

## Section 3 Responses to dis-/mis-information on the Internet

With the increasing usage rates of SNS, video sharing services, and internet news sites, the internet is becoming an important means for people to collect information. In particular, SNS is thought to be increasing its presence as social infrastructure for information gathering, dissemination, and communication.

In this context, problems surrounding the distribution of information in the digital space, such as the distribution and spread of dis-/mis-information on the Internet,

defamation, and other information that infringes on the rights of others, are also becoming more serious.

To address these issues, it is necessary to proactively take comprehensive measures, including institutional actions, support for the development of countermeasure technologies, and the improvement of ICT literacy, while taking into account international trends and giving full consideration to freedom of expression.

### 1. Overview of key challenges

Due to changes in the global situation, social structure, and technologies, the risk of the distribution and spread of dis-/mis-information is increasing. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Report 2025<sup>1</sup>, dis-/mis-information is currently ranked among the top serious risks for both the next two years and the next decade, and is considered the most significant risk over the next two years. For example, in the 2024 elections held around the world, there were a number of coverages of questionable or unconfirmed information<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, in Japan, there is a growing problem with the distribution of information that infringes the

rights of others, such as defamation. For example, the number of consultations to the Illegal Harmful Hotline has remained high in recent years, reaching 6,403 in FY2024<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, according to a survey<sup>4</sup>, 60.6% of respondents in the 2024 survey said they had "witnessed" posts on the Internet that hurt others (defamation). Over 40% of respondents have witnessed posts that use copyrighted materials such as images or videos from a work without permission (copyright infringement) or posts that use other people's photos or names without permission (**Figure 1-2-3-1**).

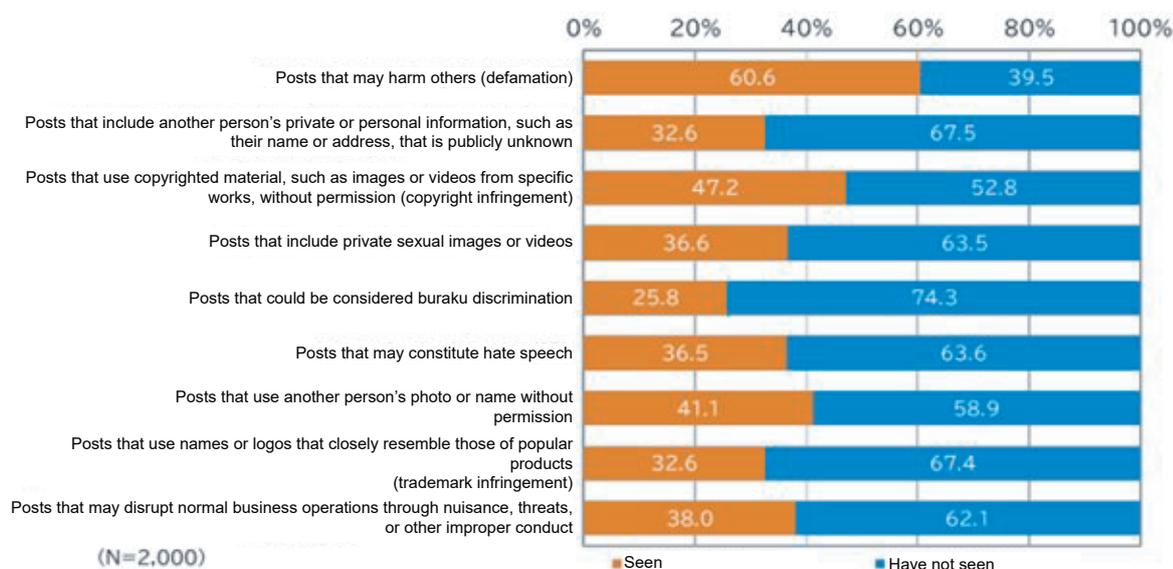
<sup>1</sup> WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM "Global Risks Report 2025" <<https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2025/>> (Reference March 10, 2025)

<sup>2</sup> With elections scheduled for 2024 around the world, and concerns about the misuse of AI to spread dis-/mis-information, in February 2024 major technology companies, including Google, Meta, X, and TikTok, signed the "Tech Accord to Combat Deceptive Use of AI in 2024 Elections" (as of April 2025, 27 companies are participating). The companies that signed the accord agreed to eight major commitments, including detecting false election content generated by AI and raising public awareness, and promised to work on measures to combat the deceptive use of AI in elections (AI Elections Accord "A Tech Accord to Combat Deceptive Use of AI in 2024 Elections" <<https://www.aielectionsaccord.com/>>). However, in reality, there have been reports of a series of incidents in the 2024 elections around the world, including interference with suspected false images, videos, and audio, and the dissemination of suspected false information. For example, in the 2024 U.S. presidential election, fake videos were released and circulated of people posing as election officials tearing up mail-in ballots, as well as information about large-scale malfunctions in voting machines.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Section 2, 2, Chapter 1, Part II "Current status of the telecommunications field in Japan"

<sup>4</sup> MIC "Study Group on Addressing Issues Related to Information Distribution in the Digital Space (2nd meeting) Document 2-1" <[https://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_sosiki/kenkyu/digital\\_shokadai/index.html](https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/kenkyu/digital_shokadai/index.html)>

Figure 1-2-3-1 Experience of witnessing posts containing illegal or harmful information (October 2024)



(Source) MIC (2024) "Study Group on Addressing Issues Related to Information Distribution in the Digital Space (2nd meeting) Document 2-1"<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Direction of response

Addressing issues surrounding the distribution of information in the digital space requires comprehensive measures, including institutional responses, support for the development of countermeasure technologies, and

the improvement of users' ICT literacy. Here, recent developments in institutional responses, the development and support of countermeasure technologies, and the improvement of users' ICT literacy will be discussed.

### (1) Enforcement of the Information Distribution Platform Act

In May 2024, a partial amendment to the Provider Liability Limitation Act (the Act on the Limitation of Liability of Specified Telecommunications Service Providers for Damages and the Right to Demand Disclosure of Sender Identification Information) was<sup>6</sup> passed to obligate large-scale platform operators to take measures to (1) speed up their response and (2) make their operational status more transparent in order to deal with illegal and harmful information, such as defamatory comments, on the Internet. Under this revised law, the title of the law was also changed to the "Act on Measures Against Rights Infringement, etc. Arising from Distribu-

tion of Information by Specified Telecommunications" (Information Distribution Platform Act).

In order to enforce this amended act, the MIC clarified what types of information distribution constitute an infringement of rights or a violation of laws and regulations, and<sup>7</sup> formulated "Illegal Information Guidelines" to provide examples of illegal information that large-scale specified telecommunications service providers should include when formulating "Standards for the implementation of transmission prevention measures." The amended act came into effect on April 1, 2025.

### (2) Development of technologies against dis-/mis-information, and support for the development

In order to technically address the risk of the distribution and spread of dis-/mis-information on the Internet, including dis-/mis-information caused by generative AI, the MIC is promoting support for the development of countermeasure technologies through the "Development and Demonstration Projects for Countermeasure Technologies against Dis-/Mis- Information on the Internet."

For example, with regard to countermeasure technology for determining whether information on the Internet was generated by AI, development and demonstra-

tion have been underway since FY2024, primarily targeting images and videos. In FY2025, efforts will continue for the social implementation of these technologies, and in order to address the distribution and spread of even more dis-/mis-information in the future, it is planned to expand the scope of determination to include audio and other low-resource data that is difficult to distinguish.

In addition, since FY2024, development and demonstration efforts have been underway to create technologies that ensure the authenticity and reliability of infor-

<sup>5</sup> MIC "Study Group on Addressing Issues Related to Information Distribution in the Digital Space (2nd meeting) Document 2-1" <[https://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_sosiki/kenkyu/digital\\_shokadai/index.html](https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/kenkyu/digital_shokadai/index.html)>

<sup>6</sup> Act to Partially Amend the Act on the Limitation of Liability of Specified Telecommunications Service Providers for Damages and the Right to Demand Disclosure of Sender Identification Information (Act No. 25 of 2024)

<sup>7</sup> Guidelines on Article 26 of the Act on Measures Against Rights Infringement, etc. Arising from Distribution of Information by Specified Telecommunications (Enacted on March 11, 2025)

mation senders, enabling recipients to assess the credibility of information amid the vast volume of content available on the Internet. In FY2025, these efforts will advance toward social implementation and interna-

### (3) Improvement of ICT literacy

In order to handle information appropriately, it is important to improve ICT literacy, as it is the foundation for appropriate handling.

In January 2025, the MIC announced the launch of “DIGITAL POSITIVE ACTION,” a public-private partnership project being promoted together with platform operators, telecommunications carriers, and IT-related companies, and other relevant organizations, with the aim of improving users’ ICT literacy on the Internet and SNS<sup>8</sup>. The comprehensive website, which was launched in February of the same year, lists various initiatives such as events and educational materials by affiliated companies and organizations. In May of the same year, in connection with the “DIGITAL POSITIVE ACTION,” the “ICT Literacy Survey” was published to assess the

tional standardization, while also expanding the scope of authenticity and reliability assurance to include the content of the sent information itself.

current state of ICT literacy, such as users’ awareness of ICT literacy and the tendency of spread of dis-/mis-information, and to promote efforts to improve ICT literacy<sup>9</sup>. The survey revealed that 25.5% of people who came into contact with dis-/mis-information spread it using some means, highlighting the importance of efforts to improve users’ ICT literacy. To further raise awareness of users’ ICT literacy, TV and web commercials for ICT literacy began to be broadcasted in the same month<sup>10</sup>. Going forward, this project plans to continue holding seminars and symposiums conducted by a variety of companies and organizations, creating educational materials, and conducting public relations activities for citizens using various advertising media.

<sup>8</sup> MIC “Let’s build and protect a safe and enjoyable information society DIGITAL POSITIVE ACTION” <<https://www.soumu.go.jp/dpa/>> (Reference March 14, 2025)

<sup>9</sup> MIC “ICT Literacy Survey” <[https://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_content/001008791.pdf](https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_content/001008791.pdf)>

<sup>10</sup> “MIC | Press Release | Publication of the Results of Survey on ICT Literacy and Launch of TV and Web Commercials” <[https://www.soumu.go.jp/menu\\_news/s-news/01ryutsu05\\_02000176.html](https://www.soumu.go.jp/menu_news/s-news/01ryutsu05_02000176.html)>