**5 Decentralised Networks & Internet Governance**

The internet was initially decentralised to facilitate an equal and transparent interchange of information. However, recently there has been a concentration of power in the hands of a small number of large corporations. This raises concerns around accountability because centralised networks concentrate data ownership, meaning there is a greater chance of widespread data breaches and privacy violations. In response, decentralised networks are gaining popularity once more, highlighting new opportunities for regulation outside (or complementary to) the formal law.

**What is a decentralised network?**

A decentralised network distributes information processing across multiple machines. Each computing device acts as a separate processor that interacts with all the other devices in the network. This contrasts with a centralised network, which is a single computer that handles all computing for a network. A decentralised structure enhances security, reduces the risk of systemic failures, and promotes transparency.

Computing devices today have significant computing power. Decentralised networks take advantage of this computing capability and pair it with networking technology that can help devices quickly interact with each other and coordinate activity. Some decentralised networks may still rely on a central computing infrastructure for things like data storage. However, a fully distributed and decentralised network has no singular computing unit controlling any process.

**Governance of Decentralised Networks**

1. **Decentralised Autonomous Organizations (DAOs)**: DAOs are a prime example of decentralised governance. They use blockchain technology and smart contracts to automate decision-making processes, allowing for democratic participation without the need for a central authority. Members of a DAO can vote on proposals and changes, ensuring that governance is transparent and community-driven based in the geographical location. This enhances compliance with local laws.
2. **Collaborative and regulatory decision-making**: In decentralised networks, decisions are made collaboratively by the network participants. This can involve voting mechanisms, consensus algorithms, or other methods that ensure that the voices of a wide variety of stakeholders are heard.
3. **Modularity**: Decentralised governance often involves modular structures, where different parts of the network can operate semi-independently by smaller groups or individuals. This allows for flexibility and adaptability in governance, and enhanced oversight.