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The Onlife Manifesto

Being Human in a Hyperconnected Era

- **Open Access: this content is freely downloadable as an eBook!**
- **Result of “the Onlife Initiative,” a one-year project funded by the European Commission to study the deployment of ICTs and its effects on the human condition**
- **Inspires reflection on the ways in which a hyperconnected world forces the rethinking of the conceptual frameworks on which policies are built**

What is the impact of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on the human condition? In order to address this question, in 2012 the European Commission organized a research project entitled The Onlife Initiative: concept reengineering for rethinking societal concerns in the digital transition. This volume collects the work of the Onlife Initiative. It explores how the development and widespread use of ICTs have a radical impact on the human condition. ICTs are not mere tools but rather social forces that are increasingly affecting our self-conception (who we are), our mutual interactions (how we socialise); our conception of reality (our metaphysics); and our interactions with reality (our agency). In each case, ICTs have a huge ethical, legal, and political significance, yet one with which we have begun to come to terms only recently. The impact exercised by ICTs is due to at least four major transformations: the blurring of the distinction between reality and virtuality; the blurring of the distinction between human, machine and nature; the reversal from information scarcity to information abundance; and the shift from the primacy of stand-alone things, properties, and binary relations, to the primacy of interactions, processes and networks. Such transformations are testing the foundations of our conceptual frameworks. Our current conceptual toolbox is no longer fitted to address new ICT-related challenges. This is not only a problem in itself. It is also a risk, because the lack of a clear understanding of our present time may easily lead to negative projections about the future. The goal of The Manifesto, and of the whole book that contextualises, is therefore that of contributing to the update of our philosophy. It is a constructive goal.

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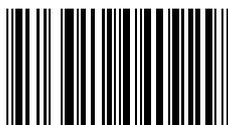
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