

**6th International Conference on Information Law and Ethics  
(ICIL 2014)**

**Lifting Barriers to Empower the Future of Information Law and  
Ethics**

**Thessaloniki, May 30-31, 2014**

***ABSTRACT***

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**Title of the paper**

**ODR: the future in dispute resolution. The pros, the cons  
and the ethical dimensions**

Alternative dispute resolution methods are gaining ground rapidly in international level. Mediation as being one of them is also promoted by the EU in an effort to ease the backlog of courts and facilitate the service of justice. In this light the European Parliament and the Council adopted the 2008/52/EC directive on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters. Hence the proliferation of disputes arising especially on the internet has led to the proposal of a new kind of ADR, the online dispute resolution. To this end the European

Commission in 2011 proposed for a regulation on online dispute resolution for consumer disputes.

The purpose of this paper will be to describe the main features of ODR, the advantages that are offered by this kind of dispute resolution method and the disadvantages that may arise. The Regulation on consumer ODR will be presented as well. The effort of the author will also be to critically assess the salient role of new technologies and the use of internet as a medium in this method of dispute resolution. Additionally, there will be an assessment of ODR with regards to EU legislation and particularly the fundamental freedom of free access to justice and the principle of effectiveness. Finally it will be examined the choice of the regulation instead of the directive as the instrument to implement the online dispute resolution.