

## Artificial intelligence: huge potential if ethical risks are addressed

- Special committee draft report highlights that EU needs to be AI leader in order to set global standards
- Huge benefits of use of AI against climate change, pandemics and in the labour market
- AI can also pose crucial ethical and legal questions, including military use and by authoritarian regimes

**Artificial Intelligence regulation should focus on the level of risk associated with specific uses, a draft report presented in the AIDA committee on Tuesday says.**

The [draft text](#), presented today by the rapporteur, says that the public debate should shift towards a focus on the enormous potential of AI, which offers humankind the unique chance to improve almost every area of our lives. AI could help combat climate change, pandemics and global hunger, and enhance quality of life through personalised medicine.

According to the draft document, AI can substantially increase productivity, innovation, growth and job creation. The EU should not regulate AI as a technology; instead, the type, intensity and timing of regulatory intervention should solely depend on the type of risk associated with a particular use of an AI system. The text warns that the EU is currently falling behind in the global tech race that will determine the future political and economic global power balance. In order to remain both economically competitive and a global power, the EU needs to become a global power in AI, the text say.

The draft report identifies policy options for unlocking the potential of AI in health, environment and climate change, competitiveness, and the labour market. It notes that autonomous AI systems are at odds with the information duties laid down in the EU's [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#), which has led to legal uncertainty and lack of cooperation in the health sector.

### Crucial ethical and legal questions

The draft report also highlights the challenge of reaching a consensus within the global community on minimum standards for the responsible use of AI, and concerns about military

research and technological developments into weapon systems without human oversight.

The draft text stresses that AI technologies could however pose crucial ethical and legal questions. Authoritarian regimes apply AI systems to control, spy on, monitor and rank their citizens. Dominant tech platforms use them to obtain more information on a person than is possessed by public authorities or their doctors, lawyers or bankers. According to the draft, this challenges the sovereignty of our nation states, the foundations of democratic systems and the safeguarding of fundamental rights.

### Quote

Lead MEP [Axel Voss](#) (EPP, DE) said: "To be a global leader means to be a leader in AI. While we need to make sure that the risks associated with AI are effectively combatted, the majority of AI applications are risk-free and bring huge benefits to our society - from more effective transport and increased sustainability to combatting diseases and pandemics. However, currently the EU cannot compete in AI. It lacks market power, and investment and research capacities, and is miles behind the US and China. But the EU still has a key advantage in standard-setting. We still have the chance to promote a human-centred approach to AI, based on our core ethical and democratic values".

### Next steps

The draft report (and any amendments) will be put to a vote in committee in March 2022, followed by a plenary debate and vote in May.

### Background

[The AIDA Committee](#) started its work in September 2020. In its [mandate](#), the Committee was tasked to explore the impact of AI on the EU economy and its different sectors, to analyse the AI approach of third countries, and to chart the road ahead. The committee held a number of [hearings and debates](#) to feed into the report. The AIDA final report will be the main output of the committee.

### Further information


[Draft report](#)  
[Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age](#)  
[Meeting documents](#)

## Contacts

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