETECTION OF CYBER-VIOLENCE**

In line with the European approach, Henri Verdier and his team propose to develop, on the basis of technologies to detect pedo-criminal content, databases of similar hashes (coded digital fingerprints) allowing the removal of problematic digital objects. This recommendation is also included in the report of the exploratory mission on Metaverses, led by Adrien Basdevant, Camille François and Rémi Ronfard.

A.I. is now developing capabilities to help identify objectionable content. Soon, avatars in the Metaverse will take on a real human form and will thus have the potential to be more damaging. It is therefore imperative to set up effective detection systems against cyber violence with the tools available. The initiatives developed abroad to fight against pedo-pornography or the disappearance of children will be useful to develop such standards.

## Proposal 19.

### ALLOW MULTIPLE AVATARS PER USER

- > *A single digital identity but several possible avatars encourages diversity: towards interoperability and traced access to different Metaverses.*

We have not yet answered the question of whether we should be able to have several avatars. Many issues have been raised, including the desire to maintain anonymity while having multiple identities.

Oriented towards user's security, the Ministry of the Interior is in favor of a universal avatar (one avatar per digital identity), to be used in all metaverses. This proposal also implies that eventually metaverses should be interoperable, so they should be able to interact and users should be able to "transfer" their avatar from one metaverse to another. While Respect Zone understands the legitimate liability and security concerns (traceability), we argue that as interoperability does not yet exist, it would be appropriate to allow multiple humanoid or non-humanoid avatars, while ensuring the traceability of the person behind them.

Indeed, according to Claudia Prettnner of Amnesty International, interoperability is essential to *"break the monopoly of giant technology companies"* and *"their business model based on mass surveillance"* by ensuring that users can move freely between platforms and that smaller but innovative startups can offer their services<sup>54</sup>. One of the primary benefits of interoperability is to foster diversity and potentially better protection of human rights, such as privacy<sup>55</sup>.

The balance between security and privacy must be reconciled. In this respect, and without forgetting the initial purpose of the Metaverse, it would be difficult for an operator to impose anthropomorphism (except in a professional context). Moreover, imposing a single avatar per person in the context of a usage standard is not sustainable. It would mean transforming and moving away from the initial promise of the Metaverse, that of freedom of expression, freedom to explore and freedom to experience virtual adventures. The elements of fun and adventure should not be forgotten, and this is part of the tradition of avatar freedom in video games. However, in order to guarantee security, it is essential to be able to identify the users behind their avatars for the platform and for the justice system, if necessary.

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<sup>54</sup> PRETTNER, Claudia, 2021, ["Interoperability as a tool to challenge platform power and protect human rights"](#), *Interoperability News*, April 14th

<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

## Proposal 20.

### **PROVIDE DIGITAL DISCONNECTION SHELTERING BUBBLES TO SEEK PROTECTION AGAINST CYBERVIOLENCE IN THE METAVERSE**

> *Create digital shelters.*

Respect Zone supports the creation of multiple metaverses, but also zones serving different purposes within a single metaverse.

It is suggested that there be spaces dedicated exclusively to authorized minors (over 13 years old and authorized by their parents) that are labeled and have reinforced security. Shelters are necessary in the Metaverse to protect vulnerable users, just as they are necessary in the real world, for example for victims of domestic violence.

In that same spirit, shelters should exist in the Metaverse for minors or other vulnerable users who have been put at risk by the behavior of other users.

The notion of shelter is inspired by the refuge villages that appear in the history of civilizations. Within such shelters, Metaverse users will be safe from external aggression. People requesting access to these shelters/bubbles will nevertheless remain bound by the rules of the platform, as these bubbles are not intended to become no-go zones, but rather zones which guarantee non-aggression. It will be interesting to evaluate who spends time in these digital bubbles and how much. They could also evolve into meditation bubbles or securely monitored bubbles.

## Proposal 21.

### **PROVIDE ACCESS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE AS NEEDED**

- > *Create specialized psychological and legal units to support victims of immersive cyber-stalking or cyber-violence in the Metaverse.*

As mentioned above, it is essential to protect users and ensure that they have a healthy, safe and rewarding experience in the Metaverse. To do this, Respect Zone believes that NGOs and other specialized actors, such as mental health professionals, should strive to provide all users with ongoing psychological support.

Cyber-violence, like physical violence, has a negative impact on a person's mental, physical and emotional state. It can produce irreparable damage if professionals do not intervene in time.

Those who have been harmed by other users in the Metaverse should be provided with free but quality legal assistance, so that they can defend their rights and seek proportional compensation. Users who do not have the knowledge or resources to protect themselves are particularly vulnerable and must be protected.

All victims of cyber-violence should be supported in the Metaverse. For example, it is suggested that victims be provided with individual and group counseling sessions and the support they need (whether psychological or legal) throughout the process of seeking redress and justice. They must also be helped to rejoin the virtual and non-virtual communities in which they live or work. This could include a semi-automated mediation system to resolve disputes.

The cost of such assistance, verification of its application, and privacy protection will be the focus of discussions about implementing such an essential personal assistance resource.

## *V. User responsibility*

Another important area when imagining the rights and duties of users is educating users about good practices and responsible use of the Metaverse, in order to ensure an enjoyable experience for all. The experts emphasize that any initiative taken in this direction must be perceived as both useful and, to some extent, entertaining. An optional Metaverse license, tutorials and a long list of terms and conditions may be very informative, but they will not reach the public with their important message. Indeed, the message is as important as the medium we use to deliver it. At this point, what excites users about the Metaverse seems to be its “exciting” side, the idea that it allows for activities and experiences that are not possible in the real world. To educate these users in the spirit of respect and responsibility, we need to “speak their language,” that is, find a way to communicate important messages in an easy-to-digest and fun way.

Respect Zone therefore proposes an educational and, empowering and committing code of conduct, built using the immersive technologies specific to the Metaverse, to make it more engaging and in line with the technological framework. Its goal is to empower users in a way that is both useful and effective, but also positive and inviting, without lecturing users or losing them in long legal explanations. Regular, pressure-free reminders of good practices will guarantee the success of these training sessions.



## Proposal 22.

### REMIND USERS OF THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS AT REGULAR INTERVALS

- > *Create a code of conduct for users and require acceptance at every login.*

Many of the experts that Respect Zone interviewed also concur in reminding people of the rules at regular intervals guarantees educational success and ensures more responsible behavior. A balance will have to be struck to avoid the monotony of receiving reminders about the rights and duties of avatars and their users. This code of conduct must be educational in nature, explaining infractions and making users aware of the potential consequences of misbehavior.

Because the Metaverse is an ever evolving concept, it is difficult to establish strict rules, such as the MetaRespect Charter, which will evolve over time. However, the standards in the code of conduct should reflect agreed-upon moral values and real-world laws. The message should focus on users' responsibility for their behavior in the Metaverse. Accordingly, all those who wish to interact with others in the Metaverse must abide by clear rules. Prohibiting all forms of violence and ensuring respectful exchanges between Metaverse users is essential. In addition to the moderation aspect and the rules imposed on Meta and the other technology companies that control the Metaverse, individual users must also be subject to rules and regulations. Serious offenses, such as all forms of harassment, participation in online criminal activities (such as distribution of child pornography), or violent behavior toward others must be strictly prohibited.

Minors must also be protected, so users must commit to responsible conduct when interacting with minors or when accessing areas of the Metaverse that are also open to minors.

The charter/code of conduct reminds us of the rules of the Metaverse and how to make fair use of it. It recalls the fundamental principles, in particular moderation and respect, and the behavior that the user must adopt. It will include a non exhaustive list of infractions and the associated sanctions. To be effective, the code/charter must be recognized by all users and signed. It must be written in a clear, unambiguous and educational manner, so that users are aware of the dangers of the Metaverse, their need to use it responsibly, and the potential consequences of misconduct.

#### ***Why is it necessary to adopt a code/charter of conduct ?***

The construction of international rules to govern the plurality of Metaverses will take a long time. Given this, it is necessary that the founders of the Metaverse take proactive steps to create their own code/charter of conduct in co-construction and ensure the safety of their users. Indeed, the codes of conduct should promote a positive collaborative culture and a safe and fun environment<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>56</sup>DILCRAH, 2022, [Civism and video games: insights from the behavioral sciences](#)

## ***VI. Rating and labeling tools***

In order to ensure that Metaverse users are informed of the advantages and disadvantages of using certain metaverses, several tools can be made available, including a score for metaverse operators, based on ratings by both users and a rating agency. This score will assess the best practices as well as the weaknesses of each metaverse, including security and respect for diversity and inclusion. This rating does not necessarily have to become mandatory ; we believe that the most serious platforms will use it voluntarily, as is the case for a number of practices in the digital sector.

### Proposition 23.

#### LET USERS RATE METAVERSES ON RESPECT AND DIVERSITY

> *Create a rating system for metaverses.*

The classification of platforms is useful and already exists for video games and video content, with PEGI classification or age restrictions on some content.

This scoring proposal was put forward by Ms. Théard-Jallu and Mr. Jagerschmidt, inspired by the Cyberscore required by Law No. 2022-309 of March 3, 2022 on the subject of cybersecurity of digital platforms.

Respect Zone proposes the implementation of a rating system for the Metaverse. This composite rating could be assigned taking into account criteria such as the perceived security level, the transparency of their algorithms, the success of the moderation techniques employed, the adaptability of the Metaverse to users' needs, and the integration of user feedback. Users should also be able to rate the metaverse they use based on their individual experiences, expectations and needs.

Both of these scores should be made prominently visible to each potential new Metaverse user, in the interest of understanding the effort devoted to cyber-violence prevention and respect for diversity. In this way, users can make an informed decision about the metaverse they decide to use, before and after signing up.

## Proposal 24.

### **CREATE EXPERT AGENCIES TO RATE RESPECT AND DIVERSITY IN THE METAVERSE**

- > *Create independent rating agencies that will evaluate and score the quality of platforms according to defined criteria (consent, rating and transparency of the algorithms used, inclusion and diversity).*

As mentioned earlier, Respect Zone supports the creation of a rating system. Of course, the institutions responsible for assigning these ratings must now be discussed. Independent rating agencies (non-commercial or commercial, public or private) must be created to evaluate and rate Metaverses, according to several objective criteria that should be established in consultation with all stakeholders. The composition of these independent rating agencies must reflect the principles detailed in the section "Governance of the Metaverse". Such agencies will have to set up a rating grid as recommended in this report, valuing, respecting and diversifying to establish a sensitive, argued, verifiable, independent, up-to-date and specific rating.

## ***VII. Conflict resolution***

Ensuring the safety and well-being of future Metaverse users is at the heart of the Respect Zone initiative. To this end, conflict resolution techniques must be provided. We must be aware that despite the best mechanisms to ensure compliance, conflicts are inevitable and it is up to us to provide alternatives to the justice system or internal moderation to remedy the suffering or abuse of users.

Based on numerous studies on the positive effect of mediation and negotiation as peaceful conflict management tools, Respect Zone proposes that these two tools be favored for minor disputes between users, and not for misdemeanors or criminal offenses that trigger the intervention of the competent authorities<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> GIAMBRONE, [“Using mediation in dispute resolution - the benefits and whether it is right for you”](#).

## Proposal 25.

### PROVIDE USERS WITH DIVERSE CONFLICT RESOLUTION METHODS

- > *Offer of an outsourced, independent and mutualized mediation.*

Though Respect Zone believes that the seriousness of certain acts requires the immediate intervention of the authorities, certain minor conflicts between users should be submitted for resolution to a mediation cell that can be used as a recourse, at the discretion of the users (and their parents, if underage) in order to resolve conflicts and de-escalate online harassment or hatred directly between the parties concerned using a semi-automated conflict resolution platform. The ambition of Respect Zone is to allow a rate of peace and digital respect useful to all and at no cost to the concerned parties to avoid creating a barrier to entry.

The goal of an option such as the respect button is to give access to an alternative mode of dispute resolution between digital users and social networks to transform the culture of clash and conflict into a culture of respect and understanding. This method allows a quick and simple resolution of digital "neighborhood" conflicts. Among the benefits of a mediation platform are reduced costs and a faster resolution process for everyone. This method also contributes to the empowerment of users and can facilitate the understanding between the conflicting parties, and is more pedagogical and peaceful in nature than the traditional punishments used in the aftermath of conflicts. Reaching common ground would promote long-term social interaction by teaching users to seek compromise. In practice, it will be an external platform and independent from the metaverse operators, but the metaverse operators will be strongly encouraged to provide a way to connect to the platform from their metaverses. The mediation platform consists of a network of accredited mediators and arbitrators. This platform is in line with the experimental Respect Zone project, chosen by the French President and all Member States at the *Paris Peace Forum* gathering every year and which did set up the *Online Child Protection Lab* on November 10th, 2022 in Paris.

## VIII. Diversity and inclusion (accessibility/digital divide)

There are four key principles that define a good user experience: trust, diversity, equity and inclusion. In addition to the ethical argument that these principles will create a safe environment in which all users can feel free to express themselves and interact with others, there is a fairly clear economic or business motivation<sup>58</sup>. Indeed, addressing the problems associated with these and other principles may increase the attractiveness of this new "virtual environment" and ensure that users will be motivated to spend time in the Metaverse<sup>59</sup>.

Therefore, Metaverse founders, as well as states and corporations, are encouraged to build and invest in a Metaverse based on respect, diversity and inclusion<sup>60</sup>.

However, there are several major challenges to achieving this. First, it is difficult to define these concepts in the context of the Metaverse. Is diversity represented by the characteristics of users, by the characteristics of their avatars, by the characteristics of operators? By all of them? What are the limits of inclusiveness? Are there people who should never be allowed to use the Metaverse? In a world dominated by countries that are not necessarily democratic or secular, how fair can it be? What about accessibility issues related to the digital divide?

Answering these questions is a difficult and complex task. The first step is to anticipate and prevent acts that violate or threaten these principles. Concrete examples recognized by the entire international community are harassment, racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia.<sup>61</sup>

In terms of inclusiveness and accessibility, the digital divide<sup>62</sup> remains a significant barrier. In addition to the skills and knowledge needed to use the Metaverse, as well as the financial resources needed to purchase virtual reality sets, investments in infrastructure will be needed to ensure that everyone can first access the Internet and then the Metaverse. To date, the technology we have cannot yet be considered truly inclusive, given the number of people who still do not have access. Thus, making the Metaverse truly "accessible" remains, for the moment, a difficult objective to reach because of the digital divide inherent in the emergence of a new technology with a significant entry cost to date.

A diverse and inclusive Metaverse can be achieved by ensuring diversity in its regulatory bodies.

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<sup>58</sup> LU, Jane, 2022, "[Metaverse platforms face diversity, equity and inclusion challenges. Here's how to address them](#)," *The World Economic Forum*, June 14th.

<sup>59</sup> HAZAN, Eric, KELLY, Greg, KHAN, Hamza & al, 2022, "[Marketing in the Metaverse: an opportunity for innovation and experimentation](#)", *McKinsey Quarterly*, May 24th.

<sup>60</sup> WILLIAMS, Maxine, 2022, "[How we are helping build the Metaverse with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Mind](#)," *Meta*, June 16th.

<sup>61</sup> United Nations Human Rights Office, [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) and [the Rabat Plan of Action](#).

<sup>62</sup> Digital divide: "The increase in the gap in ICT equipment (and access) between two given geographical areas or two given categories of individuals" (BEN YOUSSEF, Adel, 2004, "[The four dimensions of the digital divide](#)", *Réseaux*, vol. 127-128, no. 5-6).



## Proposal 26.

### **GUARANTEE A MINIMUM STANDARD OF GOVERNANCE AND DIVERSITY FOR EACH METAVERSE**

- > *Creation of multidisciplinary governing bodies within the metaverse platforms, offering guarantees of diversity.*

In order to ensure the effectiveness of the Metaverse's core operators, special care must be taken in the leadership selection process, including the selection criteria. The selection criteria must be clearly established, accepted by all key stakeholders and transparent.

The make-up of the governing bodies must be based on several key principles. First, efforts must be made to ensure diversity and inclusion<sup>63</sup>. As several articles point out, women are not yet centrally involved in the governance of Metaverse operators<sup>64</sup>. There should also be diversity of representation in the metaverse, which is not yet the case. Gender parity should be one of the key principles of this diversity.

It will also be necessary to define which characteristics of diversity a "responsible" and diverse governance body must include. In addition, what are the prerequisites for the profiles of the people who are so important in these bodies? They should represent universal values shared by all such as integrity, loyalty, humanity, honesty, ethics, professionalism, responsibility and responsiveness. Members of governing bodies should be sensitive to the ethics of new technologies and digital human rights, understand the often complex legal and ethical issues posed by the Metaverse, and be able to exercise their mandate effectively.

<sup>63</sup> MUKUTA, Florian, 2021, "[What board diversity means for modern governance and why is it important?](#)", *Aprio*, November 25th.

<sup>64</sup> LAURENT, Violette, 2022, "[Women are excluded from leadership in the Metaverse](#)", *F.Techtribune.net*, November 21.

## Proposal 27.

### **CONNECT MULTIPLE INTEROPERABLE METAVERSES TO ENSURE GREATER DIVERSITY AND COMPLIANCE WITH DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS**

> *Multiple interoperable metaverses are needed to ensure open competition: towards interoperability.*

As mentioned in the introduction of this report, there are already several versions of the Metaverse. Although a few experts who were interviewed argue for the need to have only one Metaverse, the majority of Metaverse specialists and developers seem to agree that there will and should be several metaverses. It is also argued that these metaverses should be interoperable, as the Internet is but most major social networks are not fully interoperable, in order to better protect human rights through the harmonization of rules<sup>65</sup>. Interoperable Metaverses could combat the lock-in effect (algorithmic lock-in/bubble) and reduce the risk of monopoly positions of large technology companies, by allowing others to develop their own versions of this technology<sup>66</sup>. Thus, users will have a greater choice and will not have to submit to the (often) abusive conditions of monopolistic companies. As an illustration, regarding the processing of users' personal data, many of the large platforms have already had to face sanctions from personal data regulators<sup>67</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> KOOSHA, Ash, 2022, "[The future of the Metaverse hinges on interoperability](#)", *Fast Company*, October 11th.

<sup>66</sup> PRETTNER, Claudia, 2021, "[Interoperability as a tool to challenge platform power and protect human rights](#)", *Interoperability News*, April 14th.

<sup>67</sup> BURNSON, Robert, 2022, "[Meta sued for skirting Apple privacy rules to snoop on users](#)", *Bloomberg*, September 22nd.

## Proposal 28.

### GENERATE A DIVERSE-BY-DESIGN METAVERSE: DEVELOPING FRAMEWORKS FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- > *Helping users accept their differences through the Metaverse by conceptualizing a Metaverse that is compatible with this objective.*

When discussing the progress the Metaverse can bring in terms of diversity and inclusion, the majority of the consulted 44 experts emphasized that the ability to create highly personalized avatars will allow for the representation of all human characteristics, such as skin tone and color, body shapes, hairstyles, clothing styles, disabilities, and all other physical characteristics. As such, the Metaverse will be a diverse, yet inclusive space, encouraging all users, especially those with disabilities and other vulnerabilities, to use its services according to their needs. Indeed, the Metaverse is aimed at a broad audience, and is expected to meet the needs of all potential users through innovative developments. The devices needed to access the Metaverse experience must be built with physical and mental disabilities or particularities in mind, to ensure accessibility and thus inclusion.

There is also another positive aspect that avatar personalization can bring to users. As many studies point out, including a paper written by Ratan and Al in 2019, the physical resemblance of the avatar to the human person (anthropomorphic and humanoid personalization) allows users to be closer to real world values. This is called the Proteus effect, which tells us that people conform in their behavior and attitudes to the characteristics of their avatar<sup>68</sup>. Thus, the closer the avatar is to the user and his or her moral values, the more likely the player is to feel attached to it and to feel responsible for its actions.

Thus, if the Proteus effect were to be taken into consideration, it would make sense by default to encourage users to create avatars that are possibly close (but not identical) to their image (or to a 'better than self' image), i.e.; by creating avatars with characteristics that are generally considered positive, one would potentially encourage positive and even responsible behavior in the Metaverse<sup>69</sup>. Especially if, as recommended by our *MetaRespect Charter*, avatars are encouraged to wear a sign of commitment to universal values of respect.

<sup>68</sup> RATAN, Rabindra & al, 2020, "[Avatar characteristics induce users' behavioral conformity with small-to-medium effect sizes: a meta-analysis of the proteus effect](#)", *Media Psychology*, vol. 23, no. 5, June 20th.

<sup>69</sup> DILCRAH, 2022, [Civism and video games: insights from the behavioral sciences](#).

## ***IX. Governance of metaverse control or standardization authorities (interoperability, decentralization, regulation of metaverses)***

The question of the governance of controlling authorities is particularly important in the context of the Metaverse and is strongly linked to the notions of interoperability, security and power. The way in which states, regional or international organizations, operators and users should be involved in the regulation of this virtual environment is a complex and rather controversial issue.

It seems that at this point that most of the experts consulted would opt for a decentralized Metaverse, as opposed to a centralized Metaverse. This would certainly give users the power to shape the Metaverse to their needs, making it a more accountable tool. On the other hand, one of the biggest weaknesses of this system would be the decision-making process. It would be less efficient, slower and heterogeneous because many actors would be involved in the process. Each one would have different and often divergent opinions that would have to be reconciled.

In addition, some of the experts interviewed agreed that international standards should be created for good governance of the Metaverse. Experience shows that only international harmonization allows for effective enforcement of the rules. Then, states and operators can impose their own rules in accordance with these international standards. To ensure that standards are respected, some experts have proposed the creation of international regulatory and oversight bodies specific to the Metaverse.

## Proposal 29.

### CREATE A SUPRANATIONAL METAVERSE ETHICS COMMISSION

- > *Creation of a Metaverse Ethics Commission with the possibility of referral (parallel with the European Artificial Intelligence Board foreseen in the text) within the International Metaverses Agency.*

Respect Zone proposes the creation of an independent and expert Commission dedicated to inter-Metaverse ethics, similar to the A.I. ethics team created within Meta in 2018. We propose the creation of a new team dedicated specifically to the Metaverse. Its mission will be to take charge of and address all ethical issues concerning the Metaverse. In addition, this Commission, independent of any Metaverse platform, should also be responsible for overseeing the development of the Metaverse project, from an ethical perspective.

It is essential that all companies that create Metaverses be obliged to set up ethical committees in charge of monitoring the development of the Metaverse and developing and implementing ethical standards, in accordance with national and international law, in particular to decide on the ethics of moderation or over-moderation, conflicts of interest, diversity criteria, reduction of negative bias, definition of sui generis rights of avatars, etc. In parallel to the commissions created within companies, and in particular within their legal departments and ethics committees, it is also important to create an international committee, within the International Metaverse Agency, composed of members of the delegated ethics committees of each company, as well as designated members of specialized NGOs, think tanks and public authorities. All key players must be involved in this ethical oversight process, as the ethics of the virtual world have a strong implication on the ethics and actions that take place offline.

### Proposal 30.

#### **CREATE AN INTERNATIONAL METAVERSE REGULATORY AGENCY FOR THE RESPECT OF DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND DIVERSITY**

- > *Creation of an Independent International Agency for Metaverses whose mission is to regulate, anticipate abuses, define the legal framework and sanction operators (e.g., via Pharos in France), to which the Metaverses Ethics Commission is attached.*

Concerning the governance of the Metaverse, some experts consulted throughout our project proposed the creation of a regulatory or oversight body. Véronique Reille-Soult emphasized the need to set up a Council in charge of monitoring the evolution of the Metaverse, capable of anticipating its potential uses and defining an applicable legal framework. Moreover, this body should also have the power to sanction operators and the duty to accompany victims of cyber-violence and other abuses that occur in the Metaverse (like an ARCOM-type media and platform regulator in France).

Ms. Reille-Soult also believes that the system for reporting illegal behavior in the Metaverse and providing legal assistance and tools to victims should be similar to the Pharos platform, created by the French government in 2009 for this very purpose.<sup>70</sup> This site collects and analyzes reports of illegal behavior and content online, while directing victims to the appropriate authorities for any support, legal advice and medical care they may need.

The point of such an international agency is to provide an independent body which does not favor any single interest group, culture, or system of rights or values. Its goal is diversity and objectivity.

<sup>70</sup> Pharos platform <https://www.internet-signalement.gouv.fr/PharosS1/>

### Proposal 31.

#### **DEFINE A STANDARD ALGORITHM TO GUARANTEE RESPECT FOR DIGITAL HUMAN RIGHTS FOR HEALTHY MODERATION PRACTICES**

> *Preventing cyber-violence and diversity violations to eliminate the risk of discrimination bias.*

Among the experts interviewed, Accuracy believes that operators should be subject to regular monitoring by national and international authorities to ensure their compliance with established standards of diversity and respect. The activities of Metaverse operators should be closely monitored and regularly evaluated by public authorities, given their responsibilities to users and the size of their assets.

The recommendation is that Metaverse platforms would be required to implement algorithms programmed to comply with the Respect Zone charter and these proposals.

Algorithms are able to detect people in the process of committing suicide, so Metaverse operators should equip their codes with this type of detector to help prevent tragedies and cyber violence, when the algorithms show effectiveness. Prof. David Cohen recommends not to allow the use of habit-based algorithms without the consent of the users because these algorithms can reinforce cyber violent behaviors.

Generally speaking, the choice of algorithms and their programming mode affect respect and diversity.

### Proposal 32.

## **DEVELOP AN INCENTIVE GRID FOR OPERATORS TO VALUE RESPECT AND DIVERSITY**

> *Creation of an incentive/penalty grid for metaverses.*

When it comes to punishing cyber-violence, Respect Zone believes in a system of graduated sanctions. Proportional punishment is one of the founding principles of democracy.

This means that for first-time offenders, the sanctions can be quite "light", or just warnings, and then the severity of the sanction increases if the user re-offends and if the offense is more violent than the previous one. Respect Zone's approach to sanctions can be described as "proportional" to the offense committed.

This approach aims to send a clear message: the most important thing is to educate users and make sure they understand the consequences of harassment and damaging violence. They must be given the opportunity to review and pacify their behavior and prove that they can act responsibly. A firm warning or reminder to be respectful is one effective way to combat recidivism for the less serious cyber violence on the scale. Mediation in this sense will benefit from experimentation in the relationships between Metaverse users.

Finally, civic or educational work as an alternative punishment should be encouraged. Exemplarity and rectificatory behavior becomes the norm for treatment.



## ***X. Protection of minors and vulnerable persons***

The expert questionnaire and the hearings we conducted highlighted the importance of protecting users. Protecting users, especially those in vulnerable categories (children, people with disabilities, racial, ethnic and sexual minorities, etc.), should be the top priority for all actors involved in the development and governance of the Metaverse.

Thus, in order to meet this need to protect vulnerable persons, we propose to create secure and exclusive spaces (especially for minors) and reinforced rules for their benefit, while giving parents a central role so that they activate the appropriate parental control and are in no way excluded from the education of their children on the good uses of the Metaverse. Indeed, the Metaverse must not allow minors access to pornography or violent content, nor allow their exploitation (sexual or through child labor).

### Proposal 33.

#### CREATE PROTECTION ZONES FOR MINORS AND REQUIRE APPROPRIATE PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR EACH METAVERSE

- > *Respect zones reserved for minors (metaverses adapted to allow various age groups) + age verification.*

This study suggests that minors' access to the Metaverse should be strictly regulated to protect them from exploitation and violence. However, this does not mean that they should be excluded. Minors should be allowed to use the Metaverse (13+ or all ages, not yet clear), because of its many benefits, especially in terms of immersive learning. To ensure their safety when using the Metaverse, the creation of special protected areas for minors is recommended.

Today, there are already Metaverses that claim to be suitable for children. One example is the Winkyverse, an immersive and educational Metaverse proposed by MainBot, a French company that aims to mix entertainment with education through the products and services they offer to children and adults.<sup>71</sup>

Access to areas reserved for minors should be granted upon presentation of proof of age/identity. Age verification technologies should be improved to make them less invasive of user privacy but effective enough to protect minors and all other users. In addition, these special children's spaces should have a clear educational and mental health focus, in addition to allowing for entertainment and games, to ensure that minors receive the full benefits of immersive technologies.

Age verification is one of the most talked-about, yet controversial, topics for ensuring the protection of minors online (note that Meta has implemented an experiment, reported to be more than 80% effective, carried out with a British start-up and presented at the Peace Forum on 10 November 2022 during the launch of the *Online Child Protection Lab*). Age verification technology can prevent minors from accessing violent or otherwise inappropriate content and thus protect their mental and emotional well-being. In addition, age verification tools can ensure that malicious adults do not have access to safe/underage areas and may not make contact with them.

Of course, while the tool has many advantages, it also comes with a series of technical limitations, most of which are related to privacy. It is difficult to accurately predict, identify or verify a person's age without collecting personal data that most users might not want to submit. Moreover, even if they voluntarily submit their private information, protecting that information from theft or exploitation is difficult to guarantee.

Meta currently uses several age verification tools for some of its services to ensure that minors cannot access adult services<sup>72</sup>. The company is also investing in the development of "*privacy- preserving AI systems*," according to its official website<sup>73</sup>. The development of technology that could enable

<sup>71</sup> The Winkyverse, [Play positive, grow creative. Le premier métaverse gaming et éducatif](#).

<sup>72</sup> Finkle, Erika, 2022, "[Bringing age verification to Facebook Dating](#)", *Meta*, December 5th.

<sup>73</sup> Finkle, Erika, 2022, "[How Meta uses AI to better understand people's ages on our platforms](#)", *Meta*, June 23rd.

non-intrusive "scanning" of users who wish to access age-restricted areas can address privacy concerns and misuse of personal data.

During the course of our Action Plan Report, it was noted that the Metaverse can be particularly dangerous for women and for those who identify as part of the LGBTQ community. Indeed, these two groups are among the most vulnerable on social networks.

In their report, *"The Metaverse: another cesspool of toxic content,"* the NGO Sumofus cites numerous forms of sexual violence committed against some female researchers. To describe these acts, they used terms such as "virtual gang rape", "verbal and sexual harassment", "virtual groping"<sup>74</sup>. The report also notes that homophobic slurs were directed at researchers, along with other more general forms of violence. A case of perceived sexual assault committed against a woman has fueled controversy on this subject, surrounding not only the Meta metaverse at the time in testing, but also the real impact of immersive environments and technologies in general.<sup>74</sup>

In order to protect all Metaverse users, but especially those who are more at risk of being victims of violence, Respect Zone suggests the creation of a Metaverse divided into several "zones", each with a different scope. In particular, Respect Zone proposes labeled spaces, spaces where respect is over-guaranteed (by the terms of the #Metarespect Charter proposed here in the Action Plan) and users are protected from cyber-violence by choice of either the operators or the users.

"Safe" spaces should certainly be a priority for the Metaverse creators so that users feel comfortable exploring the Metaverse.

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<sup>74</sup> SINGH, Katherine, 2022, ["In the Metaverse, sexual assault is very real - So what can we do legally?"](#), *Refinery29*, June 13th.

### Proposal 34.

#### **TRAIN, INFORM AND EQUIP PARENTS: ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN USE THE METAVERSE SAFELY AND RESPECTFULLY**

> *Responsible and accountable involvement of parents in their child's use of the Metaverse.*

Parents have a central role to play in understanding and taking responsibility for their children's access to the Internet and should be responsible for educating them about digital compliance. These precautions need not be diminished for the Metaverse. To do so, they should not only educate themselves and be informed of best practices for safe surfing but also equip themselves. Parents have only recently begun to understand that they must take this responsibility seriously. Parental awareness is therefore necessary.

Thus, it is strongly recommended that Metaverse providers ensure that user guides on their services and parental control tools are made available to all parents who wish to allow their children to use the Metaverse.

It is also recommended that parents participate in the awareness campaigns and workshops suggested at the beginning of the report to learn about the Metaverse, its dangers, and the best practices for keeping their children safe.

These are the types of issues addressed by the Parents' Committee for the Digital World, created in France by an inter-ministerial committee under the Ministry of the Interior. Without the involvement and education of parents, efforts to protect minors online are moot.

### Proposal 35.

#### IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT ONLINE ADDICTION AMONG MINORS

- > *Introduction of legal and technical frameworks introducing "age-appropriate design" in social networking areas targeting minors.*

After hearing from Mr. Konstantinos Karachalios, managing director of IEEE SA, we suggest introducing age-appropriate design frameworks at least for social metaverse platforms targeting minors.

This should be understood as an integral part of national digital transformation and child welfare anti-addiction strategies.

Indeed, children represent one-third of the world's Internet users. They benefit enormously from digital connectivity through access to information, online education and social connections with friends and family. At the same time, children are particularly vulnerable to threats to their privacy, safety and security, which can have a negative impact on their mental and physical well-being. It is therefore proposed that specific legislation be put in place to prevent the collection of children's personal data by the algorithmic systems of platforms. This is to protect children from addiction. The proposal does not aim to legislate on screen time but to protect children's private data in order to avoid their addiction linked to the exploitation of their habits.

In the UK, this has resulted in the Age-Appropriate Design Code (AADC; also known as the Children's Code), which came into effect in September 2021. The Code aims to transform the way digital technologies can interact or engage with children. It aims to gradually shift the burden of factual responsibility for the welfare of children online from parents to platforms.

Of course, independent technical communities or NGOs such as Respect Zone should be approached.

In fact, to overcome adversarial lobbying efforts, the U.K. ICO turned to the standards association IEEE SA to provide neutral expertise on the technical aspects of the proposed Code. Parallel to the development of the Code, UK legislators have used the IEEE standards process to initiate standards projects to help stakeholders properly assess the impact of digital technologies on children while complying with the provisions of the Code.

Indeed, this effort has had repercussions throughout Europe, giving rise to a project under the auspices of CEN/CENELEC, aimed at the governance of children's data, which the IEEE has conducted in partnership with the OVE (the Austrian Electrotechnical Association), which also acts as the secretariat. AFNOR is also participating in and supporting this project.

It is therefore proposed that a strong governance framework be put in place that empowers minors (under 18), while respecting childhood and protecting children's mental health.

This framework should be built around the following key principles as suggested by the above-mentioned Codes, such as recognizing that a child is anyone under the age of 18; that ultimately children should be protected wherever they are online, not just where we want them to be; that they should benefit from a high level of protection from cyber-violence (including privacy) by design and by default; and that child-friendly language should be used.

## « I dream of a Metaverse of Respect and Diversity because ... »

« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that allows everyone to be themselves in a metaverse extension of the "real world" and another in a metaverse of fantasy, an environment where the rules of the game are understood and accepted in full awareness because they are in fact understood . »



Christophe Roquilly, professor at EDHEC Business School where he directs the EDHEC Augmented Law Institute

« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that encourages me to discover, share and learn while respecting the rights and freedoms of others who will respect mine as well. »



Marie L'Hermite and Aliénor Kamara Cavarroc, lawyers

« It is the same dream I have for our poor earthly society... A peaceful society, where poverty would be eradicated and where every human being would be guaranteed a decent life. »



Catherine Kessedjian, Professor Emeritus of the University Panthéon-Assas

« I dream of a positive, inspiring, uplifting Metaverse in which we would enjoy spending time. »



Jeremie Mani, CEO Webhelp Canada & Co-founder of altruwe

« I dream of a trusted, regulated, decentralized and interoperable Metaverse. »

Accuracy, an independent French consulting firm



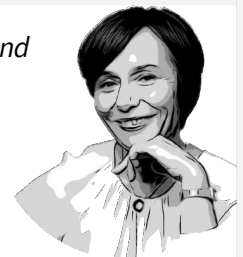
« I dream of a Metaverse of... Social Justice. »

Marc Tassé, Canadian forensic accountant



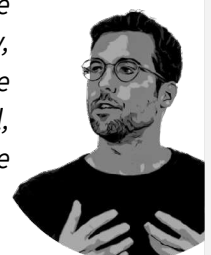
« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that would also foster the development and sharing of knowledge by and for all. »

Anne Cousin, associate lawyer at Herald



« I don't dream of the Metaverse, because the way social platforms are going right now, the Metaverse is shaping up to be a nightmare, a dystopia. To prevent that, we need to get things right very quickly, and that will be difficult. I dream of the physical world we have, which is unique, and which we are destroying. But if we must dream of a Metaverse, then I dream of an open, interoperable, neutral, responsible Metaverse, belonging to no one and to everyone, and where human rights would be respected. »

Xavier Brandao, President and co-founder of #jesuislà



# CHAPTER 3. SUMMARY OF RESPECT ZONE'S QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE YOUTH STUDY

*“How do you dream of respect and  
diversity in the Metaverse?”*





## Context and objective of the consultation

This study is part of Respect Zone's drafting of this action plan report, which aims to put forward proposals to render the Metaverse a place secured by norms of respect and inclusion.

In parallel to these expert contributions, we consulted young users aged 16 to 25 on the topic. The results show that the experts and the young people consulted had similar opinions regarding the benefits and challenges of the Metaverse. It seems that the opportunities to learn new things, socialize, and express themselves are the biggest benefits. In terms of challenges, cyber-violence, including grooming and hate speech, is the most cited problem.

Respect Zone believes that, in order to propose the most effective recommendations to ensure a safe and responsible Metaverse, both experts and users (especially young people, since they are more present on current social media platforms and one can imagine that they will be more present in the Metaverse) must take part in the conversation.

### Key Point

The survey conducted via the Heaven agency revealed a number of conclusions. First of all, even though the term "metaverse" is widely known, the concept seems inconsistently understood among young people (48% claim to know the concept) and arouses a very mixed interest (58% claim not to want to use it). The apparent lack of enthusiasm for this technology may be linked to mistrust of the impact of the Metaverse. This skepticism can also be seen in the majority of young people surveyed who said the Metaverse should only be available to those over 18 years of age.

As much for the benefits (creativity, communication...) as for the risks of cyber-violence (grooming, cyber-harassment...), the Metaverse appears above all as a space where everything that already exists online will also be possible, only amplified. The new forms of cyber-violence we anticipate are mainly related to the representation of the avatar, which could become the receptacle of hybrid attacks, both digital and tangible, on the people they represent and embody.

The proposals to secure the metaverse underline above all the need to establish clear rules for all, a minimum age of access (18 years?), the exercise of effective moderation and the existence of penalties that are actually applied when warranted (from online banning to being brought before "real" justice).

The survey in detail

Methodology

a. The survey

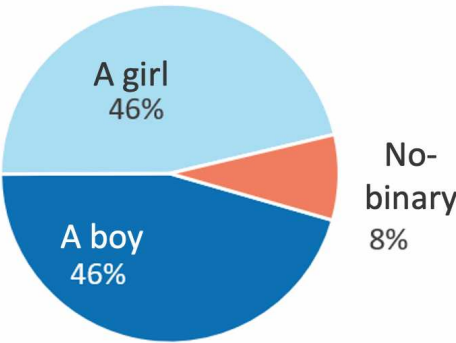
For this survey, Respect Zone and Heaven used a self-administered online questionnaire. Participants were recruited via an advertising campaign broadcasted through the Respect Zone account on Facebook & Instagram that redirected to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was targeted to young people aged 16 to 25 living in metropolitan France and who listed gaming, the Metaverse or Fortnite among their interests.

The survey took place between 11/25/2022 and 1/13/2023. Some of the young people who completed our online questionnaire also agreed to meet with us and tell us more about their opinions of the Metaverse. 7 young people were interviewed and the videos are linked in the appendices.

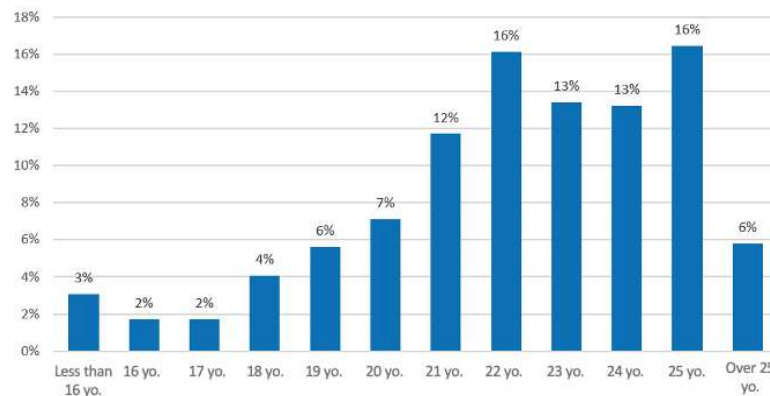
It is also important to specify that, as an introduction to the questionnaire, the following succinct definition of the concept of Metaverse was displayed to all respondents: “By metaverse we mean a *digital environment in which we are represented by an avatar.*” Since a reasonable number of young people claim not to be very familiar with the Metaverse, this somewhat reductive definition might have been the only information they had on the subject. This should be kept in mind when reviewing the responses to this questionnaire.

b. Profile of respondents

**589 youths** responded to our online survey. In terms of **gender**, 46% identify as girls, 46% as boys, and 8% as non-binary. There is a very good gender balance among respondents.



With regard to **age**, despite originally targeting 16-25 year olds, the questionnaire was shared with and distributed to a few people of different ages, particularly younger people. As this was an open consultation, we decided to keep their answers in the analysis.



## Analysis of results

This section provides an overview of the responses received for each question and a brief analysis of the data.

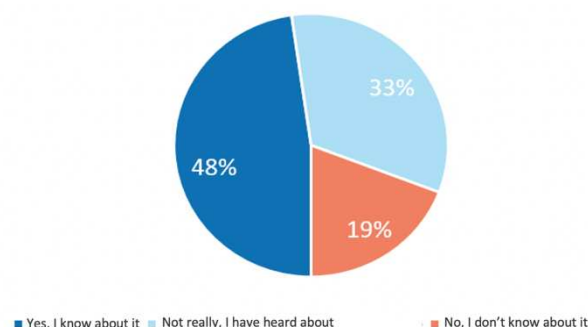
### 1. Do you consider yourself familiar with the concept of the Metaverse?

The process of recruiting respondents yielded responses from young people, nearly half of whom said they were "familiar" with the Metaverse concept.

**Boys were significantly more likely than girls to report being familiar with the Metaverse (64% vs. 48%).**

Among girls, the most common response was that they had heard of the Metaverse (40%).

n=589

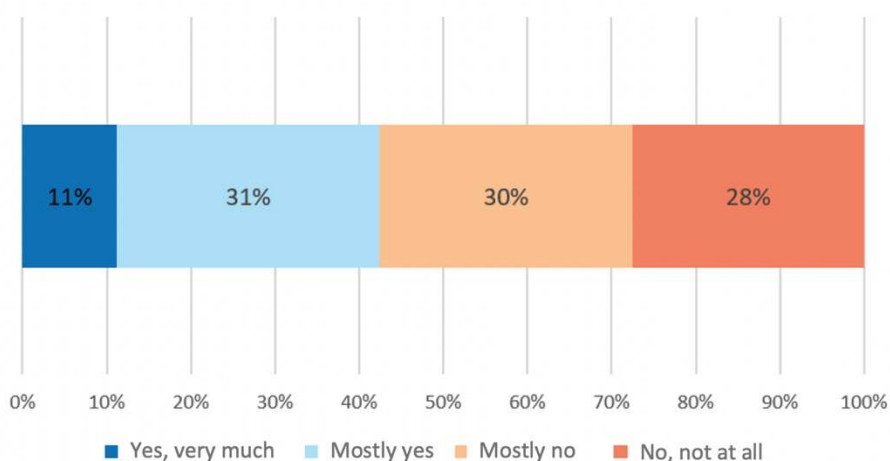


## 2. Would you like to use the Metaverse?

There were mixed responses on the perceived value of using the metaverse in a concrete way.

**With 58% saying "no" (mostly no or not at all), more than half of respondents today say they have no desire to use the metaverse.**

There was no significant difference in interest between girls and boys, although we might have imagined a greater appeal to male gamers.



**n= 589**

Although we did not ask the same question of the experts, they seemed more enthusiastic about the possibility of using the metaverse, with few seeing little or no need for it.

## 3. Would you like to use the Metaverse? Why ?

A very strong dichotomy between :

- some respondents who were attracted by the Metaverse's promises of a form of protection or surpassing of reality
- a majority of respondents who were skeptical about the usefulness of the concept.

**42% Yes**

- "Incredible potential "
- "Meeting people, trying new things "

- *“ Because it has to be cool ”*
- *“ It's quite intriguing and it's still virtual, I'm not comfortable irl, it would certainly help me work on myself ”*
- *“ I'm curious to discover ”*
- *“ To be protected from violence ”*
- *“ Escape reality and live in alternate one ”*

#### **58% No**

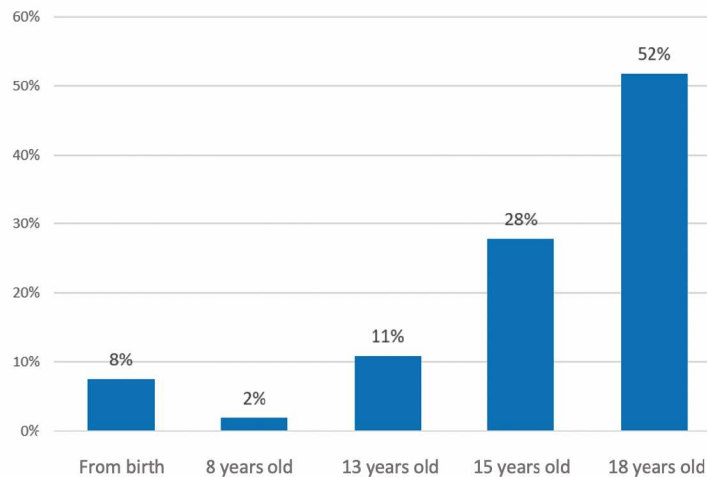
- *“ Absolutely useless ”*
- *“ There are already plenty of alternatives to stay in touch with your loved ones without having to go through a virtual world ”*
- *“ It's an element that doesn't fit my generation ”*
- *“ It's busted, there's a real world outside ”*
- *“ It's an anti-utopia that I'm not into ”*
- *“ I'll wait until it's free ”*
- *“ There are already a lot of natural environments that could be called Metaverse but aren't ”*
- *“ Risk of confinement and too many possible abuses ”*
- *“ Could be kind of useful for work. Barely ”*

**n= 153**

#### 4. At what age do you think we could be able to use the Metaverse?

Despite their youth (or because of it?), a little more than half of the respondents consider that the metaverse should only be used from the age of 18.

...



n= 560

#### 5. At what age do you think we could be able to use the Metaverse? Why?

The majority of young people, as well as the majority of experts we interviewed, believe that the Metaverse should only be available to people over 18. Few think the Metaverse is appropriate for children.

To justify a certain age level for using the metaverse, respondents rely primarily on arguments related to:

- the developmental **maturity** of the underage user
- the user's ability to manage and **take responsibility** for potentially risky situations
- the importance of developing skills in the "real world" first

Indeed, the Metaverse can be a dangerous environment for minors and other vulnerable groups. However, Respect Zone believes that, if properly supervised by their parents, minors should be allowed to use special areas exclusively for minors. In addition to age verification technologies to keep minors out of the 18+ areas of the Metaverse, having minors-only areas, or allowing minors to browse in "labeled" areas, will ensure that minors can also benefit from the positive aspects of the Metaverse, including immersive learning and socialization.

**10% 8 years or less**

“ At what age do you think we should be able to live on earth? Should the fact that this is another "universe" change the answer? I don't think so.”

“ The age limit has never prevented the behaviors it is supposed to stop.”

“ Everyone can do what they want... ”

**39% from 13 or 15 years old**

“ Because social media is 13+”

“ You have to know the difference between metaverse and real life ”

“ At 15 you get to high school, your logical reasoning is more developed than it was in middle school.”

“ It's a good age to start building a digital identity ”

“ For real, kids would love it and would have so much fun on it ”

**52% over 18 year old**

“ It can be very dangerous, especially for mental health ”

“ Because the real world is already dangerous, the virtual world even more so ”

“ Different interactions might require a certain legal understanding that minors don't have ”

“ You have to be able to be held accountable for your words and actions in order to maintain the trust and safety of users

“ I put 18 years because I think there are and will always be big perverts (even pedophiles) in the metaverse ”

“ I would have preferred 21, like the international age of majority ”

**n= 133**

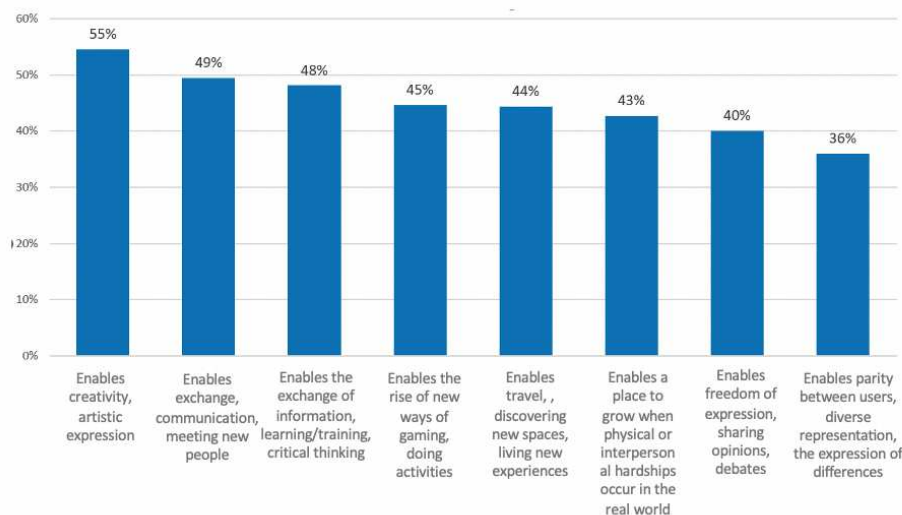
## 6. What major positive changes would you like to see from the Metaverse?

The perceived benefits of the metaverse appear to be several and very diverse, no one benefit stands out.

**The development of creativity is nevertheless the most cited benefit. It is followed by the positive effects on communication and learning.**

Among the "other" benefits freely cited :

- *“Absolute freedom of expression ”*
- *“Limits travel (business travel) and it(s a good tool for visual industries (fashion for example)”*
- *“Shopping experiences ”*
- ...



**n= 372**

While the youth primarily emphasized the positive impact of the Metaverse in terms of creativity, artistic expression, communication, and learning, experts also emphasized the impact of immersive technologies and the Metaverse on education and health (especially mental health). Overall, they placed more emphasis on innovation in the key areas of education and health than youth did.

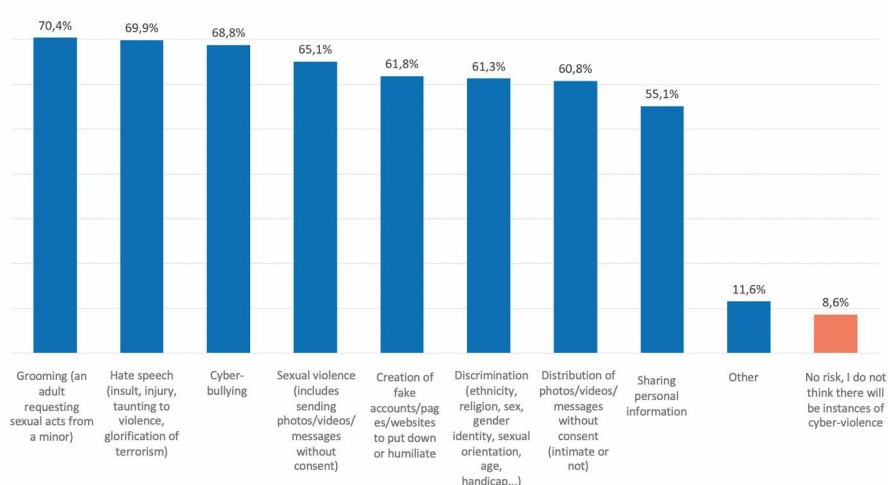


## 7. What are the main forms of cyber-violence you worry about in the Metaverse?

Respondents largely anticipate finding on the metaverse the multiple forms of cyberviolence that already exist online.

*“I've been a victim of cyberstalking, and the risks checked above are not unique to the metaverse. You never know what can happen and who it can happen with.”*

**Grooming, hate speech, and cyberstalking are the most cited cyber-violences that can occur within the metaverse.**



**n= 372**

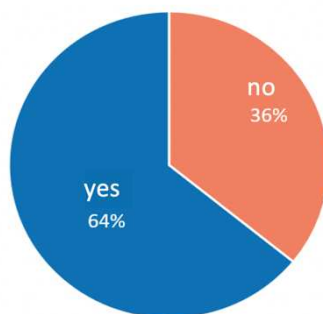
As experts have said, the biggest challenge of the Metaverse is its potential to replicate and even amplify the multiple forms of violence that already exist in the digital sphere. Because of its immersive, real-world nature, cyber-violence in the Metaverse can have an even greater negative impact on users' mental health, among other things. Youth and experts cite violence against children, violence and discrimination against certain vulnerable or minority groups, and sexual violence, among others.

## 8. In your opinion, could new forms of cyber-violence exist in the Metaverse?

Once again, young people are on the same page as the majority of experts consulted concerning the potential of the Metaverse to give rise to new forms of cyber-violence

**A large majority of respondents emphasize this potential negative aspect.**

More girls feel this way (71% vs. 57%) than boys.



n=589

### 9. If so, which ones?

**Respondents mainly imagine new forms of cyber-violence that are characterized by the fact that they are exercised on the representation of the avatar.**

Moreover, as the metaverse conveys the idea of enabling an "augmentation" or exacerbation of experiences, it is expected that this effect could be applied to already existing cyber-violences.

*“Avatar/account deletion, targeted hacking ”*

*“The mockery of the person's avatar and the way they speak and express themselves ”*

*“Virtual mass beating ”*

*“Virtual rape ”*

*“Sexual violence of a more corporeal nature (through virtual proximity and representation of bodies)”*

*“Virtual 'physical' violence ”*

*“An exacerbation of those that already exist ”*

*“A higher stage of all types of violence that already exist ”*

*“Cyber mugging ”*

*“Depending on the paid content, theft of what is owned in-metaverse.”*

*“NFT trafficking ”*

*“Concern with e-reputation could become even more present at work ”*

*“Cancel culture, self- appointed jury ”*

...

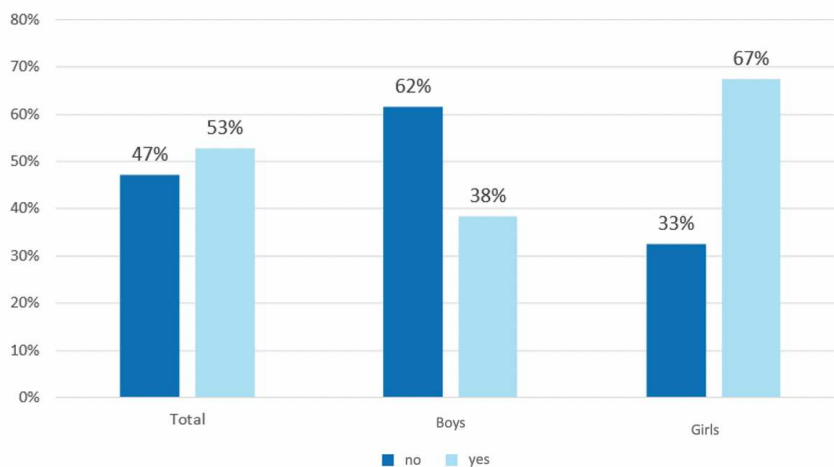
N= 86

## 10. Do you think that avatars should be subject to the same rules as physical persons?

Although the total number of respondents is divided into two equal groups, this conceals a great gender disparity in responses.

Girls are much more inclined to consider that avatars should respect the same rules as physical persons, whereas the majority among boys think the opposite.

This is the first disparity between experts and young people. While very few experts disagree that avatars should be subject to the same rules as the physical person, young people's opinions are more divided: 47% disagree and do not think that avatars should be subject to the same rules as the physical person and 53% think they should. Those who disagree point to the "virtual" nature of the avatar, arguing that this makes it "not real". Experts warn against this argument that the virtual world or online sphere is not "real", because this mentality can have serious repercussions in terms of undesirable behavior



n= 371

## 11. Why?

Respondents who believe that the same rules should be applied to avatars as to physical persons see this as a necessary means of regulation to avoid harmful behavior.

Opponents of this idea emphasize the virtual or fictional character of the avatar and the situations encountered.

**47% yes**

“ A person who harms another using an avatar deserves an equivalent punishment ”

“ There could be physical violence between avatars that would influence physical people ”

“ Harassment on the internet is punishable by law.”

“ To avoid deviant behavior and not to incite hatred even virtually ”

“ If we don't do this, people might think they can afford to be uncivilized and socially unfit, under the guise of being a persona and not a physical person ”

...

**53% no**

“ It's an avatar so literally not a physical person ”

“ It's fictional. As long as it doesn't affect people IRL (including sexual violence and harassment which are to be banished), we don't care, it's a role, we can play it however we want ”

“ Because they don't exist. They are avatars ”

“ Because avatars do not exist, it is the physical person who controls them that is subject to rules, no need to create new ones, it would be pure duplication ”

“ Because it would be impossible to enforce.”

“ Should we enforce the Geneva Convention in Call of Duty? ”

...

**n = 93**

## 12. What do you think it would take to ensure a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse?

The proposals made express 3 expectations in particular:

- **Clarity / transparency of the rules** governing the metaverse
- The implementation of active and tangible **moderation** procedures (reporting...)
- **Respect for and an efficient, effective application of the sentences** or sanctions pronounced

*“ I think we should check for fake accounts and have more security ”*

*“ I don't think this concept should ever see the light of day ”*

*“An active staff that is on the lookout for the slightest hiccup ”*

*“Seriously evaluating the reported accounts would be good enough ”*

*“Consideration of all complaints filed with supporting evidence ”*

*“A true independent and universal regulation, just like laws in the real world ”*

*“That it's free and you don't get "extra features" by paying more. In essence, all accounts are really equal.”*

*“For children, that families take virtual harassment seriously. For adults, facilities to contact the justice system of its network and the guarantee of a real follow-up on complaints by the metaverse's authorities.”*

*“Provide safe spaces for different groups (minors, women, people of color) ”*

*“Age minimum to register. Parental permission required for minors.”*

*“Quick and efficient contact with a Metaverse police officer. Or a very advanced AI, although a real person would be better in case of big trouble. With a new world comes new laws.”*

*“Effective moderation by humans, preferably with AI so sophisticated that it understands dark humor and sarcasm that is not intended to harm the person in question .”*

*“A reputation rating system somewhat like China with good and bad points to encourage positive behavior.”*

*“Having a digital identity where an individual cannot hide behind an avatar and act without consequence.”*

*“There would have to be a certification or IP banning system, so malicious people won't be able to run into "good" users.”*

*“Cancel all people who would engage in racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, transphobic, binary, Islamophobic, misogynistic etc. speech.”*

*“Real criminal penalties for the accused.”*

*“Clearly defined rules in this sense with simple sanctions (bans). Have the servers managed by their creator and remove any borderline servers.”*

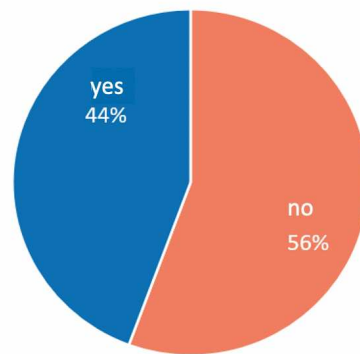
*“International cooperation, a strict policy of personal data protection, a choice of interaction possibilities according to people and their status, and access to other users' information.”*

...

**n = 123**

### 13. Could a code of conduct signed by users help limit cyber-violence?

One of the biggest discrepancies between youth and expert responses is the usefulness of a code of conduct to limit cyber-violence. The majority of youth surveyed do not see much use for it, probably because they compare it to the terms of use, which most people simply skip when they want to access a website or online service. The code of conduct imagined by Respect Zone is interactive, taking advantage of the immersive aspect of the metaverse, and educational in nature, focusing on equipping users with the skills and knowledge to navigate the metaverse responsibly.



n= 266

### Conclusion of our youth study

Overall, the results of this study highlight that youth are aware of both the great potential of Metaverse and, more importantly, of its negative aspects. To address these issues and ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all future users, youth and experts agree that the focus should be on creating clear and enforceable rules, effective moderation, and a penalty system that is proportional to the harm done. This report focuses on these practical solutions.

## The ideal Metaverse, through to eyes of youth

**I dream of a Metaverse...** All respondents were given the opportunity to continue this sentence to summarize their hopes and expectations for the Metaverse.

In general, they want a fun and safe environment where they can express themselves freely. Young people want a Metaverse that is accessible, where they can make friends, learn new things, and have new experiences. However, like some of the experts we consulted, some young people are rather critical of the notion of the Metaverse and do not want it to become a reality.

*"I dream of a metaverse where I can sometimes break free from the physical rules in complete freedom (possibility of large-scale GTA-Minecraft-like creation and destruction, being omniscient, etc.), and sometimes exchange and have social experiences in an adapted replica of physical society with additional features."*

*"That is a social hub or an effective, reliable and stable workplace."*

*"That is not just ruled by big corporations, that is collaborative and open source."*

*"I dream of a Metaverse that would allow me to discover infinite worlds."*

*"I dream of a Metaverse that breaks the codes of language, border, and community barriers."*

*"Where people don't impose their opinions as absolute facts and you could run into hundreds of thousands of Naruto/Pikachu/Baby Yodas greeting each other nicely because anyway, they were free skins, not NFTs."*

*"Where I could fly like a bird, accessible to all."*

*"Where poorly educated people could be more educated. Where people stop kidding themselves about the climate, declining wildlife... A place where people would wake up and start thinking."*

*"I dream of a Metaverse where I can create what I want, dance, do and all sorts of activities like for example run an anti-harassment unit or do yoga or aikido or judo or boxing..."*

*"I dream of an accessible metaverse."*

*"That stays respectful without being excessive where you can discover, learn and enjoy yourself."*

*"Respectful, open to others, curious, rich in knowledge and sharing."*

*"Where I could sometimes escape and enjoy the solitude surrounded by breathtaking images."*

*"Where we could try on the lives we don't have."*



*"Of love."*

*"I dream of a Metaverse that is good for the climate, and improves people (development, knowledge)."*

*"I dream of a metaverse that wouldn't exist."*

*"Unique, where true freedom reigns and we join servers that suit us. And live better."*

*"Conflict-free, with a beautiful community, things to discover every day, cultures that are exchanged, advice, support, help, knowledge... a peaceful, quiet and accessible place."*

*"It would be nice to have a universe that opens up the realm of possibilities and allows us to experiment with things we wouldn't dare to do in "real life" (something to be nuanced, but that's the idea) and not be ashamed of failing."*

*"Where I could make a lot of money to make ends meet!"*

*"Where no more personal limits would exist, (physical limits, health and social inequalities). It should not be that the social environment where the origins of each one cannot be found."*

*"Where the struggles of everyday life would not be echoed within it; without forgetting our real life, just escaping it for a moment."*

*"I dream of a metaverse where people aren't too dumb and understand that you just have to take your helmet off to get out."*

*"Without institutional and corporate oversight."*

*"I dream of a metaverse that would be useful to the world in terms of technological advancement."*

*"I dream that this ridiculous project will stop dead in its tracks and that the huge financial mess it represents will be used for useful things."*

*"That doesn't isolate its users from the real world to push them to consume."*

*"In which I would not feel oppressed."*

*"I dream of a metaverse similar to Ready Player One."*

*"Where people won't be as dumb as they are in the real world."*

*"Where I could feel the presence of distant relatives."*

*"Where impunity for hatred will not be possible like it is currently on the internet."*

*"I dream of an open source, self-hosted metaverse with the ability to go through anonymizing networks like Tor."*

*"Je rêve que ça ne tourne pas au cauchemar. Métavers ou pervers ? Cela dépendra d'efforts concertés d'éthiciens, d'ingénieurs concepteurs de ces plateformes, et de régulateurs européens éclairés. En attendant bravo à RZ et aux contributeurs de cette étude pour cette importante initiative."*

# **CHAPTER 4. SUMMARY OF THE INTERVIEW WITH 44 EXPERTS & VERBATIM**



In order to get an up-to-date understanding of the trends and relevant reflections in our Report - Action Plan, we have chosen to interview experts from different sectors. The approach is thus multidisciplinary. The aim is to obtain a study based on problems and issues that are as close to reality as possible. We interviewed a panel of 44 experts and figures in various fields (law, science, economics, ministries, higher education). Most of the people consulted were based in France, but foreign experts also participated. The consultation took place throughout the second half of 2022. The list of interviewees is attached as well as the methodology and framework note used to define this written and in some cases oral interview.

Each expert was asked a series of 28 questions. In order to summarize the main ideas, we have reproduced the questions below as we asked them and illustrated them with quotes from some of the experts.

## I. Introduction part

### 1. What is your definition of the Metaverse?

The Metaverse, as envisioned by gaming companies and social media platforms, is more of an abstract concept, evolving over time and in line with technological developments in the field of augmented reality and artificial intelligence. There is no consensus definition, which is why we asked the experts and personalities we interviewed to explain their perspectives on the Metaverse. Although there are notable differences between their conceptions, most of them insisted on some generally accepted characteristics, such as (1) immersiveness, (2) a three-dimensional aspect and (3) a combination of Virtual, Augmented Reality and Artificial Intelligence technologies. There is also the technical mode of access, via a helmet or glasses or without accessories. The experts underlined that there can be a plurality of metaverses and that these metaverses open towards various worlds. In Mark Zuckerberg's vision of the Meta, the Metaverse would become an extension of our reality and therefore probably start from a virtual representation of it. Then, some experts think that the Metaverse can give access to a purely fictitious world, a world of entertainment. Thus,

#### Verbatim

According to **Accuracy** “ *The Metaverse is like a virtual world, decentralized and immersive, in which users wear unique virtual identities in the form of avatars. It is now a promise, a promise of the next generation of digital experiences, of total immersion and connection through three-dimensional spaces. It will be able to transform the way we work, buy, communicate and consume content.* ”

Indeed, *"It all depends on the type of metaverse. Indeed, metaverses do not - and will not - all have the same purpose. Like any community of individuals, it can have different purposes. Thus, it can be a purely fictitious universe, where the projection of the individual can be totally fanciful and respond to very permissive codes. It can also be a universe that is the "simple" representation in a digital environment of the life we lead elsewhere,"* concludes **Christophe Roquilly**.

« A network of **social interaction**, in 3D, with **a certain degree of immersion**, which is not yet clearly defined (it may be virtual reality and true immersiveness or augmented reality techniques and more limited immersiveness). The Metaverse is going to be a **"digital city"**, where there will be **social and political interactions between all digital beings**. »

— • • • —  
**Alexei Grinbaum, Philosopher and physicist, research director at the Larsim laboratory of CEA- Saclay**



## 2. What is your definition of an avatar?

Most experts agree that avatars should be considered an extension of the user's personality. In this hypothesis, the liability would be the same as in the material world. The user would thus be directly responsible and could be held responsible for the behavior of his avatar in the metaverse.

The avatars chosen according to the proposed options can be highly customizable virtual representations commonly called anthropomorphism. In addition, some of them have already introduced key concepts that clarify their vision for the development of the Metaverse, such as interoperability. This is the ability to move from one metaverse to another with your avatar. When developing a proposal, we must take into account the existence of avatars of non-person legal entities, such as companies, political parties, associations and institutions. Finally, the expert's answers show the importance of keeping a place for fiction, games and entertainment in the Metaverse.

### Verbatim

Without addressing the notion of anonymity at this stage, experts like **Cécile Théard-Jallu and Guillaume Jagerschmidt** compare the avatar to the mask of confidentiality. For Ambassador **Henri Verdier**, it is the pictorial equivalent of the pseudonym. Finally, for Mr. **Nicolas Vayatis**, it is an extension of the physical and moral personality of the user.



« Avatars are **digital individuals**, behind which we can find **humans (natural persons), companies (legal persons) or even machines that are not persons**. Humans can have **several avatars**, one can multiply, and therefore one should make sure that all **avatars respect the rules of good conduct**. »

— • • •

**Alexei Grinbaum, Philosopher and physicist, research director at the Larsim laboratory of CEA- Saclay**



« [The avatar is] A digital **object that has** the appearance that the human user who creates it chooses and is **named by its inventor**. »

— • • •

**Marie L'Hermite, Lawyer**



« A **multidimensional pseudonym** that allows a human being (?) to act without revealing his identity in "real life", an identity that is eventually known by the operator who provides this actor with the services necessary to act in the Metaverse .»

— • • •

**Catherine Kessedjian, Professor Emeritus of the University of Panthéon-Assas**



« On a personal level, I define it as **an extension of my physical and moral personality**. »

— • • •

**Nicolas Vayatis, Co-founder and Director of the Borelli Center**



### 3. What kinds of advances in and opportunities for respect, diversity and inclusion is the Metaverse likely to bring?

The Metaverse has enormous potential to revolutionize medicine and more specifically surgery, professional training, education, entertainment and finance. The list is obviously not exhaustive. Beyond these advantages, the Metaverse is seen as likely to bring important benefits to individual freedoms, notably freedom of expression and access to knowledge and professional training.

#### Verbatim

For **Frédéric Bardeau**, the Metaverse is an opportunity to reflect on a better way to guarantee "*the protection of fragile people (children) or those who are discriminated against, the respect of human rights, **diverse representation***", but also to develop "*codes of conduct and **inclusive governance***".

In terms of competition, **Jérémie Mani** notes that "*Metavers has a vast potential to challenge existing digital monopolies (...) and to help companies test new ideas*".

Finally, the Metaverse is a means of "*breaking down existing social boundaries*" and of promoting social inclusion, which inherits the Internet's original, unfulfilled promise to "*allow everyone to have access to the same resources without social distinction*" but "*it will be necessary to establish 'rules' and avoid relying solely on artificial intelligence, which often reproduces the biases of the real world,*" concludes **Véronique Reille-Soult** on this topic.

« The avatar contributes to **gender respect, diversity respect, inclusion**, and **provides an escape** from unpleasant realities . »

— ...

**Accuracy, French independent consulting firm**

The logo for Accuracy, featuring a red location pin icon above the word "Accuracy" in a red serif font.

« So it's an opportunity and an advantage to carry values **of solidarity and humanism**. »

— ...

**Laurent Bitouzet, Commander of the National Gendarmerie Officers School**



#### 4. What kinds of risks and challenges to respect, diversity and inclusion is the Metaverse likely to bring?

Aware of the dangers of the Metaverse, notably cyber-violence, verbal and physical aggression, harassment, and discrimination, the experts warn of the need to be particularly vigilant. The effects on victims could be amplified by the realistic nature of the Metaverse. The virtual reality of the Metaverse, so close to "material" reality, could have a greater impact on users.

##### Verbatim

**Dr. Catriona Wallace** fears a deregulated Metaverse where prioritizing respect for diversity and inclusion is not at the heart of the business model - in general - of platform operators .

« **Protection of the vulnerable** (children) or **discriminated** against, respect for human rights, diverse representation, codes of conduct and **inclusive governance**. »

— . . .

**Frédéric Bardeau, President and co-founder Simplon.co**



« The metaverse can also be conceived as **an educational, awareness-raising prevention space** for acts of discrimination and cyber-violence. »

— . . .

**Christiane Féral-Schuhl, Lawyer specializing in new technologies and computer law**





« The metaverse essentially contains **ungoverned worlds with few or no rules, laws or regulations**. The metaverse platform owners often have business models designed to engage participants in order to create monetisation opportunities and do not appear to prioritize respect, diversity and inclusion. »

— ...

**Dr. Catriona Wallace, Fondatrice de Responsible Metaverse Alliance.**



« As has been the case with social networks, the Metaverse can quickly turn into a **violent, vulgar and intolerant place**. We have to be careful that this doesn't happen, because users could **feel these aggressions even more deeply** because of the immersion offered by metavers.. »

— ...

**Colette Bouckaert and Jean-Marie Cavada, Secretary General and President of iDfRights**



«The possibility of choosing Avatars to explore this digital world can bring out **the risk of denying differences** (I choose my Avatar not according to who I am, but according to who I would have liked to be) or **artificially increasing them (overrepresentation of communities)**. »

— ...

**Christophe Torrisi, Head of the "Economic Intelligence and Security" department at IHEMI**



« The Metaverse adds an additional dimension that is still unknown: the management of one's avatar in a virtual reality space and the impact on the perception of what is real or virtual (especially for younger people ). »

— ...

**Axelle Desaint, Director of Safer Internet Day**



## A. Avatar and virtual identity

### 5. Do you think we should be allowed multiple avatars?

Existing metaverses emphasize the freedom of exploration and expression granted to their users. Respondents think it would be good to have different avatars for different occasions. A recurring idea is to differentiate between personal and professional avatars. Others think that avatars could be different for different types of Metaverses (game vs. real-world reproduction, for example). However, some of them, concerned about the security issues that could arise, argue for a universal avatar that would be a faithful representation of the user. But an overwhelming majority of experts agree that users should be allowed to create multiple avatars, just as we are now able to have different accounts on social networks.

#### Verbatim

For **Christophe Roquilly**, his vision is clear: *"in totally fantasy metaverse, it is up to the metaverse editor (or to the community in totally decentralized metaverse) to decide if a user can have one or several avatars. In metaverse that are a digital extension of the "real world", a user should only have one avatar".* The general view is well represented by **Accuracy**: *"A user should be free to establish one or more self-representative identities (necessary for some, but not all, experiences), and create one or more self-representative embodiments (avatars) ".*

« **The avatar must be connected to its creator. An individual can create several and say which ones are theirs.** »

— . . .

**David Cohen, Head of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris**



« **Yes! Absolutely! But each user using one or more avatars must be able to be identified by the platform.** »

— . . .

**Serge Tisseron, Doctor of Psychology and founder and president of the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC)**



« The answer to this question must be able to leave as much room as possible for **the expression of individual freedom of choice**. To the extent that it is a digital extension of the person, an individual should be able to have an avatar and modulate the number of accounts created (**pluralities of possible avatars**). »

— . . .  
**David Gruson, Health Program Director at Luminess**



## 6. Should we have the right to remain anonymous?

The right to remain anonymous is one of the most controversial issues. While the bulk of those interviewed indicate that there is no such thing as total anonymity on the Internet, the majority of experts argue for so-called pseudonymity, which means that users can remain anonymous to each other, but can be traced back to their true identity if necessary. Thus, if avatars commit crimes or other reprehensible acts, the panel of experts agreed that the competent authorities should be able to identify the user behind the avatar who broke the rules. The right to a pseudonym in the online sphere (including video games) is important. First of all, because it is historical and secondly because it protects users and allows them to express themselves more freely, without fear of pressure (e.g. whistleblowers). This is important for example for members of minorities, activists, journalists and discriminated groups. The other side of the coin is that the pseudonym can encourage impunity, especially on decentralized metaverses, and encourage malicious users to commit reprehensible acts thinking they can escape punishment.

### Verbatim

Thus, interestingly, **Mr. Emmanuel Pierrat** indicates that *"as for any digital network, anonymity should be guaranteed in the Metaverse insofar as individuals should be able to create freely and protect themselves from potential attacks against them. A system of identification via connection addresses could nevertheless make it possible to prosecute in the real world individuals who commit offenses, particularly with regard to copyright"*.

The authorities will naturally opt for more control to ensure public safety. It is normal that the **Ministry of the Interior** (French Ministry of the Interior) assimilates anonymization and pseudonymization .

Anonymity online is a controversial notion as confirmed by **Annelise Penel** who proposes an reasoned approach : *"I have difficulty in perceiving how it is possible to be anonymous on the Internet? Anonymous towards other users? Vis-à-vis the platform? \* Towards other users: I would say that no, anonymity on the internet opens the door to a form of impunity, doubled here by the impression that nobody will be able to connect us to our words/acts. Some people will always find pseudonyms, or other ways to try not*

to be recognized, but a frequent user of the platform must be able to be identified by other users. If only to be banned if this user has already had disrespectful words/attitudes in the past. \*Vis-à-vis the platform: obviously not. If comments break the law, the platform must be able to identify the persons

« I don't have a clear-cut answer to the question and this is **an ethical dilemma**. Indeed, either we decide to **abolish anonymity** and in this case there is a **risk of drifting towards a society of total surveillance**. Or one decides to **defend anonymity** and in this case there is a **risk of drifting towards a totally libertarian society**, to the detriment of the weakest or the most deprived. If I had to decide, I would say that a **public authority should be able**, in case of **suspicion of criminally reprehensible behavior or that could lead to a civil liability**, to **order the editor of the metaverse to lift the anonymity** (but he must have the means to do so). Much more complicated in decentralized metaverses. »



\*\*\*  
**Christophe Roquilly, Professor at EDHEC Business School and Director of the EDHEC Augmented Law Institute**

« While **the publicly displayed identity can be anonymized** (pseudonym), **the identifying data** associated with the avatar **must be accessible by legal authorities** within a specific legal framework. Furthermore, the creation of an identity in the Metaverse will have to be subject to a verification process. »



\*\*\*  
**The Ministry of the Inland (The French Ministry of the Interior)**

## B. Interactive communication

### 7. In your opinion, should a user be able to (1) block or (2) exclude an avatar in the Metaverse so as not to be bothered by its "physical" messages or contacts?

As is the case with social media, evolving in the Metaverse may expose its users to cyber-violence in the absence of an ideal and effective anti-violence protocol. In order to protect users, the panel mentions several tools, namely the possibility to block a violent and unwelcome user. We thought that similar tools should be made available to Metaverse users and the majority of the experts interviewed share our opinion on this issue. Horizon Worlds has implemented an activatable "protection bubble" that protects the user (via their avatar) from any form of unwanted interaction. The most controversial aspect of the issue is the ability or not to block an avatar, which evokes the notion of exclusion and

censorship of an avatar. Most experts agree that this exclusion cannot be one-sided, but that it should be possible, depending on the degree and frequency of undesirable behavior.

## Verbatim

**Hugo Spiess** provides some food for thought on this subject: *"Blocking: yes, without a doubt. Exclusion: no, but produce a report to warn the moderators and administrators".*

The **Cleary partners** applaud Horizon World's approach to blocking both physical and verbal actions for a distance of the virtual equivalent of 1m20. This makes lawyers **Marie l'Hermite and Aliénor Kamara Cavarroc** say that *"it is up to each metaverse provider to provide such features (code of conduct, exclusion or alert button ...). In practice, a user must necessarily be able to block an avatar, without having to justify this blocking; on the other hand, the question of exclusion is a matter for the operator.*

« Blocking: yes, without a doubt  
Exclusion: no, but produce a flag to notify moderators and administrators. »



— • • •  
**Hugo Spiess, Co-founder and CEO of Prosoon**

« A user **should be able to block avatars** but there is a question about **whether he can exclude an avatar** from the Metaverse. Users should be allowed to "block" verbal as well as physical interactions with an avatar. **The right to block unwanted interactions is inherent in the principle of consent.** Therefore, a minimum distance between avatars should be included in default settings and users should be able to set a customized **"personal boundary"** to keep all other users at a certain distance from their avatar. However, it **does not seem appropriate to allow a user to exclude an avatar** from the Metaverse because this would lead to obvious abuses as users are biased and would exclude an avatar for a behavior that they consider offensive or inappropriate according to their own criteria. It may be more appropriate to define objective criteria according to which users could report misconduct to the Metaverse designer or to an external body in charge of regulating the avatars' behavior in the Metaverse. »



— • • •  
**Delay, Dolmans and Laprévotte, Attorneys at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP**



## C. The Metaverse : a new zone of rights?

### 8. Do you consider that certain (1) prohibited activities and (2) behaviors (in the field of cyber-violence) should be allowed in the Metaverse?

In asking this question, our biggest inspiration was the world of gaming, which enables certain behaviors that are either illegal or objectionable in the real world, such as speeding, stealing, fighting, and other acts of violence. Some of the most popular "Metaverses" today are immersive video games. Experts were rather divided on the issue, with just over 50% of those who answered the question agreeing that these behaviors should be allowed, but only in special areas, while just over 40% said that these acts should not be allowed at all.

#### Verbatim

« Everything is based on **the idea of consent and rules of the game**. People who come to have a virtual tea in a chat room should not be able to get shot. On the other hand, **a shooting game in VR like "Counter-strike", or a fighting game in the Metaverse, should allow users to "attack" each other. Spaces dedicated to sexuality should allow users to live their sexuality, whatever it is, between consenting adults of course . »**

— ♦ ♦ ♦  
**Xavier Brandao, President and co-founder of #jesuislà**



On the other hand, **Véronique Reille-Soult** believes that *"cyber-violence is an extension of mental and physical disorders and the metaverse should never become an outlet dispensing treatment or censure.*

### 9. Is there a need for special virtual areas for an avatar to commit these activities, which are objectionable in the physical world?

The experts who said that violent and other objectionable acts could be permitted in the Metaverse also said that special zones should be created for this specific purpose. Those who disagreed with the creation of these special zones also disagreed with allowing such behavior in the Metaverse. Opinions here remain divided on a demarcation of zones, play or non-play, adults and minors.

#### Verbatim

Thus, **Marie l'Hermite and Aliénor Kamara Cavarroc** refute the idea of special zones by declaring: *"Internet law applies as well as all the rules relating to online communication, so a special "crime" zone could not be created. The risk of incitement to crime could be blamed on the provider".* And Serge Tisseron adds, with the protection of minors in mind: *"Yes. Between consenting adults. Under certain*

conditions, the emotions experienced and the actions carried out in VR can provoke changes in the behavior of subjects in the real world. This is the principle that guides their therapeutic use, for example to treat phobias. The changes in emotions and behaviors obtained in these worlds transfer to the real world. But in the absence of a specific protocol intended to rely on virtual experiences to modify real behaviors, the modifications differ from one individual to another, according to their personality, but also according to the weight of the prohibitions in their life. Some people may aggravate their tendency to perform real life criminal acts by performing them in virtual life, but others may find in those acts an outlet that prevents them from doing those acts in real life. It is therefore important that clear and explicit warnings be provided on these spaces about the penalties for performing the same actions in real life. And that research be conducted to better understand the populations that may use these spaces and how they evolve, and the conditions for their prevention.”

« Yes, **only for gaming**, if the user is of legal age. »



— ...

**Accuracy, French independent consulting firm**

« Yes. **Between consenting adults.** »



— ...

**Serge Tisseron, Doctor of Psychology and founder and president of the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC)**

## 10. Should the law of the Metaverse be different from the law applicable to the physical world or the law applicable to the Internet?

We asked experts whether they thought the Metaverse could be a new area for creating new rights. An overwhelming majority of those interviewed said that the law of the Metaverse should not be different from the law applicable on the Internet or from the law applicable in real life. However, the whole panel is inclined to think that the laws must be adapted to the specificities of the Metaverse, and some demand continuous moderation.

### Verbatim

Moreover, Axelle Desaint insists on the fact that *"it is essential today that people understand that the law also applies to their online activities. The Internet is too often seen as a zone of lawlessness and impunity. And there is still a lot of teaching to be done on this subject. There is no "real" life and "virtual" life, the acts and words we say in digital spaces can have very real consequences on people, and engage our responsibility, even for minors who often ignore it."*

« With few exceptions, the Metaverse, in its current state, does not make it necessary to apply a special law. **However, the law applicable to the physical world operates on the basis of its own interactions and will not always be appropriate. For example, the rape of an avatar in the Metaverse should not be qualified as rape under the Penal Code, since the material elements of the offence will not be present.** It will therefore be necessary to find another basis to repress this type of behavior or to create one that would be specific to the Metavers. **As for the law applicable on the Internet, it should be applied to Metavers. One thinks in particular of the provisions of the LCEN or the GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data). International conventions (Rome I and II), to the extent of their scope, will help determine the applicable law in case of conflict.** »



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Cécile Théard-Jallu et Guillaume Jagerschmidt, lawyers at De Gaulle Fleurance.

« **The metaverse should not be an exception to the applicability of digital law rules governing online behavior.** Content and behavior on this virtual space must be regulated and respect a policy established by the platform in compliance with digital law. This framework must **be complemented by content moderation allowing for continuous monitoring of activities on the metaverse** and therefore rapid reporting to the platform, which must provide for appropriate protection and sanction measures. »



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Christiane Féral-Schuhl, Lawyer specializing in new technologies and computer law



## II. What forms and kinds of violence (existing and new) could be expressed there?

### A. Diversity and inclusion

#### 11. How do we ensure that the Metaverse is an exemplary area for diversity and inclusion?

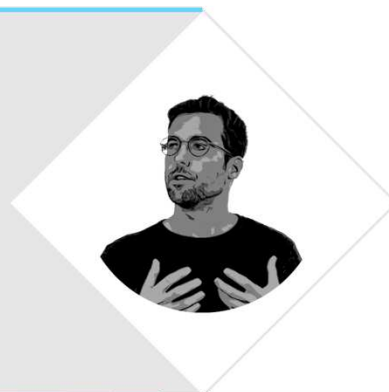
We wanted to ask the experts for their thoughts on the issue of protecting diversity, with the hope that we can find practical and innovative ways to ensure diversity and inclusion in the Metaverse. Some of the key ideas put forward by the experts are interoperability, decentralization, and active involvement of the user community in moderation.

#### Verbatim

« **One word: interoperability. We must decentralize the Metaverse.** Make it a public, shared space, built by and for citizens. Like the Internet, like Wikipedia. The Metaverse communities must be able to moderate themselves. Like an LGBT bar that could make sure to remain a safe space. **We need millions of citizen moderators.** And above that, there are universal human rights and laws. »

— ...

**Xavier Brandao, President and co-founder of #jesuislà**



**Serge Tisseron** proposes to put a palette of creation that is free to access and development at the users' disposal". And **Cleary** considers: "People of diverse backgrounds should design and develop the Metaverse, its rules and principles, as well as engage in it as users. The tech sector has to diversify its workforce especially in fields such as augmented reality, virtual reality and artificial intelligence. Moreover, to reduce social exclusion, one could increase user's and creator's accessibility to the Metaverse by increasing the number of access points available for participants, like cell phones. Furthermore, in order to mirror the diversity of the physical world, the Metaverse must offer a wide range of alternatives for self-expression. A good example is the improvement of Meta's avatars in Horizon world which include over a quintillion potential permutations since they have added new features (such as face types, clothes, accessories, helpful technologies like glasses or even cochlear implants) allowing users to customize their avatars." - **Delay, Dolmans and Lapr v te**

« **Responsive moderation** service, **stringent access and verification requirements.** »



— ...  
**Hugo Spiess, Co-founder and CEO of Prosoon**

## 12. How to protect minors in the Metaverse? E.g. : specific zones, access conditions

Because minors are identified as particularly vulnerable, their protection is at the heart of our thinking. Navigating the online sphere safely and responsibly when underage is a difficult undertaking, so we consulted our experts on possible ways to ensure that minors use the metaverse safely. A majority of them concluded that special areas dedicated exclusively to minors, backed up by age verification technology, to keep potential predators away. Some of the experts cited consider that imposing a minimum age limit on the use of the Metaverse in general may be an effective method. The general consensus seems to be that minors should be allowed to use the Metaverse, as they can benefit from it, especially in terms of education. However, they must be protected in the process. The role played by well-informed and engaged parents was also identified as crucial to ensuring the safety of minors in the Metaverse.

### Verbatim

**Pierre Paperon** adds the idea of colors (in the manner of the Respect Zone experimented by the association: *"A particular color is to be chosen to signal these zones and to allow live parental control at the screen. We must make a huge effort to educate parents, who must be made aware of what can be found in these virtual worlds (starting with the most widespread of them, Fortnite)"*).

*Concrete measures are taken by Safer Internet Day to protect minors: "To address this issue, in 2022, we launched a committee of experts to work on drafting an ethical charter of the metaverse for minors. This committee brings together experts in the protection of minors and regulatory bodies of digital spaces and aims to develop a framework of recommendations for publishers of immersive worlds that welcome children under 18. Then to formulate a clear user charter for young people and their parents."*

« With or without the metaverse, online addiction has already taken on the dimensions of a global mental pandemic, depriving entire generations of the right to a decent childhood. Placing the responsibility on the shoulders of parents has not and will not solve the problem. The most promising solutions are emerging and partially implemented legislative approaches to enforce age-appropriate design for relevant Internet platforms, supported by regulatory codes and technical standards. »



— • • •  
Konstantinos Karachalios, author at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE )

## B. Moderation in the Metaverse

### 13. How can freedom of expression be guaranteed?

One of the greatest promises of the Metaverse is that it will enable, primarily through highly customizable avatars, an unprecedented opportunity for multidimensional freedom of expression. However, intrusive technologies and rampant cyber-violence can prove to be great challenges. With this in mind, we asked experts for their ideas and proposals for ensuring this freedom of expression. Most of them suggested that moderation, accompanied by monitoring tools, a clear set of rules, an effective moderation system, interoperability and governance by citizens are solutions to protect the exercise of this fundamental right.

#### Verbatim

**Dan Rotenberg** recommends moderation under the control of the judge: "[t]he question has already arisen with Twitter and its decision to exclude Trump, for example. Operators who have acquired a dominant position could be subject to specific obligations to close their users' accounts following a court decision (with precautionary measures if necessary) but also to prohibit them from doing so for a public figure in the absence of precautionary measures or court decisions."

**Ensuring freedom of expression is also possible:** "[b]y establishing rules. By educating participants. By sanctioning abuses. By supporting emancipation and discernment. By multiplying inclusive algorithms and banning militants" according to **Laurent Bitouzet**.

« By forcing platforms to take into account freedom of expression when moderating content (which is in any case is already compulsory but is not always respected), **by training moderators and by encouraging recourse to a professional judge in the event of a dispute** (and not systematically to a mediation platform whose decisions are not known to the other users). »



— • • •  
Anne Cousin, Associate of Herald Cabinet

## 14. What types of moderation do you propose to protect users from cyber-violence?

As we consider effective moderation a necessity for a safe experience in the Metaverse, we wanted to understand the characteristics of a good moderation system or moderation policy. Most agreed that the framework should be imposed by public actors/states, rather than private actors, that moderation should be conducted primarily by certified moderators, alongside artificial intelligence and sometimes with the help of a community-based system. In addition, most experts raised the major challenges in terms of moderation in the Metaverse: the fact that you have to moderate behaviors, so not just content, that you have to moderate real-time interactions and billions of interactions at the same time, so artificial intelligence will be essential. Today, laws against violent expression makes little reference to gestures. Everything is focused on words, writing or audio-visual content.

### Verbatim

*« Despite all the problems that companies face today to moderate content efficiently, it remains relatively "simple" compared to the complexity of moderating behaviors: how do we monitor how people interact with each other? First, behavior is much more nuanced and less clear than words. Second, the creator's economy means that we should expect an exponential volume of behavior (as well as content) to be moderated. This means a massive increase in moderation resources. Right now, companies are focused on building their capacity to handle the massive increase in humans needed to moderate behavior and how they will use those increases to train AI to handle a conduct and review of content and content review. »*



— ♦ ♦ ♦  
**Jérémie Mani, co-founder of the non-profit digital movement Altruwe**

**Xavier Brandao** encourages "user-based moderation. A public Metaverse will allow volunteer moderators to be involved in their communities. Like for Wikipedia, Reddit. It will also require automatic moderation tools, given the amount of exchanges and interactions that will take place in the Metaverse".

## 15. Should there be reserved areas for expression in the Metaverse? E.g.: political debate, gaming, open stage, combat.

Similar to video games, the Metaverse can be seen by some as a release zone. We asked our experts for their thoughts on the matter, and many pointed out that allowing these types of areas within the Metaverse can send the wrong message, namely that acts committed in the virtual sphere have no "real" impact and that expectations of behavior have exceptions. For others, the use of the Metaverse as a space for venting is not seen in a negative light, but rather as something that can be useful to a certain class of users. This issue is shared by the experts interviewed. It is the principle of zones between "*consenting adults*" that comes back and that is at the edge of the difference between Web 2.0 and the Metaverse: the fine line between the real world and the fictional world that are represented at the same time.

### Verbatim

*« [P]roviding for zones of release could be a solution to evacuate violence or hatred from the "ordinary" zones, however, it would then remain very important to partition the different zones so that a child could not end up in the release zones and that the users of the release zones could not spill hatred or violence of any form outside. »*



— • • •  
**Pascal Etain, Lecturer in private law at the University of Paris Dauphine**

**Christophe Torrisi** sums up the situation as follows: "*The term "release zone" is certainly inappropriate. So: Yes to specialized communities. No to no-go zones.*"

### III. Violence Prevention in the Metaverse

#### A. Protection and prevention

#### 16. What rules/parameters already in place (physical and digital world) could be applicable to the Metaverse? Which ones would not? What new rules need to be thought of?

As we work to propose concrete recommendations for ensuring a metaverse of respect and diversity by design, we asked experts to reflect on the rules that apply today to the online and offline spheres and their potential applicability to the Metaverse. We are also thinking about new and innovative rules that could adapt to the Metaverse and the challenges imposed by its specificities. Most experts agreed that most of the rules that govern our conduct today can be transferred to the Metaverse, with some adaptations.

#### Verbatim

For example, the Ministry of the Inland explains that "common law already applies to any digital space".

« [N]ew rules are to be imagined to frame :

- The processing of biometric data: for example, we can imagine exclusively allowing this data to be processed locally ;
- Prohibiting the monetization of biometric and similar data, such as eye movement capture ;
- Digital object transactions and cybercrime that will take advantage of this new industry. »

— ♦ ♦ ♦  
**Henri Verdier, Digital ambassador**



Regarding reporting mechanisms, **Annelise Penel** believes that "it must be possible to cut off all communication with someone. It should also be possible to report someone's actions/proposals, with two channels, one for disrespect and the other for what is incompatible with the law. We could also imagine a system that is based more on valuation than on repression. For example, five star ratings like on commercial sites: everyone starts with the maximum, and the reports (analyzed by the moderation) make you lose stars. This makes it possible to put redflags on harmful avatars, in the absence of real sanctions by the platform (which I imagine are rare )."



## 17. Should there be a single set of standardized rules for the entire Metaverse or should each operator be able to impose different rules on the users of its Metaverse? And according to the laws of which real or virtual state?

Creating international standards is an effective way to protect future users of the Metaverse, but it is a rather difficult task. Currently, we still lack an international legal framework on artificial intelligence, one of the key technologies that make up the metaverse. It may be easier to allow each operator to impose its own rules, but the experts interviewed argued that a common framework or standard needs to be created and that operators should be free to impose their own rules as well, as long as they do not conflict with the general standard. The creation of a harmonized set of rules seems to be essential and necessary.

### Verbatim

**Nicolas Vayatis** questions the appropriateness of a single, standardized body of rules for the entire Metaverse: *"Is this applicable if the system operates under differentiated legal and cultural regimes?"* Some experts turn to the European model, such as **Christophe Torrisi**, for whom the *"European regulation projects (DSA and DMA) constitute the beginning of an answer for the defense of European citizens' interests"*.

« There should be a common base of common and respected values, and then specificities according to the states (sovereignty is an important legal principle). Think of a train, which has its own regulations but must also, each time it crosses a border, respect the legislation of the country it enters. Now, not all legislations apprehend infractions in the same way. But there are common denominators and, on a certain number of offenses, the legislations will converge, for example, child pornography or incitement to terrorism. So the problem is not the legislation. The real problem is the identification of the offender, especially when the offender is located in an "Internet paradise". The second problem is how to enforce a decision made against the author of illicit content? And for that, we need to collaborate with the network, the train driver. »



— • • •  
**Catherine Kessedjian, Professor Emeritus of the University of Panthéon-Assas**

## 18. Do you think a renewable license or training tutorial for the Metaverse is needed?

Educating and sensitizing users to a responsible use of the Metaverse is a top priority for us. To this end, we proposed mandatory Metaverse training and awareness tutorials. A majority of our experts agreed that these were effective tools to achieve our goal, while others argued that this was perhaps too rigid a proposal and could diminish the attractiveness of the Metaverse. This seems to be a controversial point: can we reserve access to metaverses by a permit? As long as there is no independent supranational and reliable body, this obligation is problematic. The idea of pushing for training, but without making it a barrier to access to these universes, emerges.

### Verbatim

For **Giuseppe de Martino** *"[a] tutorial is an excellent idea, if it is monitored in some way, either algorithmically, which would be preferable, or by the presence of video, to avoid people cheating. For that, we need either human means (to take the exam in front of someone), or technical tools. Since these tools have a cost, the training/tutorial can represent a barrier to entry for those who want to start in the Metaverse, which is a problem."*

Conversely, other experts are opposed to the idea of a use permit, such as **Christophe Roquilly**: *"I am absolutely opposed to this notion of 'permit'. To allow what? Issued by whom? Let's not put bureaucracy where it should not exist. On the other hand, let's educate, yes. And, finally, let's move towards drafting general conditions of use in a way that is understandable by everyone, which is almost never the case today. Here, "legal design" or, if we prefer, clear language, must be absolutely privileged"*.

« In my opinion, what works is the educational side, but there will be a lot of work to explain and teach. There are several categories of users, including those who do not realize that their actions can be considered as violent. This category is not negligible. There are users for whom the Metaverse and the online world in general is used as a venting zone. Then there are those I would call "hate professionals". For the first two categories, the educational aspect can make a real difference. In my opinion, one strategy that generally works to help users understand their responsibility is to force them to remove their own inappropriate or illegal content. Nevertheless, while it is true that the educational part is lacking in the online sphere and that a focus on that can help, what we see online is a reflection of a societal problem that cannot be answered online. That there may be a need for a virtual venting space says something about our offline society. The long term solution to these issues is offline. »

— . . .

**Audrey Herblin-Stoop, Director of Public Affairs and External Communications for the Betclic group**





## B. Rules of good conduct and protection

### 19. How to report undesirable or prohibited behavior/activity in the Metaverse? E.g. : a unique “respect” button, alarm signal.

As has been pointed out many times in the past, the reporting system used by social media platforms needed urgent reform, as it was rather difficult to use and inefficient. To combat these problems in the Metaverse, we propose a common, easy-to-use and easy-to-spot alarm button. Once used, a signal is sent to the moderator and the user is isolated from the individual they reported. A majority of the experts interviewed agreed that such a signaling system is a pretty good idea.

#### Verbatim

« Alert button available on all metaverses with above all an immediate recording of facts, gestures and words is one of the effective preventive solutions. The approach is the same as the triggering of webcams, which have become the norm for the intervention of law enforcement agencies: the recording sends a clear message that not everything is allowed and traces will be left. »

— • • •  
Pierre Papéron, Créateur de l'association France Meta



For **Anne Cousin**, “[t]he single button is undoubtedly a good idea but does not seem to properly apply to text. We must also have a **dedicated “false information” button.**)”

However, **Alexei Grinbaum** questions how these reports and alarms are handled: “A panic button can be a good idea, but you have to know who is behind it. Is it a human being who will intervene? Not possible, not enough people to intervene in real time. If a machine intervenes and does justice in an automatic way, that's not good either. A machine cannot administer justice. The button has to “send” people somewhere else, has to help them to escape in a “protection zone/bubble” to be worthwhile. We have to take advantage of this new technology and find a way to solve conflicts that do not exist in real life. For example, to escape virtual crimes, one solution may be to transform into an all-powerful virtual being for five minutes.”

## 20. How to sanction cyber-violence (role of the judge, role of mediation bodies and articulation with the platform) online? Should real sanctions be issued for our conduct in the Metaverse? Can the use of the Metaverse lead to the criminalization of new types of offenses? Which ones?

The experts involved in this study do not minimize the seriousness of acts that can be committed online. An offense is not less serious simply because it occurred in the online sphere. In this sense, the experts believe that every crime should be punished according to the principle of proportionality and that real sanctions can be imposed for serious crimes committed in the virtual space of the Metaverse. Sanctions should be progressive and imposed by designated public authorities, not by private actors.

### Verbatim

« [The] use of the Metaverse must lead to an adaptation of existing offenses to make them applicable. Behavior in the Metaverse must be actually punishable. This requires means of preserving evidence in the various Metaverses to materialize the facts. Regarding the means to punish, the real judicial process must be able to be implemented, which implies reliable information feedback and magistrates trained in cyber. A specialized court could perhaps be dedicated to this, in the same way that an administrative unit of the national gendarmerie is dedicated to the fight against cybercrime. In any case, the sanctions in the Metaverse should be the same as those provided by the legal framework governing the Internet. »

Ministry of the Inland



**Christiane Féral-Schuhl** brings several elements of response: "First of all, the judge must be put back at the heart of the system. The responsibility of the person who reports is also to be taken into consideration. If the "red button" has been activated in a wrong way or in an abusive way, it must engage the responsibility of the person who activated it. Just like the alarm signal on a train when it is activated without reason. The platforms must also assume their role in the moderation process, in particular by creating their own rules (see questions 7, 11, 13 and 14), or even by creating a moderation service, without depriving the victim of legal recourse. As for the legislator, it is quite possible that the latter will take up the subject and decide to regulate the Metaverse, at the national and European levels, with specific rules, including new types of offenses, or to expressly provide for the applicability of certain existing offenses in the Metaverse. Nevertheless, we have a complete legislative arsenal for the most part". As for **Catherine Kessedjian**, she proposes we "imagine an "impartial and independent third party" (neutral) system specific to the Metaverse. Be careful not to reproduce the gas factory created by ICANN for top-level domain names and not to authorize operators to build their own system internally without any external and independent intervention. Perhaps it is not necessary to completely eliminate the intervention of state jurisdictions (this is compatible even if we create the 'ex metaversa' mentioned in

question 17). It would therefore be necessary to set up a system of complementarity and cooperation between the "Neutral Metaverse" and national jurisdictions".

## 21. How to ensure respectful behavior in the Metaverse? E.g.: creation of a code of conduct including guidelines to be signed by each avatar and whose non-respect could lead to sanctions against the platform and the individual?

When asked to suggest ways to ensure respectful behavior in the Metaverse, a majority of experts emphasized the importance of creating a code of conduct, common to all Metaverses and including a clear set of rules with potential sanctions for non-compliance. The code of conduct should be signed by all those who wish to use the Metaverse. A few have shown skepticism towards this method, considering it rather counterproductive and comparing it to the user terms and conditions that are ignored by a majority of users, who select "accept the terms" without reading them, just to be able to access the application or website they want to use. The challenge is therefore to create an interactive and useful tool whose message will truly reach users. The Metaverse could benefit from the simplification of the general terms of use of the platforms.

### Verbatim

According to the **Ministry of the Interior**, "[o]ne can indeed imagine the implementation of a charter of good conduct which, if not respected, provides for the exclusion of the user in question and/or having to accept the terms of use in the context of a charter of good conduct to finalize the creation of a user profile. In addition, it seems appropriate to consider a mechanism that obliges platforms to enforce their charter of good conduct. Necessity. It is essential that moderators be present in all chat rooms."

« Rule #1 : There is only one Metaverse .  
Rule #2 : The Metaverse is for everyone.  
Rule #3 : No one controls the Metaverse.  
Rule #4 : The Metaverse is open.  
Rule #5 : The Metaverse is hardware independent.  
Rule #6 : The Metaverse is a network  
Rule #7 : The Metaverse is the Internet. »

— . . .  
**David Gruson, Director of the health program at French digital services company  
Luminess**



#### IV. What are the new opportunities ?

##### 22. How can we leverage the immersive experience to raise awareness of online (and potentially offline) respect issues)?

Immersive technologies can be used to create immersive awareness campaigns and tutorials, to help users understand the consequences of toxic behavior and effectively prevent it. Several experts mentioned that immersive technologies can help combat discrimination and harassment by helping the perpetrator feel what the victim feels at those times, thus discouraging them from acting in the same way again. No expert is unaware of the positive aspects of this revolutionary innovation.

##### Verbatim

*« There was a humanitarian association, I don't remember which one, that used virtual reality to be able to put oneself in the shoes of a young African girl, to understand her daily life, and to experience empathy. This kind of experience and openness to the world can help to understand, activate empathy and bring people together. To live the experience of a woman being harassed or assaulted, of a migrant crossing the Mediterranean on a rubber boat, the possibilities are endless.»*

— • • •

**Xavier Brandao, President and co-founder of #jesuislà**



Other solutions can also be considered, such as those put forward by **Véronique Reille Sault**: "A film with testimonies from victims of cyber harassment would raise awareness. For some cases, a physical meeting (via an association) would be a way to better educate."

##### 23. Immersive technologies are already used to foster empathy and to treat certain pathologies such as agoraphobia. What good practices or specific tools can be developed based on this?

Immersivity, as our experts point out, whose opinions are supported by studies on the subject, is an excellent tool that can be used in the treatment of mental health problems and to help people become more empathetic, by allowing them to "live" in someone else's shoes.

## Verbatim

« People who struggle with problems like social anxiety or agoraphobia might be able to interact in the Metaverse in a setting that feels very realistic even though it is a virtual world. They can eventually begin to develop some meaningful relationships with other users and be forced out of their comfort zone. Their capacity to converse and feel at ease in unfamiliar real-world settings may eventually increase. Moreover, individuals who are lonely could feel more included in society by accessing the Metaverse. Therefore, the Metaverse could open up a number of brand-new therapy options for a variety of mental health disorders. A good practice and a top priority for Metaverse designers could be to create safe spaces that give users access to virtual environments that improve emotional and mental wellness where they may go to enjoy therapeutic services, mindfulness workshops, and exercise routines. »



— • • • —

**Delay, Dolmans and Lapr v te, Attorneys at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP**

However, some experts note some limitations to the use of such tools. According to **Christophe Roquilly**, *"[i]t is necessary to take the best of what exists in different sciences (cognitive, information, psychology, etc.), and use it. But this will have a cost and it is important to know if the creators of metaverses will accept to bear it. Inclusion is also about helping people to better understand who the others are, and to accept them for what they are, in a community."* Similarly, **Pascal Etain** recognizes that *"[a] benevolent approach to the system could help treat pathologies. However, the universes should be separated so as not to risk an inverse function that would create new pathologies specific to the Metaverse."*

## 24. What mechanisms of cooperation between digital actors can be put in place?

The experts suggest that digital actors must come together and agree on a set of rules and standards, via international governance bodies, particularly in terms of moderation, which must be respected by each of them. Their cooperation, via think tanks or otherwise, between themselves and with public authorities, as well as the exchange of relevant information and good practices are necessary for the creation of Metaverses of trust, which will benefit from moving towards interoperability. A warning is presented against the proven risk of *"Respect Washing."*

## Verbatim

Indeed, for **Accuracy** *"the interoperability of platforms is absolutely essential."*

Moreover, **Marc Tass ** supports our vision and proposes the *"creation of an International Committee on Ethics in Artificial Intelligence"*.



« The Metaverse will have to be built around a regulatory authority that will have to enforce regulations a priori of the foreseeable consequences. The establishment of a state and a political and legal system linked to those of the real world and under their control is also an indispensable element to guarantee respect, inclusion and diversity in the Metaverse. »



Emmanuel Pierrat, Member of the Paris Bar & Founder the law firm Pierrat & Avocats

Corroborated by the expert **Serge Tisseron**: "Supranational legislation, European if not global, that sets ethical guidelines".

## 25. What mechanisms of cooperation between academic actors, associations, and public authorities can be put in place?

When it comes to including all stakeholders in a meaningful way, experts suggest the creation of government-led working groups, ethics commissions, and other regulatory and oversight bodies that include civil society, NGOs, academia, and the like to ensure the creation of accountable metaverses.

### Verbatim

For **Christiane Féral-Schuhl**, the public authorities "must invest in the metaverse, in the same way that they have invested in the Internet and social networks. They must be present to extend their actions in the virtual world and make the link with the real world (...) In particular, they can interact in the training and awareness of citizens, employees, students,...".

As for **Xavier Brandao**, the public authorities must "put resources into the justice system, into the administrative authorities in charge of regulating the sector. And enforcing the law is the greatest challenge. Academic actors: invest in this field of research, with ethics and the respect of rights as their primary concern. Ethics experts must be closely associated with the design of the Metaverse. Associations should do what they do, play their role as "watchdogs", launch alerts, put pressure on platforms that do not respect rights and on authorities to apply the law, raise awareness, and encourage responsible alternatives.

Finally, **Prof. Roquilly** expressed his concern by saying that: "Metaverses must be user-oriented, human-oriented, and not just another cash machine with cosmetic good conduct. To do this, we must encourage multi-actor cooperation, and each metaverse must have an independent ethics committee, made up of scientists, designers, ethicists, lawyers and mental health specialists. Why not create a rating system, managed by a independent organization, assigning a score based on criteria relating to ethical behavior and "sustainability" (in the sense of social responsibility)".

« IEEE SA has made an invaluable contribution to 5Rights mission of building the digital world children deserve. IEEE's status as an engineering organization and its role as a creator of globally recognized technical standards have helped demonstrate that it is possible to design a child- and youth-friendly digital world. The world has come to realize that over the last two decades, we have ignored the fact that children are harmed by technology designed for adult use. The work we have done with IEEE is an early response to a global problem. »



IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

## 26. Based on your previous answers, what are the main principles that should guide the development of the Metaverse?

According to our experts, among the key principles that should guide the development of the Metaverse are: respect for human rights and the rule of law, freedom of expression, diversity, inclusion, transparency, accountability, protection of minors and vulnerable groups, interoperability, equality and decentralization.

### Verbatim

"Accountability of large platforms, interoperability, inclusiveness." - **Henri Verdier, Ambassador for Digital.**

« The fight against cyber harassment, the respect of individual liberties, the protection of personal data, the training / awareness of users. »



Hugo Spiess, Co-founder and CEO of Prosoon

## 27. En une phrase, à quoi ressemble le Metaverse de vos rêves?

**I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that ...does not repeat the same pitfalls as Web 2.0 but on the contrary anticipates them.** - **David Cohen, Head of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris.**

« I dream of a Metaverse that is respectful, diverse and inclusive, that learns from the lessons of the past and takes into account the promises of the future to finally allow for the serene use of technology. »



Giuseppe de Martino, President and co-founder of Loopsider

*I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that integrates the issue of its environmental impact as soon as possible.* - **Audrey Herblin-Stoop, Director of Public Affairs and External Communication of the Betclic group.**

## 28. Other comments and thoughts?

« We need to emphasize the ecological risk posed by the infrastructure and operation of the Metaverse in its current form. Today, digital technology already accounts for 1.5 times more greenhouse gas emissions than air transport. What about tomorrow's connected objects and servers that will allow billions of users to be interconnected in 3D? The issue of digital sobriety (of tools, data, machines, uses) is fundamental in the development of this new digital El Dorado (mirage?). »



Accuracy, French independent consulting firm

*"Today's web has been around for over 10 years and we still can't regulate it properly, due to a lack of will from online services and politicians who have underinvested in the risks of non/low moderation on platforms. Under PFUE, we have seen a new political will that needs to materialize with the upcoming metaverse projects. Online services must take responsibility and the judicial authority must be better equipped to use this new legal framework. We cannot repeat the same mistakes in Web3.0"* - **Henri Verdier, Ambassador for Digital .**



# PRO OR CON

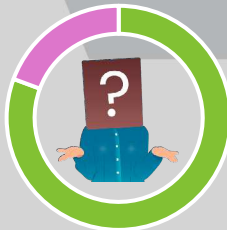
(The vote of the experts Interviewed)

## ONE OR MORE AVATARS



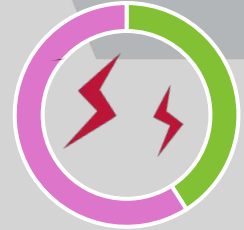
**82%** for

## ANONYMITY / PSEUDONYMITY



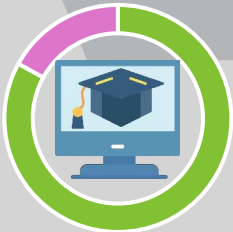
**75%** for

## RELEASE AREAS



**59%** against

## TRAINING TUTORIAL



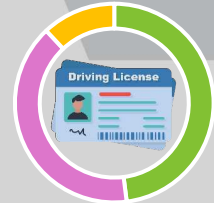
**83%** for

## COMMITTING ACTS CONSIDERED REPREHENSIBLE



**50%** for

## USE PERMIT



**48%** for 40% against and  
12% for the points-based license



# THE TOPICS DEEMED MOST IMPORTANT BY OUR EXPERTS

**01**

## FEATURES OF THE METAVERSE

Interoperable  
Decentralized  
Immersive

Virtual world  
3D

**02**

## PROGRESS OF THE METAVERSE

Role of the Metaverse in education  
Role of the Metaverse for health  
Role of avatar personalization for  
diversity, inclusion and freedom of  
expression

**03**

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE METAVERSE

Diversity  
Respect  
Inclusion  
Freedom  
Responsability  
Protection of fundamental rights  
Protection of minors  
Moderation  
Self-regulation  
Decentralization/power to users  
Equality  
Interoperability  
Transparency  
Training and awareness

**04**

## METAVERSE CHALLENGES

Increased danger of cyber-violence in the Metaverse  
Moderation  
Protection of personal data  
Protection of fundamental rights  
Accessibility

Bias (human, IA)  
Enforcing the law  
Establishing evidence  
Monopoly of large companies

**05**

## WHAT SHOULD WE PRIORITIZE WHEN DISCUSSING THE METAVERSE ?

Responsibility (users, platforms, parents)  
Training and awareness  
Protection of minors  
Moderation



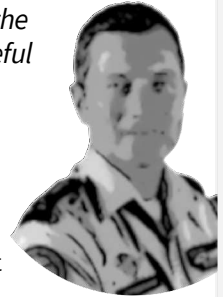
## « I dream of a Metaverse of Respect and Diversity because ... »

*« I dream of a Metaverse that avoids the excesses observed on Web 2.0 and the cyber-violence on social networks. I dream of a Metaverse where collective intelligence prevails over artificial intelligence . »*



— • • •  
Véronique Reille-Soult, Expert in opinion management and crisis communication

*« I dream of a respectful, diverse, and inclusive Metaverse that fosters the learning of and respect for peaceful community life. »*



— • • •  
Laurent Bitouzet, Commandant of the National Gendarmerie Officers School

*« I dream of a benevolent and playful Metaverse that opens horizons, but without replacing the real world. »*



— • • •  
Christiane Féral-Schuhl, Lawyer specialized in new technologies and computer law

*« I dream of a useful Metaverse. »*



**MINISTÈRE  
DE L'INTÉRIEUR  
ET DES OUTRE-MER**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

— • • •  
Ministry of the Interior

*« I dream of a Metaverse that makes the most room for user cooperation and the least room for individual consumption of virtual gadgets. »*

— • • •

Serge Tisseron, Doctor of Psychology and founder and president of the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC)



*« Ideally, a Metaverse should be set up to invent new realities to compensate for the shortcomings of the real world and to stimulate the creativity of users, all accompanied by a dialogue between the institutions of the real world and those of the virtual world. It must be a place that embodies the ideal of equality, creativity and mutual aid that are at the heart of the great principles of human rights. »*

— • • •

Emmanuel Pierrat, Lawyer at the Paris Bar





## « I dream of a Metaverse of Respect and Diversity because ... »

« We dream of a Metaverse which is exciting, experimental, playful, creative, allowing freedom of identity and daily constraints, and yet empathetic, safe, inclusive and diverse. »

♦ ♦ ♦

Delay, Dolmans and Laprêvote, Attorneys Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP



« I dream of a free and responsible Metaverse. »

♦ ♦ ♦

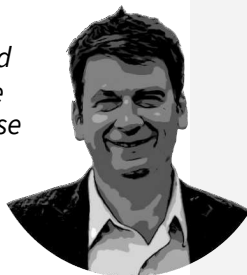
Jean Luc Chetrit and Sophie Roosen, Managing Director and Brand and Impact Director, Union des Marques



« I dream of a Metaverse that is respectful, diverse and inclusive, that learns from the lessons of the past and takes into account the promises of the future to finally allow for the serene use of technology. »

♦ ♦ ♦

Giuseppe de Martino, President and co-founder of Loopsider



« I dream of a respectful, diverse and inclusive Metaverse that integrates the issue of its environmental impact as soon as possible. »

♦ ♦ ♦

Audrey Herblin-Stoop, Director of Public Affairs and External Communication, Betclic Group



« I dream of a Metaverse analogous to the founding myth of humanity. I dream of the continuity between the virtual world and the world of myth which is also that of our civilization. »

♦ ♦ ♦

Alexei Grinbaum, Philosopher and physicist, research director at the Larsim laboratory of CEA- Saclay



« I dream of an ethical and respectful Metaverse. »

♦ ♦ ♦

Myriam Quemener, Council of Europe expert on cybercrime



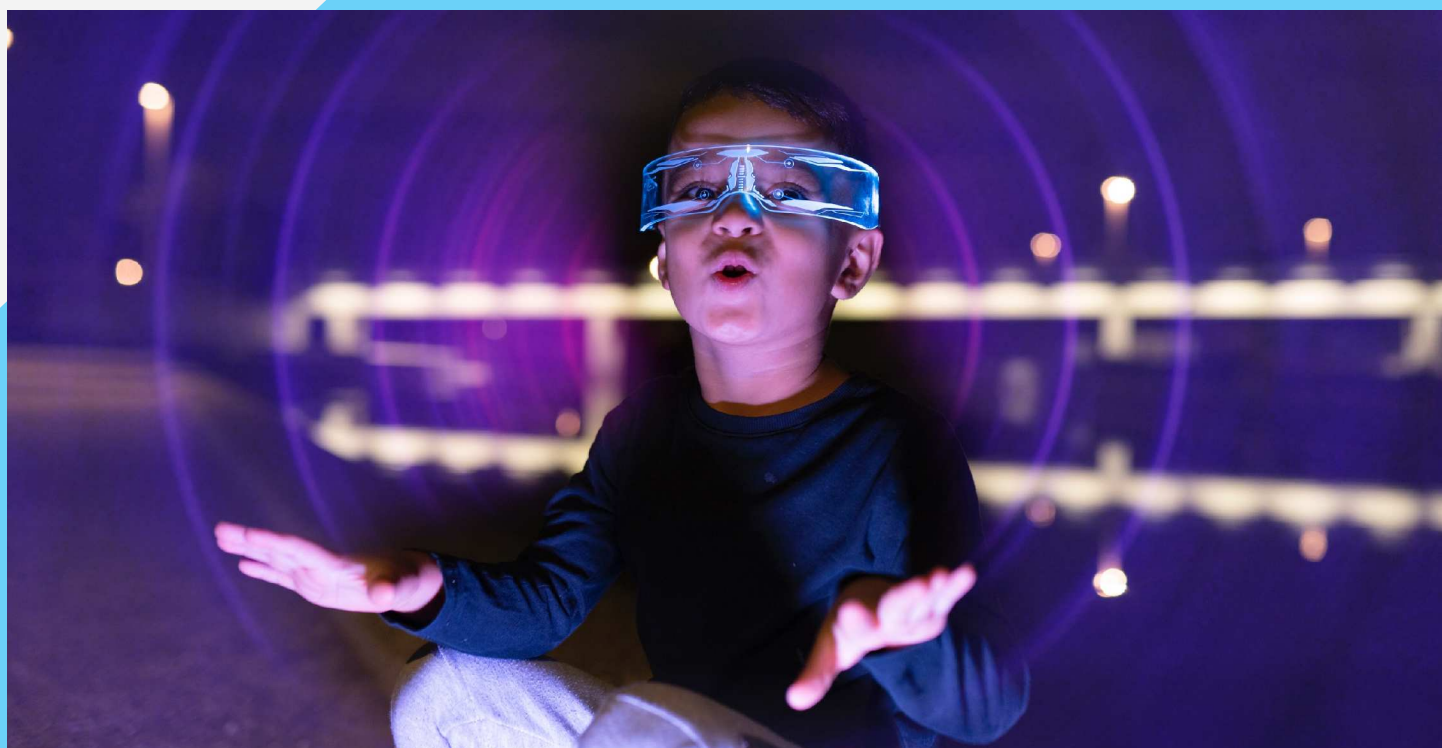
# PROSPECTIVE CONCLUSIONS



Rather than attempting a hasty conclusion, it is proposed that we collectively reflect on the ethical architecture of the metaverse and avoid waiting for difficulties to arise before acting. Studying, questioning, analyzing, criticizing, and asking fundamental questions is a societal and civic responsibility. In view of the specificities of the Metaverse, notably its three-dimensional nature, its impact on its users' ethical behavior must be seriously considered. It calls into question the limits of the Metaverse, between the acceptable and the unacceptable, respect and disrespect, diversity and uniformity, benevolence and malevolence. In order for the Metaverse not to become a no-go zone, a no-respect zone or a no-diversity zone, simple and effective safeguards, inspired by the experience of Web 2.0 in terms of cyber violence, cyber harassment and attacks on diversity, must be implemented.

This study allows us to start thinking about the place of fundamental rights in the metaverse and, concomitantly, of its users. Interoperability is one of the future objectives in the construction of the metaverse. While it can be viewed positively because it brings many advantages, particularly in terms of access to health, culture and diversity, it is not without new risks. It is therefore important to raise the debate here and now in order to lay the cornerstone of a safe and respectful Metaverse. It is also our collective responsibility to prevent the risks of toxic behavior within the Metaverse and to guarantee zones of respect that promote critical thinking and free will. One of the best solutions is to define and build common protection standards to guarantee respect, security, integrity and diversity in the Metaverse. This is why Respect Zone is launching a call for a "*Public/Private/Civil Society Partnership*", with the goal of guaranteeing a common metaverse ethic that ensures an acceptable standard of security and trust for each user and their avatar. In this period of consolidation of the fundamentals and modeling of metaverses, it is appropriate to act now before it is too late.

# ANNEXES



## **a. Method and Transparency of Respect Zone's Consultation**

The Metaverse Project is an independent study conducted by the NGO Respect Zone, with the activation and participation of various partners (companies and research centers), including Meta France, Heaven, iDfRights, and 44 experts in France and abroad. The Meta group has supported this work with :

- a 2-hour Horizon Oculus headset test at Meta France's HQ in 2022
- an offer to put us in touch with technical experts in case of technical questions
- a consultation of a large group of 16-25 year olds, with the expertise of the Heaven (advertising agency).
- the means to ensure meaningful dissemination of the report

The rest of the project is financed by the Respect Zone's own funds.



## b. Monitoring of action proposals

The Respect Zone association proposes a methodology to monitor and annually evaluate the compliance of each metaverse with the recommendations listed in this study, recommendations that are updated over time. Indeed, the follow-up of the proposed actions is useful in order to understand the trends, analyze the phenomena and the remedies. With the help of these evaluations, operators and users will be able to find their bearings in the time frame of the construction of each metaverse.

The "Monitoring & Evaluation" (ESG rating) framework proposed below is more general and can then be adopted and modified by each Metaverse operator, to fit their specificities.

First, to assess whether each Metaverse is on track to achieve the objectives sought through the 35 proposals, an evaluation by an external or internal audit is recommended. Second, the evaluation will rely on relevant and measurable indicators. For example, the rates of cyber-violence will be measured by sampling according to a Respect Zone benchmark, noting the targeting of cyber-violence to identify whether it is aimed at a more or less vulnerable category. This is part of a "*harassment meter*" initiative, which will measure the "number of violent gestures in a certain period of time. The impact of cyberbullying on quality of life is now being taken seriously, with the General Social Survey - Canadians' Safety including an indicator for cyberbullying. So there are examples of indicators used in studies today that may be relevant to the Metaverse.

Second, to understand the evolution of the phenomenon being measured, it is recommended that a baseline be established first. For this reason, we recommend that each Metaverse provider take steps to measure the state of violence within their Metaverse within the first year after launch. This data will serve as a baseline for future reports on the topic and will allow Metaverse creators to see how far they have come and what they still need to do to achieve their goals.

Having determined exactly what data should be collected, the methods of data collection must now be discussed. Respect Zone recommends the use of opinion surveys, periodic reports and regular independent evaluations. The international metaverse regulatory agency could regularly conduct polls to guide their regulation. The supranational Metaverse Ethics Committee should also conduct surveys to determine whether, in the opinion of Metaverse users, these virtual and immersive environments are successful in implementing ethical guidelines and protecting users. Periodic reports, focusing on progress in implementing proposals that fit the scope of the respective Metaverse, on an annual basis, are to be

prepared by each Metaverse operator and sent to expert agencies or to the International Metaverse Regulatory Agency for their evaluation or ranking.

NGOs are essential to make Metaverse operators accountable to their users and to society in general. Respect Zone proposes to conduct regular independent reviews to assess the progress made by each Metaverse with the ultimate goal of participating in the evaluation and improvement of responsible metaverses in terms of diversity and respect.

We recommend that in the medium term (2 to 3 years) full compliance with the present proposals constituting the reference platform for the standardization of metaverses should be aimed at and that most of the proposals should be fully implemented within a maximum of 5 years.

The total or partial completion of the proposals are evaluated for Metaverse to render their level of progress for each criterion. For more information, please contact [info@respectzone.org](mailto:info@respectzone.org)

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## d. List of experts and entities interviewed



### Accuracy

Accuracy assists company management in their decision-making and in situations involving transactions, disputes and crises. Independent, with a global presence and organization, we combine strategic thinking with factual and numerical analysis.

Our teams are custom-built by combining a variety of expertise and recruited from the best international profiles. Accuracy is present in 13 countries in Europe, North America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and operates worldwide.

### Frédéric BARDEAU



Frédéric has been working 25 years to put the Internet's power of action and the potential for innovation at the service of actors in the social economy, people and fragile territories. **In 2008, Frédéric co-founded the LIMITE Agency**, entirely dedicated to responsible communication for NGOs and foundations. **In 2013, he founded Simplon.co**, a social enterprise that provides free training to thousands of job seekers and supports the digitalization of the SSE sector as well as the professional retraining of employees through a network of 100 schools in 20 countries. Fellow of the Ashoka and EPIC Foundation since 2015, social entrepreneur of the year 2017 of BCG, Frédéric is also the author, with Nicolas Danet, of "Anonymous, can they change the world?" and of "Lire, écrire, compter, coder" published by FYP.

### Laurent BITOUZET



Appointed **Commander of the National Gendarmerie Officers School** in August 2021, Laurent Bitouzet is also an Officer of the Legion of Honor, an Officer of the National Order of Merit and the holder of various foreign decorations. Since entering Saint-Cyr military academy in 1988, his career has been divided between command in the field, administrative design and missions abroad, notably as a United Nations military observer in the Sahara and as French ambassador in Ottawa. General Laurent Bitouzet also holds a degree in history (1992),

is a graduate of the Ecole de Guerre (2003) and is a former auditor of the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Développement et d'Aménagement des Territoires Européens (2007).

### **Colette BOUCKAERT**



Cabinet Director for Jean-Marie Cavada during his ten years as a Member of the European Parliament, Colette Bouckaert has used her legal expertise in intellectual property law, acquired during her career as a lawyer, to assist and support him in all the work he has carried out in the Legal Affairs and Culture and Education Committees. Colette Bouckaert is now **Secretary General and responsible for European and legal affairs at iDFRights**, an association that works in two areas of concern: The Defense of human rights in the digital sphere (individual and collective), and the protection of the economic sovereignty of companies.

### **Xavier BRANDAO**



Xavier Brandao is the **co-founder and president of #jesuislà**, a collective and association fighting against hate speech and misinformation on the Internet and promoting respectful debate online. He created the website [www.repondreauxprejuges.com](http://www.repondreauxprejuges.com).

Before that, Xavier Brandao worked on sustainable development projects in the South.

### **Jean-Marie CAVADA**



Jean-Marie Cavada was a Member of the European Parliament from 2004 to 2019 and successively held the positions of Chairman of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs; Member of the Committee on Culture and Education; Chairman of the Working Group on Copyright and Intellectual Property; Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Legal Affairs, and Chairman of the Media Intergroup. He has been very involved in the drafting of the European directive on copyright and whistleblowers as well as the European GDPR.

Today he is **President of the OGC of Press Neighboring Rights (DVP) and of the Institute of Digital Fundamental Rights (IDFRights)**, an association that works in two fields of concern: The Defense of human rights in the digital (individual and collective), and the protection of the economic sovereignty of companies.

### Jean-Luc CHETRIT



Jean-Luc Chetrit began his career in the sales department of Procter & Gamble. He joined Nestlé in 1994, where he held increasing responsibilities in marketing and key account development in France and Asia. Back at Procter & Gamble, he was appointed head of sales management in France and Europe for several of the group's key accounts. Then in 2009, Jean-Luc Chetrit became Marketing Communication Director of Procter & Gamble France and a member of the Management Committee. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the Union des Annonceurs. In October 2012, he was appointed President of Carat France (a subsidiary of Dentsu Aegis Network), a pioneer in media consulting and buying advertising space. He also became Vice President of UDECAM in 2013, then President in 2015. In June 2017 he joined the **Union des marques as Managing Director**.

### David COHEN



A former student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure and a doctor in neuroscience, David Cohen is a **professor at Sorbonne University and head of the child and adolescent psychiatry department at the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris**.

He is also a corresponding member of the French *National Academy of Medicine* and a member of the *Institute of Intelligent Systems and Robotics* where he collaborates with several engineers of the [Perception, Interaction and Social Robotics](#) team. He recently coordinated the working group on the consequences of exposure to pornography during development for the National Academy of Medicine. He was president of the International Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (IACAPAP) congress held in Paris in 2012. In addition to his work as a psychiatrist, he is also a [visual artist](#).



### Laurent COHEN-TANUGI

**A member of the Paris Bar and New York Bar**, Laurent Cohen-Tanugi is the **founding partner of a firm focused on strategic international cases**, particularly in the areas of corporate criminal law and anti-corruption.

In his thirty-five year career, Laurent Cohen-Tanugi has been a partner at the law firms Cleary Gottlieb and Skadden Arps, and Senior Vice President of Legal Affairs for the Sanofi group. To date, he is the only French lawyer to have served as an independent FCPA monitor, appointed by the U.S. Department of Justice and the SEC. He has also performed similar monitoring functions for the World Bank and the French Competition Authority. A graduate of Sciences-Po and the law schools of Paris and Harvard, Laurent Cohen-Tanugi is the author of numerous influential essays, including most recently, “Résistances, la démocratie à l’épreuve” (Editions de l’Observatoire). He has taught at Harvard and Stanford.



### Anne COUSIN

Anne Cousin has been a **partner of Herald** since 2010. Her practice focuses on new technologies, internet and media law. She advises and litigates on issues related to personal data, computer contracts, hosting companies' liability, and e-reputation. She also advises on numerous issues related to innovation and research.



### Giuseppe DE MARTINO

Giuseppe de Martino **chairs the social media [Loopsider](#), which he co- founded in September 2017, and also runs the media [Period](#)**. He has been President of [ASIC](#) (Association of Community Internet Services) since its creation in 2007 and was the first Vice President of the National Digital Council. He was also President of the Association of Internet Service Providers (AFA) from 2005 to 2007.

He holds a DEA in Literary, Artistic and Industrial Property Law from Paris II University and a DESS in Law and Administration of Audiovisual

Communication from Paris I University. He was, among other things, Managing Director of Dailymotion from 2007 to 2017 and EVP & General Counsel of AOL France from 1999 to 2007



### **Chloé DELAY**

Since 2022, Chloé Delay has been an **associate based in the Paris office of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP**. Ms. Delay's practice focuses on EU and French competition law. She advises clients in EU merger control proceedings and French antitrust investigations.

Prior to joining Cleary Gottlieb, she completed several internships at international law firms in Paris. Ms. Delay graduated from Sciences Po with a Master II degree in 2020. She also received a Master II degree from Université de Paris II - Panthéon-Assas in 2021.

Ms. Delay was a national legal editor for Caselex and is currently a contributor of Cleary Gottlieb's French competition newsletter.



### **Axelle DESAINT**

Axelle Desaint graduated from the University of Paris VIII in Hypermedia Sciences and Techniques and joined Tralalere in 2011. Tralalere is a creator of educational digital experiences founded in 2000 and operator of the Internet Without Fear awareness program for the European Commission.

Ms. Desaint is now **Director of the Digital Education Division of Tralalere and Director of Safer Internet Day**.



### **Maurits DOLMANS**

Maurits Dolmans' practice focuses on EU, UK, Dutch and international competition law, especially high-tech and EU intellectual property and sustainability. He is a member of the New York Bar, Rotterdam Bar and Brussels Bar and a **partner at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP** since 1994.

He has been involved in a range of antitrust cases in areas of IT, IPR, platforms, standards, innovation, and sustainability throughout his career since the mid-1980s. He has appeared in proceedings before the European Commission, in EU courts, national courts, national competition authorities of several member states, and ICC and NAI arbitrations. Many of his competition cases involve multi-sided platforms, high-tech products, new economy services, licensing or refusals to license, standardization, IP strategy, access to networks, mergers, joint ventures and other transactions, intellectual property arbitration and litigation, abuses of dominance, vertical agreements and cartels.



### **Pascal ETAIN**

Pascal Etain has been a **lecturer in private law at the University of Paris Dauphine** for 20 years, after having taught at HEC Paris. He is a specialist in private law, and in particular in corporate law. He has been teaching digital law for 10 years and intellectual property law for 20 years. Pascal Etain also advises companies in matters of creation, transformation, and intangible rights. He is also at the origin of some of the startups involved in the Metaverse.



## Christiane FÉRAL-SCHUHL

Christiane Féral-Schuhl is **a member of the Paris Bar**. She **co-founded the Féral law firm**, which specializes in the fields of digital technology, personal data and intellectual property. She is also registered on the list of mediators of the Court of Appeal of Paris and on the list of the Quebec Bar. She is a WIPO cyberarbitrator and a PARL expert with AFNIC. She has chaired the Conseil National des Barreaux and the Paris Bar Association, and co-chaired the [Parliamentary Commission on Law and Freedoms in the Digital Age](#).

Christiane Féral-Schuhl publishes books and numerous [articles](#) in her fields, including: "[Cybersecurity, instructions for use](#)" (PUF 2022), "[Mediation, tested in practice](#)" (Delmas, 2022), "[Cyberdroit: le droit à l'épreuve de l'Internet](#)" (Daloz Praxis 8<sup>ème</sup> ed. 2020-2021) and "[La protection des données personnelles](#)" (Daloz, 2019)



## Jean-Claude GOLDENSTEIN

Jean-Claude Goldenstein is a **European-American technology entrepreneur** with a unique perspective on solving complex global challenges.

Armed with M.Sc. in Aerospace Systems Engineering and an M.B.A., Jean-Claude started out in aerospace R&D and Trust & Integrity for United Technologies (with clients such as Boeing and Airbus), followed by 15 years in risk-mitigation for EY and leading consulting boutiques. He founded CREOpaint.ai to help leaders combat disinformation and restore trust. JC has been granted multiple related patents and seeks to partner with industry leaders who can quickly realize the full potential of the company's artificial & collective intelligence inventions.

He has recently served as a trusted advisor to leaders who needed personalized intelligence also to help mitigate brand safety risks and reputational damage. Clients include Ernst & Young (where JC was instrumental in founding their consulting business), GE, IEEE, CNES, KPMG, CBRE, LVMH, Roederer and SNCF.

Jean-Claude has provided featured insights including about filtering social media information overload, disinformation and generative-AI such as deepfakes to Bloomberg TV, The Financial Times, Le Point,



Nasdaq.com, NBC News, Nikkei, Techonomy, VivaTech and the Wall Street Journal..



### **Alexei GRINBAUM**

Alexei Grinbaum is a **philosopher and physicist, director of research at the Larsim laboratory of the CEA-Saclay**, and a specialist in quantum information. Since 2003, he has been interested in ethical issues related to new technologies, particularly nanotechnologies, artificial intelligence and robotics. He is a member of the French National Digital Ethics Committee (CNPEN) and of the French Commission on Digital Research Ethics (Cerna). He is also an expert for the European Commission and president of the CEA's Digital Ethics Operational Committee. He has published "Mécanique des étirements" (Encre Marine, 2014) and "Les robots et le mal" (Desclée de Brouwer, 2019).



### **David GRUSON**

A graduate of the Institut d'Étude Politique de Paris, the École des Hautes Études en Santé Publique (EHSP) and the École Nationale d'Administration (ENA), David Gruson is currently **Director of the health program at French digital services company Luminess**.

Co-founder of Ethik-IA, an academic and citizen initiative for a positive regulation of artificial intelligence and robotization in health, he is also the author and coordinator of numerous books related to AI.



### **Audrey HERBLIN-STOOP**

Audrey Herblin-Stoop was Twitter's Public Affairs Director for France and Russia from January 2015 to the end of 2021. She started her career at MEDEF in 2008 as Public Affairs Director, before joining TBWA Corporate in August 2012 as Influence Account Director, Head of Public Affairs.

She is currently **Director of Public Affairs and External Communications for the Betclic group**.



### **Guillaume JAGERSCHMIDT**

Guillaume Jagerschmidt is a **lawyer at De Gaulle Fleurance**. His practice focuses on personal data, new technologies and intellectual property. He is also a lecturer in contract law and civil liability law at the Université Paris Cité.

He holds a masters in e-commerce and digital economy law from the University of Paris 1 – La Sorbonne (2021), in civil and commercial obligation law from the University Paris Cité (2020), and in Business Law from Paris Cité University (2019).



### **Aliénor KAMARA-CAVARROC**

**A member of the Paris Bar** since 2004, Aliénor Kamara-Cavarroc joined the teaching team of the Paris Court of Appeal Bar Training School (EFB) in 2014. With the contribution of many lawyers and magistrates, she has created a valuable and now well-known instrument: the Practical Guide to Procedure for Lawyers, which now covers almost every area of applied judicial law.

A member of a working group of the National Council of Bars and Law Societies to define a reference system of professional competences for lawyers, of the association Droit et procédure, Mrs. Kamara-Cavarroc was an expert of the European Union for the dissemination of the Rule of Law in Central Asia as well as of Expertise France for the development of the continuing education of lawyers in Moldova

## Konstantinos KARACHALIOS



A globally recognized leader in standards development and intellectual property, Dr. Ing. Konstantinos Karachalios is managing director of the IEEE Standards Association and a member of the IEEE Management Council.

Before IEEE, Konstantinos played a crucial role in successful French-German cooperation in coordinated research and scenario simulation for large-scale nuclear reactor accidents. And with the European Patent Office, his experience included establishing EPO's patent academy, the department for delivering technical assistance for developing countries and the public policy department, serving as an envoy to multiple U.N. organizations.

Konstantinos earned a Ph.D. in energy engineering (nuclear reactor safety) and masters in mechanical engineering from the University of Stuttgart.

## Catherine KESSEDJIAN



Catherine Kessedjian is **Professor Emeritus of the University Panthéon-Assas Paris II**. Until 2016, she was Deputy Director of the European College of Paris and at the same time the LLM in European Law of the University Panthéon-Assas, which she founded in 2008.

Since 2016, Catherine Kessedjian has been a CEDR-accredited arbitrator and mediator, a lifetime member of the American Law Institute, a presenter of the French branch of the International Law Association, and an associate member of the Institute of International Law.



### François-Charles LAPREVOTE

Member of the Paris Bar and Brussels Bar, François-Charles Lapr v te has been a **partner based in the Brussels and Paris offices of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP** since 2007. His practice focuses on European competition and international trade law, including merger control, state aid, cartel investigations, market dominance and trade defense instruments. He has advised corporate clients and financial institutions as well as government and public entities in numerous cases before the European Commission, the European Courts in Luxembourg and the French Competition Authority.

Prior to joining Cleary Gottlieb, he served as the economic adviser of the French Minister for European Affairs, as a national expert in the Directorate General for External Trade of the European Commission or at the Inspection G n rale des Finances, the internal auditing and consulting body of the French Ministry for Finance. He is also an editor and co-authored several chapters of the *Research Handbook on State Aid in the Banking Sector*, published by Edward Elgar Publishing.



### Marie L'HERMITE

Marie L'Hermite has worked for more than 10 years in legal management positions in the energy and telecommunications sectors. In February 2019, Marie set up on her own as a **lawyer highlighting her tech profile** and her business knowledge. She also trains in blockchain technologies by accompanying a project on the dematerialization of general meetings. In June 2021, Marie started a secondment mission with a new start-up aiming to provide a secure framework to the adult entertainment industry using Web3 technologies (NFT, crypto, blockchain, metaverse).

A committed lawyer, Marie is vice-president of the French Association of Women Lawyers and Secretary General of 2GAP, an association of 70 professional women's networks from the public and private sectors working for shared governance.



## Jeremie MANI

Jeremie Mani has been an entrepreneur in the digital world for over 20 years. Former president of Netino, a company specialized in Internet content moderation, he has been a privileged witness of and commentator on the evolution of online hate in all its forms.

**Jeremie Mani is now the head of Webhelp** in Canada, a company that focuses on the Metaverse and its future implications for brands, especially on user protection in its new digital environments. He is also the **co-founder of the non-profit digital movement Altruwe**, which works for the #digitalforgood by viralizing positive, inspiring and altruistic content.



**MINISTÈRE  
DE L'INTÉRIEUR  
ET DES OUTRE-MER**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

## The Ministry of the Interior

The Ministry of the Interior has been at the heart of the French administration for over two centuries. It ensures the maintenance and cohesion of the country's institutions throughout the country. Its organization and human and material means are an important tool for protecting citizens in their exercise of their rights, duties and liberties.

Today, its missions revolve around two main axes: administering the territory and guaranteeing the security of citizens and property.



## Pierre PAPERON

Mr. Paperon is a graduate of Arts et Métiers and has a MBA from HEC. He was a consultant and Managing Director of several companies: McKinsey, Havas, Apple, Groupe Danone, Lastminute.com.

For 7 years, he has been advising governments and companies on the use of blockchains, NFTs and Web3. **He created the France Meta Association**, which counts 1300 metaverses. Pierre has 7 children, attempted to scale Mount Everest, 2 published books, and was a submarine officer on nuclear submarine Le Redoutable for two years.



### **Emmanuel PIERRAT**

Emmanuel Pierrat is a **member of the Paris Bar**, a former member of the Conseil de l'Ordre and a former member of the Conseil National des Barreaux. **He founded the law firm Pierrat & Avocats**, composed of a dozen lawyers, of which he is managing partner. He is also General Secretary of the Yves Saint-Laurent Museum in Paris since 2018 and a member of the Acquisitions Commission of the Museum of Decorative Arts.

President of the French PEN Club (2018-2020) as well as of the Writers for Peace Committee of International PEN (2019-2022), Emmanuel Pierrat is a Chevalier in the Order of Arts and Letters and has been awarded the Grand Silver Medal of Jurisprudence of the Academy of Architecture



### **Myriam QUEMENER**

**A digital law and cybercrime expert for the Council of Europe and the Chancellery**, Myriam Quémener has been a judicial magistrate since 1986. She has held various management positions, including at the Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons, Deputy Prosecutor at the Court of First Instance of Créteil, legal advisor to the Ministerial Delegation for Security Industries and the Fight against Cyber Threats (DMISC) at the Ministry of the Inland.

She is a Knight in the Order of the Legion of Honor, a Doctor of Law, and the author of several books on cybercrime including "*Economic and financial crime in the digital age*" (Economica, 2015), "*What rights in the face of digital innovations*" (Lextenso 2020) prefaced by Professor Agathe Lepage, and soon a book on the digital ecosystem and legal responses prefaced by Maître Féral-Schulh.



### Véronique REILLE SOULT

Véronique Reille Soult is a specialist in reputation management and conversational strategies, and an expert in opinion management and crisis communication. She is the **President of BackBone Consulting**, a consulting firm that helps companies and their executives define and implement their communication strategy based on opinion analysis, whether it be BtoB or BtoC.

She is also a lecturer at Sciences Po, a teacher at Celsa/Sorbonne and a weekly contributor to the programs "Les Informés" on France Info and "Politique" on France 24.



### Sophie ROOSEN

Sophie Roosen has a dual expertise in both marketing/communication and CSR. Sophie Roosen was the Marketing and Communication Director of Dr. Hauschka France (Wala Heilmittel GmbH) before accompanying B Lab Europe in leading and developing the SDG Action Manager program, and joining the CSR department of AXA France.

In 2021, she joined the **Brand Union** team and was appointed **Brand and Impact Director** in February 2022. Her mission is to continue the profound transformations in brand building initiated in recent years in the fields of marketing, influence and digital insight. She will naturally continue the development of the Responsible Communication and Marketing community and its FAIRe program, which now has nearly 50 signatory companies.





### **Christophe ROQUILLY**

Christophe Roquilly is **Professor and Honorary Dean of Faculty and Research at EDHEC Business School where he directs the EDHEC Augmented Law Institute**. His work focuses on the relationship between law and strategy, legal management and legal risk management, and the impact of digital technology on the legal profession.

Mr. Roquilly is also Vice President of the Cercle de la Compliance, member of the Scientific Council of the magazine Semaine Juridique Entreprise et Affaires (Lexis Nexis) and of the Scientific Council of the Business & Legal Forum.



### **Dan ROTENBERG**

A graduate of Sciences-Po Paris, Dan Rotenberg joined the European Commission in January 2015 as **Deputy Head of the Irregular Immigration and Return Policy unit**. Since October 2020, he has joined the **Cybercrime unit in the same capacity**.

However, it is important to note that **Dan Rotenberg is participating in this report in a personal capacity**, independent of his duties.



### **Hugo SPIESS**

Hugo Spiess is a graduate of a business school in France and Ireland. He has worked in advertising and media for over 6 years. After discovering Blockchain technology in 2015, he decided to launch an entrepreneurial project, transposing the assets of this technology to the world of training and employment.

In September 2018, he **co-founded Prosoon of which he is now the CEO**. This project aims to strengthen the employability of trainees, optimize recruitment processes, fight against the falsification of diplomas and promote equal opportunity hiring.



### Marc TASSÉ

Distinguished Professor at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law and the Telfer Executive MBA program, Marc Tassé is a **leader in the field of anti-corruption**.

He spoke at the OECD Global Anti-Corruption and Integrity Forum in 2020, participated in academic roundtables organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, advised the G20 Anti-Corruption Ministerial Working Group, and most recently, was selected to present further research on the same topic at the Anti-Corruption Colloquium organized by the World Bank, OECD, and the American Society of International Law in April 2022



### Cécile THÉARD-JALLU

Cécile Théard-Jallu is a **partner at De Gaulle Fleurance**. Her practice focuses on commercial and innovation law, digital technologies, data protection, intellectual property and regulatory aspects of a number of sectors, in particular health, mobility, e-commerce and the digital economy in general. She assists private and public companies, in France and abroad, in the design, security, development and implementation of their technological innovation strategy.

She is involved in the design, drafting, negotiation and implementation of commercial, industrial and R&D contracts, with or without public funding. She assists companies in their data protection and development projects, particularly in all aspects related to the application of the GDPR and the French Data Protection Act. In particular, she is certified to help them in their GDPR compliance certification process with the new European Europrivacy™ label °.

Co-chair of the Health/Life Sciences Committee and member of the Technology Committee of the *International Bar Association* (IBA), she is also an expert selected for France in the European TEHDaS program, contributing to the construction of the future European health data space. She is a member of the steering committee of the National Institute of e- Health (INeS) and teaches in the DU AI and Health at the University of Burgundy. She is distinguished as a *leading individual* in the Chambers & Legal 500 EMEA 2022 rankings and in the Best Lawyers ranking published in partnership with Les Echos



## Serge TISSERON

Serge Tisseron is a **psychiatrist, doctor of psychology**, member of the Académie des technologies and of the scientific council of the Centre de recherches psychanalyse médecine et société (CRPMS) at Paris Cité University. In 2008, he created the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC), then the website "[Mémoire des Catastrophes, la mémoire de chacun au service de la résilience de tous](#)" ([Memory of Disasters, the memory of each person at the service of the resilience of all](#)), and in 2013 the Institute for the Study of Human-Robot Relations (IERHR).

His work focuses on resilience and the relationship with screens, especially for young people. He is the creator of "3-6-9-12, pour apprivoiser les écrans" (age-based guidelines to help children and teenagers in their relationship with screens) and the "Three Figures Game" to develop empathy from kindergarten to college, which has been approved by the French National Education System



## Christophe TORRISI

A graduate of the National Gendarmerie Officer School, with a law degree from the Jean Monnet faculty of the University of Paris-Sud and a Masters in territorial economic intelligence from the University of Toulon, Colonel Christophe Torrisi is currently **Head of the "Economic Intelligence and Security" department at IHEMI**.

He also contributed to the writing of the manual "La Gendarmerie pour les nuls". In 2015, Colonel Christophe Torrisi became a Knight of the National Order of Merit.



### **Nicolas VAYATIS**

A graduate of the École Centrale de Paris, Nicolas Vayatis is the **co-founder and director of the Borelli Center**.

A specialist in data science and machine learning, Nicolas Vayatis leads a research group that develops work in modeling and predictive algorithms, network science, signal processing, in constant interface with industry and the biomedical field.



### **Henri VERDIER**

Henri Verdier is a French digital entrepreneur and alumnus of the École Normale Supérieure with a degree in philosophy, a master's degree in biology, and a graduate degree in sociology.

He was interdepartmental director of digital and information systems for the French state and General Administrator of Data (AGD). Since October 2018 he has been a **digital ambassador**.



### **Catriona WALLACE**

**Founder of the Responsible Metaverse Alliance**, Dr Catriona Wallace is an entrepreneur and specialist in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, the Metaverse and the responsible use of technology. Catriona has been recognised by The Australian Financial Review as the most influential woman in business & entrepreneurship and by the Royal Institution of Australia as a pre-eminent scientist.

Dr. Wallace is also Adjunct Professor at UNSW, the Co-Chair of Sir Richard Branson's B Team's AI Coalition and has been recognized by Onalytica as one of the top speakers on Ethical AI globally. Catriona is also the author of [Checkmate Humanity: The how and why of responsible AI](#), launched in August 2022).



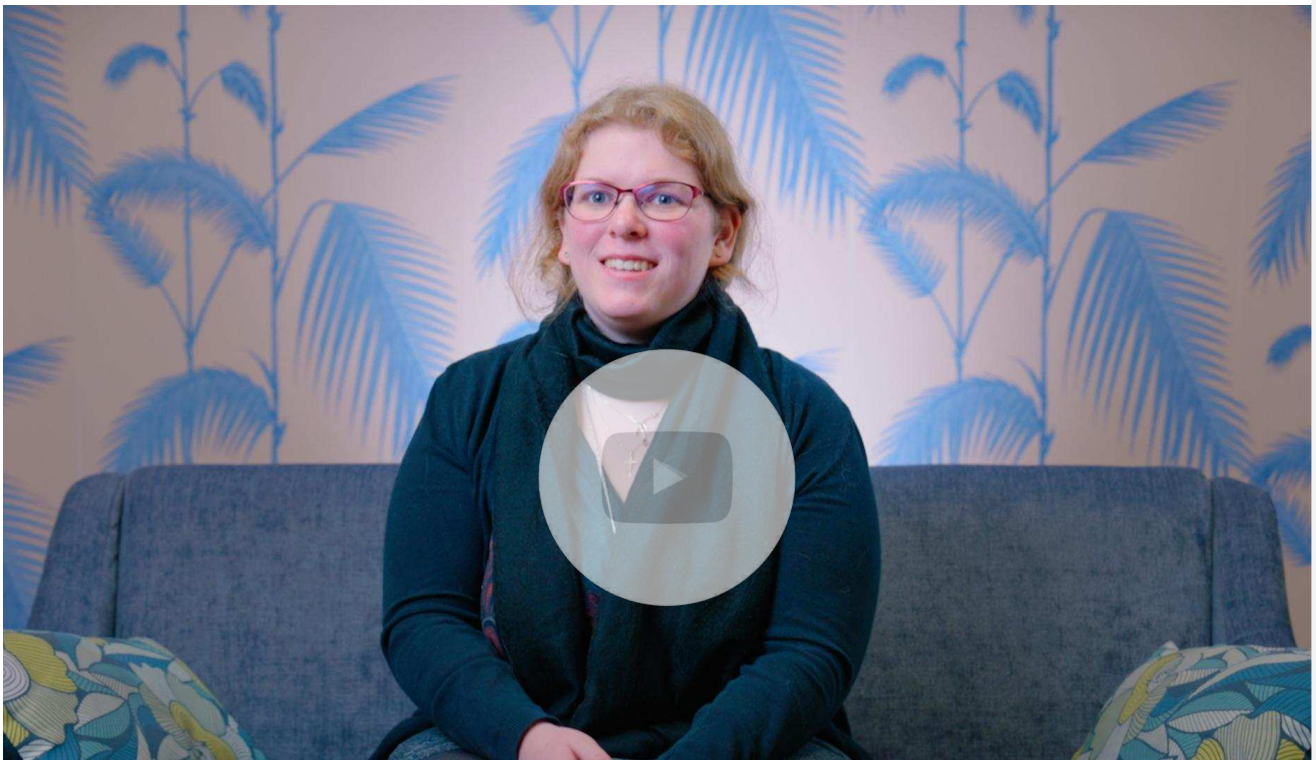
## e. Videos of the youth survey

### 1. The Metaverse

*The videos are available on Respect Zone's YouTube channel.*

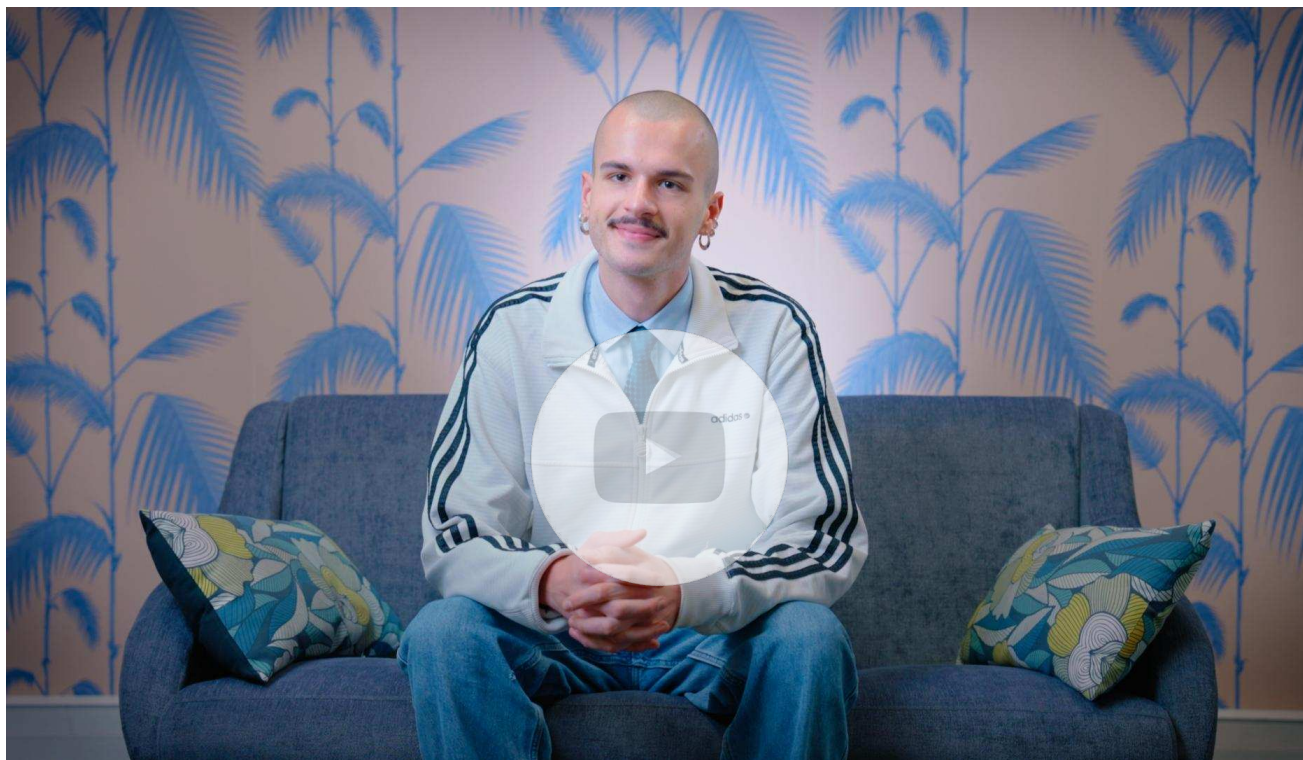


### 2. Avatars

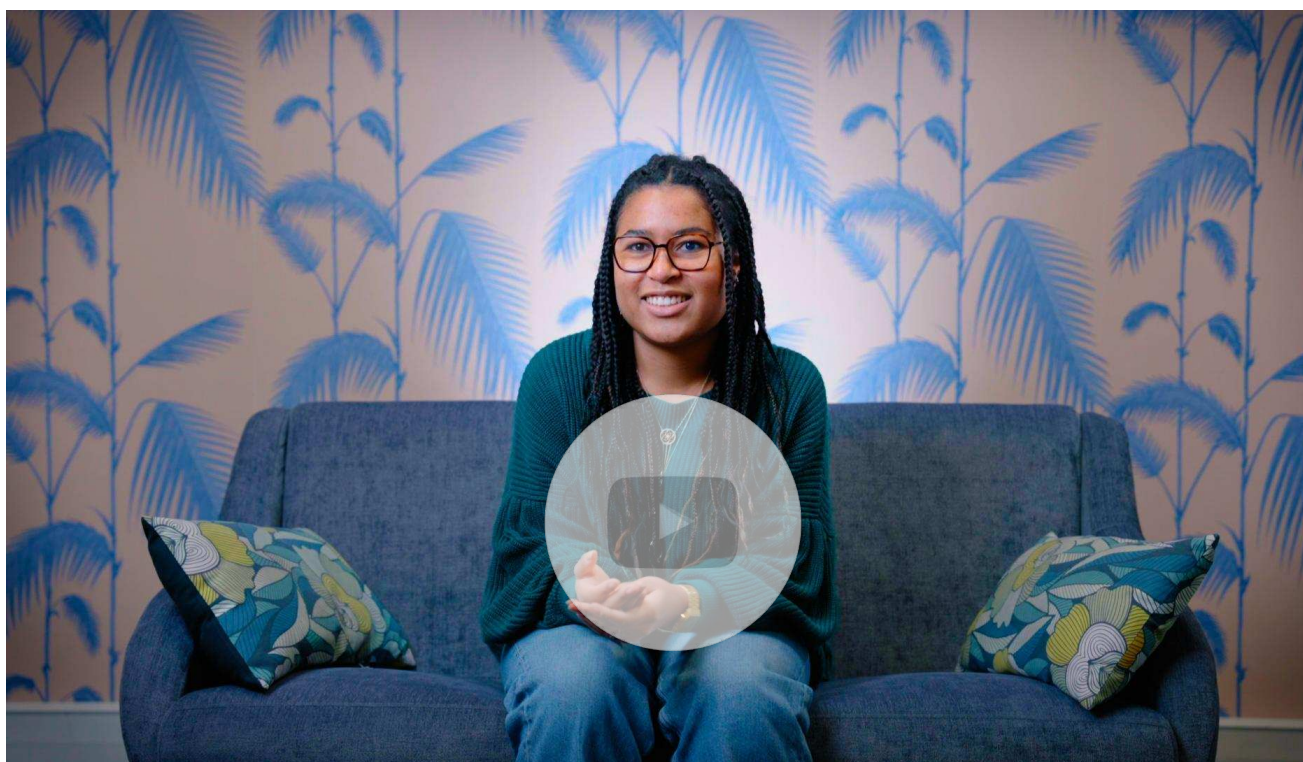




### 3. Benefits of the Metaverse

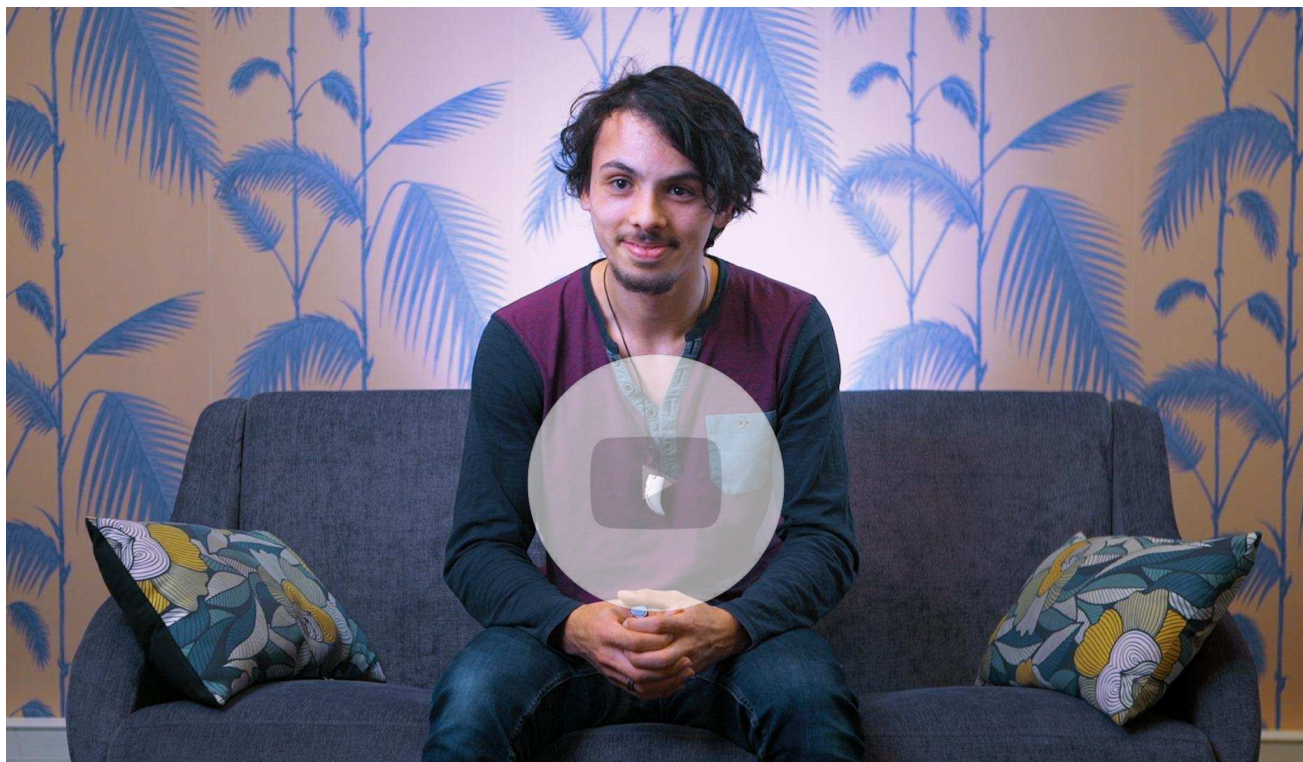


### 4. Risks associated with the Metaverse





## 5.Prevention and regulation in the Metaverse



## 6.I dream of a Metaverse





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the experts who agreed to be interviewed and thus to contribute to this study, as well as the members of the association's Board (Nathalie Turco, Eric Lauvaux, accompanied by Auriane Varin, our intern).

This report was produced in collaboration with the Meta group, which approached Respect Zone concerning the subject of the metaverse, in order to obtain its recommendations as an independent association recognized in the field of cyber-violence prevention.

Assisted by Heaven for the youth survey and Ugo Navarra for the design.

English version proofreading was curated by Oriana Timsit and Sarah Kasha.

Thank you all.

# OUR TEAM

Philippe Coen



**Philippe Coen** is President and Founder of Respect Zone. Lawyer by training. Law degree from Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Paris X. Auditor of the Academy of the International Court of Justice of The Hague, LL.M. Harvard Law School & Kennedy School of Government. Author of '*Internet contre Internhate - 50 propositions pour détoxifier les réseaux sociaux*', Ed. Le Bord de l'Eau and '*Company Lawyers: independent by design*' (Lexis Nexis), '*Droit international du commerce électronique*' (Sweet & Maxwell), the legal encyclopedia '*Droit de la Communauté Européenne*' (Matthew Bender - Lexis Nexis) and '*Company Lawyers, Independent by Design*' (Lexis Nexis). Philippe Coen is Vice President of ICW (In House-Counsel Worldwide), Honorary President of ECLA (European Company Lawyers Association), Secretary General of UNIFAB, President and Founder of the French *Legal Profession Ethics Committee* (AFJE-Cercle Montesquieu). He co-directs the *Respect Zone Digital Human Rights Clinic* at Paris Dauphine.

## Sandrine Richard



**Sandrine Richard** practiced law at the Paris Bar for more than 10 years before joining Cristal Group International as Director of Business Ethics and Business Diplomacy from September 1, 2021 until December 31, 2022. Sandrine Richard is a graduate of the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas and of the Institut National des Hautes Études de la Sécurité et la Justice (INHESJ), which was previously attached to the Prime Minister (Diploma in Business Protection and Economic Security). She is also a certified auditor and consultant at ETHIC Intelligence, an accredited auditor in Washington DC in anti-corruption standards (ISO 37001 and 19600), and involved in the CEN/CENELEC group on issues related to the ethics of Artificial Intelligence. She is co-administrator of the AFJE ethics commission. She is in charge of Respect Zone's Strategic Partnerships and Studies.



Assisted by **Otilia Avram** (Project Manager)

Otilia Avram is a Master's student at PSIA (Paris School of International Affairs), Sciences Po Paris. Otilia holds a Bachelor's degree in Politics and Government from the same university and has a strong academic background in European and foreign affairs, Middle Eastern politics, public international law and human rights. Over the years, she has interned with several NGOs focusing on human rights and poverty alleviation.

## List of consulted experts

1. **Accuracy** - French independent consulting firm
2. **Frédéric Bardeau** - President and co-founder of Simplon.co
3. **Laurent Bitouzet** - Commander of the National Gendarmerie Officers' School
4. **Colette Bouckaert** - Secretary General and Head of European and legal affairs of iDfRights
5. **Xavier Brandao** - President and co-founder of #jesuislà
6. **Jean-Marie Cavada** - President of iDfRights
7. **Jean Luc Chetrit** - Managing Director of the Union des Marques
8. **David Cohen** - Head of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department at the Pitié- Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris
9. **Laurent Cohen-Tanugi** - Lawyer
10. **Anne Cousin** - Associate lawyer at Herald
11. **Giuseppe de Martino** - President and co-founder of Loopsider
12. **Chloé Delay** - Attorney at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
13. **Axelle Desaint** - Director of Tralalere's digital education division and Director of Safer Internet Day France
14. **Maurits Dolmans** - Attorney at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
15. **Pascal Etain** - Lecturer at Paris Dauphine University
16. **Christiane Féral-Schuhl** - Lawyer specialized in new technologies and digital law
17. **Jean-Claude Goldenstein** - European-American technology entrepreneur
18. **Alexei Grinbaum** - Philosopher and physicist, Research Director at the Larsim laboratory of CEA-Saclay
19. **David Gruson** - Health Program Director at Luminess
20. **Audrey Herblin-Stoop** - Director of public affairs and external communication of the Betclig group
21. **Guillaume Jagerschmidt** - Lawyer at De Gaulle Fleurance
22. **Aliénor Kamara Cavarroc** - Lawyer
23. **Konstantinos Karachalios** - Managing director of the IEEE Standards Association and member of the IEEE Management Council
24. **Catherine Kessedjian** - Professor Emeritus at Panthéon-Assas University
25. **François-Charles Laprêvote** - Lawyer at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
26. **Marie L'Hermite** - Lawyer
27. **Jeremie Mani** - CEO Webhelp Canada & Co-founder of Altruwe
28. **Ministère de l'intérieur**
29. **Pierre Paperon** - Founder of the France Meta Association
30. **Annelise Penel** - French Federation of Role Playing Games
31. **Emmanuel Pierrat** - Lawyer
32. **Myriam Quemener** - Council of Europe expert on cybercrime
33. **Véronique Reille-Soult** - Expert in opinion management and crisis communication
34. **Sophie Roosen** - Brand and Impact Director of the Union des Marques
35. **Christophe Roquilly** - Professor at EDHEC Business School and Director of the EDHEC Augmented Law Institute
36. **Dan Rotenberg** - Deputy Head of the Cybercrime Unit at the European Commission
37. **Hugo Spiess** - Co-founder and CEO of Prosoon
38. **Marc Tassé** - Canadian Forensic Accountant
39. **Cécile Théard-Jallu** - Lawyer at De Gaulle Fleurance
40. **Serge Tisseron** - Doctor of psychology and Founder and President of the Institute for the History and Memory of Disasters (IHMEC)
41. **Christophe Torrisi** - Head of the Economic Intelligence and Security department at IHEM
42. **Nicolas Vayatis** - Co-founder and director of the Borelli Center
43. **Henri Verdier** - France Digital Ambassador
44. **Catriona Wallace** - Founder of the Responsible Metaverse Alliance



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