

Internet freedom and democracy

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



Internet Freedom and Democracy Recently people more aware about real democracy because technological developments and internet help people who access the internet simultaneously. Especially internet has a great contribution. Internet's most important two features which are pure information and easy accessibility are gift from network developers to general public. Some believes that this intervention is very helpful for humanity and some others argues that internet will be a tool for mean and malevolent people such as terrorists, racist or pedophiles.

Democracy's most well known feature is being free as can as possible. Person who lives in democratic country can do what s/he wants to do without abusing the other people's rights, feelings and freedoms. Accordingly on this definition , people can access to internet when they want. They can communicate with each other or surf on the internet and no one can stop users. Internet is a new way of promoting democracy. It is a new area that capable for keeping in touch with billions of people. It does not need to rest or it never dies. However this event depend on governments and authorities' attitude towards the internet.

As you imagine that, internet's simplicity creates powerful interaction. This interaction ability leads billions of people's attention. This interaction power and lots of people's attention may cause a handicap for Authorities. Because of this great power States and Authorities want to control it. Thanks to the democracy, there is a obstacle for that. Our rights are saved by laws and governments can not inhibit our internet freedom. Let assume that all of the developing and developed countries are beindg governing with complete democracy.

In this circumstance, a large amount of people can reach various information easily. Only one click on the mouse opens a door to the rest of the world. Jamie Metzl describes the internet as a quick and cheap way of exchanging the information. It is a great invention that people may gain information very fast and very easy. People can announce their voice and express their ideas. People may also express themselves without the internet but internet makes this process faster. Sharing ideas has become easier with internet. Because internet provides flow of information without any corruption or changes.

For example (from Peter Brophy and Edward Helpin's article), human rights organizations were challenging with authoritarian governments early 80's but later internet usage has started to grow and they have gained advantage from internet. They published their articles and announced their activities freely. In Peter Brophy and Edward Helpin's article, Amnesty International which is an organization that protects human rights all over the world. In their Indonesia campaign, they used the online communication because government could not making intervention to that area.

Day by day Indonesian people have become more aware about their rights and resisted to government's human rights abuses. Briefly, internet provides democratic rights for people. With internet's contributions people can understand the democracy in fast and easy way. Internet is such a great invention that it is easiest way to foster freedom. There is no militaristic pressure, police stick, or torture for readings, songs and idea expressions. It

means that there is no this kind of scary affects for being free. People know that they can read, listen or say what they want with internet.

This is the main reason for internet's popularity. Completely democratic countries have been allowing flow of information for many years. Except democratic and liberal countries' citizens, people couldn't express themselves freely before the invention of the internet. For example; in Turkey, in early 80's lots of author was imprisoned by military because of their ideologies and books. Also military was burning ideological books. Even today Turkish citizens aren't recognizing the complete freedom. However, it changed recently. Lately 90's internet has become popular and there was no limitation for it.

That interval was the pure freedom for internet users. It is a fact that, only way for spread of an idea is communication. Frequency, power and speed of communication are directly proportional with dissemination of idea or information. A user's idea could be effective on the other user. Different thoughts could become an ideology at the internet. For example; a couple months ago Turkish government has started to applying safe-internet which is software for limiting the internet. Popular bloggers wrote articles about it and they raise awareness about this law.

Firstly bloggers and a lot of users protest this issue on web but it didn't be effective. After that bloggers planned a real protest at streets. They invited both internet users and civil public to strike this issue. Thousands of people responded this call and they protest that law because, government tried to abuse their internet freedom. However, some people argue that internet isn't kind of a tool that helpful for democratic developments. In dictatorships and <https://assignbuster.com/internet-freedom-and-democracy/>

non-democratic countries internet doesn't work properly while process of promoting the democracy.

Censorship issue and authoritarian pressures prevent flow of information. Not only civil people use the internet. Governments have their own websites or blogs. Public's internet is being limited with same technology by governments. Civilian programmers call that the Censor ware. There are lots of ways for blocking or limiting access to websites. Most well-known are Web filters which programmed by states' programmers. Another one is blocking the website. Jonathan Strickland mentioned this issue in his article. For Strickland, Governments block access to the web pages they identify as undesirable.

Undesirable means that the websites which criticizes the state's ideology or contrary with government's activities. As a result, these actions cause a counter belief for internet's democracy foster power. In conclusion, many people believe that internet is accelerating the freedom and democracy in most of the countries. A few people disagreeing with that but generally thought of internet's contributions to democracy is positive. Two main features of this technology are helping people which are fast and easy and fast accessibility and not corrupted information.