Abstract

In this article, we present an on-going research project about virtual communities. After an introduction (1) we raise the main research questions and present some theoretical considerations (2). In part three we propose basic definitions for communities. In a fourth part, we describe preliminary results of a personal network study we conducted in summer 1998 with 101 frequent users of chatgroups and newsgroups in Switzerland. After a short discussion (5) we present an outlook for future research (6).