Different definitions[2] exist but common aspects of what the metaverse(s) are or will be include:

Immersive: Bˆ ^} &æ} • ˘ |ææ} * æ ˘ • ^¦ ꞵ -æ\å of view, and through other sensory inputs (e.g. sound, physical interaction), virtual reality can create the perception that the user is physically present in a virtual environment;

Spatial: activity occurs either in simulated spatial environments (virtual reality) or in physical environments enhanced by virtual content (augmented reality);
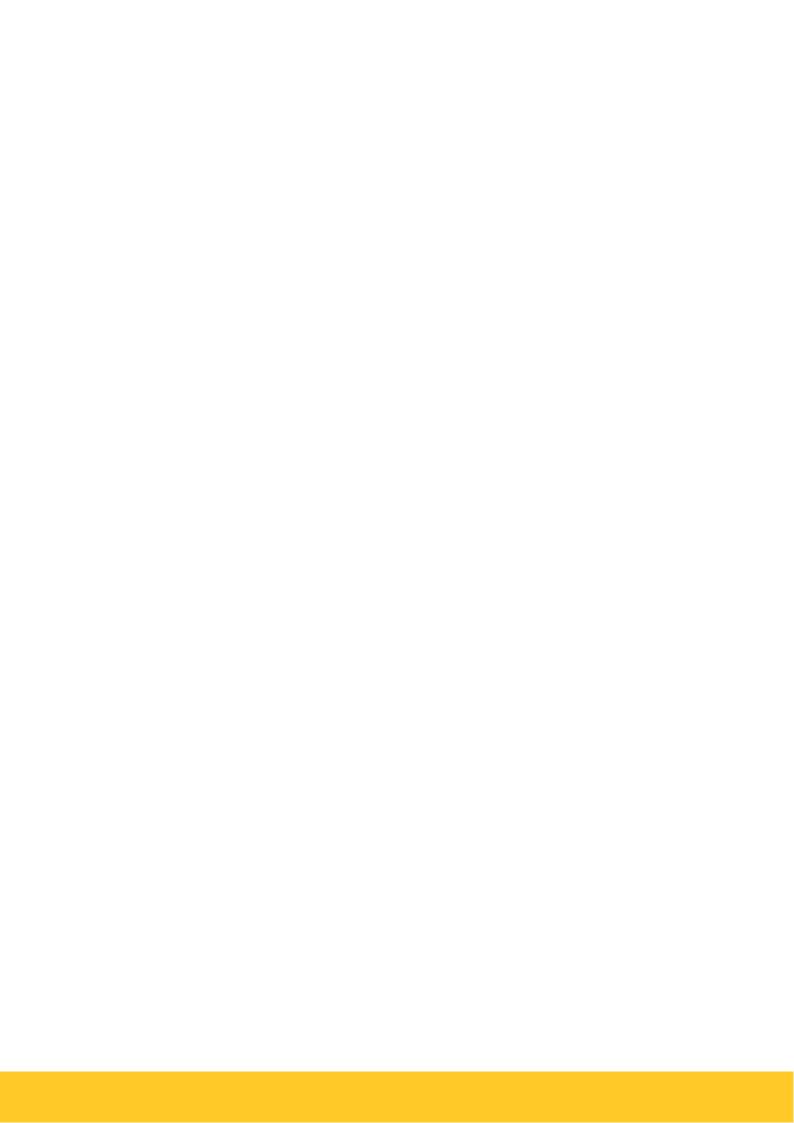
Use of avatars: users are visually represented as avatars . not necessarily human-like, but these can be photorealistic[3];

Multiuser: multiple users can interact at the same time, even in massive numbers;

Multipurpose: it can be used for retail, work, gaming, social activities etc;

Introduction

The metaverse or metaverses are an emerging convergence of technologies that enable users to experience mixed/extended realities (i.e. the merging of physical and virtual environments) for a range of legitimate purposes. There is significant investment in the metaverse(s) and PwCꞵ 2022 T^æ₵^¦•^•˘¦ç^ˆ ã̊ åR̊æ^• c@æ82% of executives expect their business plans to include the metaverse(s) in the next three years[1].

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[1] PWC (2022) *PwC 2022 US Metaverse Survey*. Available at https://www.pwc.com/us/en/tech-effect/emerging-tech/metaverse-survey.html

[2] Forster, A. (2022) *Metaverse NEXT - Antonia Forster - 'How to Build a Metaverse' - Lethbridge College*. Available at

offences against the person such as common assault, battery, assault occasioning bodily harm. malicious wounding, sexual assaults against adults or the more generic (and, therefore, potentially helpful) offence of causing adults to engage in sexual activity without consent. The exclusion of the latter is quite surprising, given that the equivalent offence against children is included amongst the priority offences.[10]

A more general obstacle to the implementation of the Act is its length (currently 241 sections and 17 schedules) and overall complexity, which could make it impenetrable for many and aggravate interpretative difficulties.

OFCOM can play a pivotal role in addressing some of these shortcomings by including metaverse-specific guidance in the code of practice and, more generally, encouraging and supporting online service providers to adequately address metaverse-related crime risks. The