



## **Communications Committee Report: *Regulating in a Digital World*** **Debate on 12 June 2019**

This briefing identifies relevant reports and useful documents, including recent parliamentary materials and press articles, which may be of assistance to Members in preparing for the following debate:

Lord Gilbert of Panteg to move that this House takes note of the Report from the Communications Committee *Regulating in a digital world* (2nd Report, HL Paper 299).

Copies of the materials are available for collection from the Library.

### **Key Information**

- House of Lords Communications Committee, [Regulating in a Digital World](#), 9 March 2019, HL Paper 299 of session 2017–19, pp 3–5; and [Government Response](#), 15 May 2019

*Summary of the committee report on regulation of the digital world, including coverage of online harms and large technology companies. Key recommendations include creating a set of ten principles for regulation of the internet and a new Digital Authority to oversee the regulation. The Government's response to the committee's report states that the committee's recommendations are closely aligned with the Government's approach and refers to the Online Harms White Paper which was published in April 2019.*

- HM Government, [Online Harms White Paper](#), April 2019, CP 57, pp 5–10

*Executive summary of the Online Harms White Paper which outlines a new regulatory framework to improve people's safety online. This covers proposals to establish a new statutory duty of care and an independent regulator to oversee and enforce compliance.*

- House of Lords Communications Committee, '[Chairman Responds to the Online Harms White Paper](#)', 8 April 2019

*News release from the committee, quoting the chairman of the committee, Lord Gilbert of Panteg, responding to the Government's Online Harms White Paper. He stated that "the need for further regulation of the digital world goes beyond online harms, however. A comprehensive new approach to regulation is needed to address the diverse range of challenges that the internet presents".*

- Ofcom, [Online Nation: 2019 Report](#), 30 May 2019, pp 3–11

*Executive summary of Ofcom's annual report looking at people's experiences of using the internet and how they are being served by online content providers. This includes information on time spent online, exposure to potential online harms and understanding of data collection and funding.*

- Ofcom, [Adult's Media Lives 2019](#), 23 May 2019, pp 5–7

Overview of Ofcom report looking at how adults use and understand digital technology; this includes findings that there are “growing concerns about media technology ‘spying’ on users” and a “growing sense of disillusionment with media organisations and tech giants”.

- Doteveryone, [Regulating for Responsible Technology](#), October 2018, pp 5–6

Executive summary of a report on regulating digital technology by Doteveryone, an independent think-tank exploring responsible technology. This recommends establishing a new Office for Responsible Technology which would have three functions: empower regulators, inform the public and policymakers and support people to find redress.

### Parliamentary Debate, Statements and Questions

- A selection of written questions from both Houses: [HL15782](#) (29 May 2019); [254131](#) (22 May 2019); [254190](#) (22 May 2019); [HL15201](#) (25 April 2019); [HL15165](#) (24 April 2019)
- [Debate on ‘Online Harms White Paper’](#), HC Hansard, 8 April 2019, cols 55–77
- [Debate on ‘Online Harms White Paper’](#), HL Hansard, 30 April 2019, cols 898–944

### Press Articles and Comment

- Alex Hern, [‘House of Lords Report Calls for Digital Super-regulator’](#), *Guardian*, 9 March 2019
- Henry Mance, [‘Lords Hits Out at Big Tech Over Internet Privacy’](#), *Financial Times* (£), 9 March 2019
- Charles Hymas and Mike Wright, [‘Britain to Have ‘Toughest Internet Laws in World’ as Government Backs Duty of Care’](#), *Telegraph* (£), 8 April 2019
- Alex Hern, [‘Internet Crackdown Raises Fears for Free Speech in Britain’](#), *Guardian*, 8 April 2019

### Further Information

- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [‘Digital Charter’](#), 8 April 2019
- Ofcom, [Adults: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2019](#), 30 May 2019
- Doteveryone, [People, Power and Technology: The Tech Workers’ View](#), May 2019
- House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [Disinformation and ‘Fake News’: Final Report](#), 18 February 2019, HC 1791 of session 2017–19
- House of Lords Library, [Regulating the Internet: Online Harms White Paper](#), 25 April 2019

---

House of Lords Library briefings provide a selection of politically balanced reading material intended to help Members prepare for debates. Briefings are published on the Library’s [parliamentary intranet site](#) in advance of debates, and are also automatically emailed to those Members who have their name on the speakers’ list.

**Please respect the copyright of the owners of the documents cited. The Library is not responsible for either the views or the accuracy of external content. Any comments on Library briefings should be sent to the Head of Research Services, House of Lords Library, London SW1A 0PW or emailed to [purvism@parliament.uk](mailto:purvism@parliament.uk).**