

## **LITMUS PAPER FOR DEMOCRACY:**

### **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS ON THE INTERNET**

Progress and diffusion of the Internet has made its possible gains and losses in terms of fundamental rights and freedoms an object at issue. Since the emergence of the Internet, two fundamental rights and freedoms have especially been held under the microscope: freedom of expression and the right of privacy.

It is, however, seen that these two rights are evaluated through very different points of view. Indeed, at the time when the Internet was born and began becoming widespread, the emphasis was on the fact that this kind of communication would ensure a gain never seen before, in terms of actualising the freedom of expression in every aspect. In the course of time, however, everyone found out this wasn't exactly the case.

Besides, another important right: the right of privacy should be added, if we are to analyse the Internet regarding fundamental rights and freedoms. In order to ensure protection of the right of privacy, it becomes gradually more important to establish legal regulations for protecting personal data in digital environment.

The approach by a state regarding these two fundamental rights provides a notable datum about the level of democracy in related country. In this respect, Turkey constitutes a significant example. As a matter of fact, in Turkey, restrictive decisions on Internet access, based on regulations that are often legalized for protecting children, increase gradually; whereas a framework law for personal data protection is not yet to come into effect.