

Artificial intelligence: MEPs want the EU to be a global standard-setter

- Parliament proposes an EU Roadmap to 2030
- Huge benefits of using AI to address climate change, pandemics and the labour market
- MEPs warn about risks to fundamental rights, particularly privacy

On Tuesday, the European Parliament adopted the final recommendations of its Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age (AIDA).

The text, adopted with 495 votes to 34, and 102 abstentions, says that the public debate on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) should focus on the technology's enormous potential to complement human labour. It notes that the EU has fallen behind in the global race for tech leadership. There is a risk that standards will be developed elsewhere, often by non-democratic actors, while MEPs believe the EU needs to act as a global standard-setter in AI.

They identified policy options that could unlock AI's potential in health, the environment and climate change, to help combat pandemics and global hunger, and enhance people's quality of life through personalised medicine. MEPs say that, combined with the necessary support infrastructure, education and training, AI can increase capital and labour productivity, innovation, sustainable growth and job creation.

The EU should not always regulate AI as a technology, say MEPs, and the level of regulatory intervention should be proportionate to the type of risk associated with the particular use of an AI system.

Risks of mass surveillance

Noting the EU's push for a global agreement on common standards for the responsible use of AI, MEPs encourage like-minded democracies to work together to jointly shape this international debate. They also stress that AI technologies could pose important ethical and legal questions, and voice concerns about military research and technological developments into lethal autonomous weapon systems.

Parliament points out that certain AI technologies enable the automation of information processing at an unprecedented scale, paving the way for potential mass surveillance and other unlawful interference in fundamental rights. MEPs warn that authoritarian regimes can apply AI systems to control, exert mass surveillance and rank their citizens or restrict freedom of movement, while dominant tech platforms use AI to obtain more personal information. For MEPs, this profiling poses risks to democratic systems.

The EU should therefore, according to the Parliament, prioritise international cooperation with like-minded partners in order to safeguard fundamental rights and at the same time cooperate on minimising new technological threats.

Quotes

Lead MEP [Axel Voss](#) (EPP, DE) said: "With this report, we clearly show AI will be a booster for digitalisation and a game-changer in global digital competition. Our AI roadmap puts the EU in a position to take a global leadership role."

"The EU now has the unique chance to promote a human-centric and trustworthy approach to AI. One that is based on fundamental rights, which manages risks while taking full advantage of the benefits AI can bring for the whole of society. We need a legal framework that leaves space for innovation, and a harmonised digital single market with clear standards. We need maximum investment and a robust and sustainable digital infrastructure that all citizens can access," he added.

AIDA Committee Chair [Dragoş Tudorache](#) (Renew, RO) said: "Our future global competitiveness in the digital sector depends on the rules we put in place today. These rules need to be in line with our values: democracy, the rule of law, fundamental rights, and respect for the rules-based international order. Succeeding in this is paramount, as the struggle between authoritarianism and democracy is becoming more and more acute - and unfortunately more deadly, as we have seen with Russia's unjustified invasion of Ukraine."

Next steps

The report will feed into upcoming parliamentary work on AI, in particular the AI Act, which is currently being discussed in the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) and the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) committees. The AI Act is to be voted on jointly by the two committees in late September.

Background

The [AIDA Committee](#) started work in September 2020. It [was tasked](#) with exploring the impact of AI on the EU economy and its different sectors, analysing the approach to AI of third countries, and charting the road ahead for the EU. MEPs held several [discussions](#), the results of which fed into a final report that aims to establish an AI Roadmap up to 2030.

Further information

[Adopted text \(03.05.2022\)](#)

[Video recording of the debate \(03.05.2022\)](#)

[Steps of the procedure](#)

[Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age](#)

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Contacts

Baptiste CHATAIN

Press Officer

☎ (+32) 2 28 40992 (BXL)

☎ (+33) 3 881 74151 (STR)

☎ (+32) 498 98 13 37

✉ baptiste.chatain@europarl.europa.eu

✉ indu-press@europarl.europa.eu

✉ aida-press@europarl.europa.eu

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