

# Investigation into the potential of artificial intelligence in the digital age

As a general-purpose technology, artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to change our lives. It could bring many benefits, from increasing farming efficiency to helping to fight climate change and making transport safer, cleaner and more efficient. However, AI also generates a number of issues, such as opaque decision-making, discrimination, or intrusion into our private lives. To investigate these challenges and to analyse the impact of AI on the EU economy, the European Parliament decided in June 2020 to set up a special committee. The special committee on artificial intelligence in a digital age (AIDA) is expected to vote on its final report on 22 March 2022.

## Special committee on artificial intelligence in a digital age

The European Parliament [decided](#) to set up a special committee on artificial intelligence in a digital age (AIDA) on 18 June 2020. Its 12-month mandate was to analyse the future impact of AI on the EU economy and its different sectors and its contribution to business value and economic growth, investigate the challenge of deploying AI, and analyse non-EU countries' AI approach. The committee should submit an evaluation defining common EU medium and long-term objectives and the steps needed to reach them. The committee is chaired by Dragoş Tudorache (Renew Europe, Romania) and has 34 full [Members](#).

The committee has exchanged views with the Commissioners responsible for internal market and digital affairs, and held hearings with experts, policy-makers, and business representatives. The hearings have explored (for example) AI's potential in fighting climate change and cancer, as well as its use in agriculture and financial services. The AIDA committee has also held workshops on topics such as 'AI and law enforcement' and 'AI and public administration'. The AIDA [working papers](#) summarise the key takeaways from these hearings, including the positions of political groups.

## Report

The AIDA committee published a [draft report](#) (rapporteur: Axel Voss, EPP, Germany) on 2 November 2021, which outlined AI's enormous potential to improve almost every area of our lives, from helping to combat pandemics and global hunger to improving healthcare. It could also significantly increase productivity, innovation, job creation and growth. According to the draft report, the EU should not regulate AI as a technology; but the type, intensity and timing of regulatory action should rather depend solely on the type of risk associated with a particular use of an AI system. The draft text warns that the EU is currently falling behind in the global tech race. If the EU wants to remain competitive, it needs to become an AI leader and set global standards. AI technologies also raise crucial ethical questions and fundamental rights concerns. Against this backdrop, the draft report addresses the opportunities and risks of AI in six specific areas: health, the EU Green Deal, external policy and security, competitiveness, democracy and the labour market. During the 13 January 2022 [debate](#) on the 1 384 amendments tabled to the draft report, some Members stressed the risks of discrimination inherent in AI and emphasised the importance of also using private funding for AI development. Members from different political groups disagreed on the question whether the General Data Protection Regulation should be touched in the process of future regulation of AI. The AIDA committee is expected to vote on its final report on 22 March 2022, with Parliament then expected to consider the report in plenary in May 2022.

The AIDA report will complement other legislative and non-legislative initiatives in this area, such as the European Commission proposal for an EU regulatory framework on AI. As co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council are currently discussing this [proposal](#).

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Author: Maria Niestadt, Members' Research Service  
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[eprs@ep.europa.eu](mailto:eprs@ep.europa.eu) (contact) <http://www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu> (intranet) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank> (internet) <http://epthinktank.eu> (blog)