Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament

Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age

Our priorities in detail

1. **Respect for ethics, fundamental rights and legal safeguards**
2. **A democratic and socially just approach**
3. **Protecting citizens, users and consumers**
4. **Data and infrastructure**
5. **Research, innovation and investment**
6. **Europe leading the way on setting standards**

Artificial intelligence is already becoming part of our lives, from drones and self-driving cars to online search engines and the factories making the products we buy every day. If we want to stay in control and make sure that we can use these technologies in a human-centric, ethical and socially just way, then Europe needs to act to create the future we want to see.

The special committee on artificial intelligence will study the impact and challenges of AI, and propose a progressive roadmap for the EU. The S&Ds will take the lead on pushing for a European policy that reflects our priorities for AI we can all trust, which respects our social and democratic principles as well as our fundamental rights and legal standards.

1. Respect for ethics, fundamental rights and legal safeguards

- *We want a 'human-centric' and 'human-led' AI in Europe: AI systems must be designed to respect human dignity, human agency and human oversight.*

- *Europe should define and safeguard digital human rights by law and by design as a specific category of citizens' rights in the digital era.*

- *The EU needs a robust legal framework on AI, robotics and related technologies focusing on guaranteeing fundamental rights and establishing clear ethical principles, legal safeguards and liability.*

- *We propose a common legal framework on ethical principles that would apply during the development, deployment and use of AI technologies in the EU, including the software, algorithms and data used and produced by those technologies. This would not undermine the EU acquis and the Charter of Fundamental Rights in these areas, as the current EU legal framework, in particular on protection and privacy and personal data, fully applies to AI.*

- *Any AI legislation must include principles of non-discrimination, protection of privacy and personal data, transparency, safety, accessibility and accountability. A 'privacy-by-design' and 'ethics-by-design' approach should be followed from the initial development to the actual implementation of AI systems.*

- *The competent authorities should ensure that no AI technology entailing significant risks of breaching fundamental rights and safety rules is developed, deployed and used in the EU.*

- *Compliance with the existing EU legislation, together with strong scientific, ethical and legal standards, and methods of democratic oversight, are key to establishing trust in AI systems and their reliability.*

- *Legally binding ethical requirements and a liability regime should be in place for sectors in which AI applications could have a sensitive impact, such as education, the medical sector, transport, banking, insurance, employment, the public sector, law enforcement and the judiciary.*

- *To ensure citizens can trust AI, data-protection legislation, strong scientific, ethical and legal standards, and democratic oversight are needed. This includes basic data protection and privacy principles such as data minimisation, the right to object to profiling and to control one's data, the right to obtain an explanation of a decision based on automated processing, and privacy by design, as well as the principles of proportionality, necessity and limitation based on strictly identified purpose.*

- *Transparency and trustworthiness must always be ensured when using AI, for example by using logbooks to track the procedure of how algorithms and AI applications were created. The competent authorities should have access to information concerning the data used for training, statistical models and theoretical principles related to AI solutions, as well as the empirical validity of their outcomes.*

- *We believe in the added value of a European Agency on Artificial Intelligence to co-ordinate the European approach to AI, with binding guidelines for the implementation of ethical principles, thus avoiding market fragmentation and ensuring legal certainty.*

- *We need an effective intellectual property system that is fit for the digital age, strengthens the EU's competitive advantage and strikes the right balance between providing public protection and incentivising innovation. In particular, we need to take a closer look at whether and how to address human creations assisted by the use of AI, how AI can contribute to better enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) and what alternatives to the creation of an intellectual property right over non-personal data exist within the current acquis to support the EU's developing data economy.*

- *Creations entirely made by AI cannot have the same IPR protection as human-made creations, therefore there must be a clear separation between the two. AI applications developed with public money should be treated as open source.*

- *We support the use of the precautionary principle for AI applications which might be considered dangerous until proven safe. We support the creation of innovation spaces or 'sandboxes' for experimenting, testing and finessing specific AI*

applications which carry some risk but also have a high potential for public good. Controlling the pace of application and development is important to ensure public and expert evaluation, in order to maintain citizens' trust in AI.

- *Any use of military AI must be subject to strict human control and oversight mechanisms, ethical principles and in full respect of international human rights and humanitarian law. Moreover, we want a complete ban on killer robots. Global international laws are needed to regulate the use/ban of any kind of military AI equipment.*

- *Every AI-based system needs a permanent human review mechanism as basic conditions and requirements may evolve and the data in the system may need to be adapted to a changed environment, to ensure compliance with ethical principles such as non-discrimination, transparency or data privacy.*

- *It is important that the specific needs of different AI applications are addressed in various sectors – and if needed also within the sectors – taking into account their use or purposes.*

- *We must encourage the public sector at all levels to find ways AI can improve public services while ensuring transparency in the use of AI.*

- *AI, robotics and related technologies must not violate human dignity, the rule of law or basic legal principles. AI in the area of law enforcement, migration management and border control requires special attention as these technologies pose significant risks which must be adequately addressed when it comes to possible adverse effects on individuals, in particular to their rights to privacy, data protection and non-discrimination, as well as the presumption of innocence.*

- *Europe must address risks of undue influence over the criminal justice sector and the independence of the judicial system by automated decisions.*

- *The misuse of technologies such as biometric recognition can become a direct threat to democracy and, therefore, their deployment and use must respect the principles of proportionality and necessity, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, as well as the relevant secondary EU law such as data-protection rules. It must also comply with ethical principles.*

- *Artificial intelligence will be a vital asset for Europe and Europeans when used successfully, offering more precise and topical analysis for decision-making in all sectors, both public and private.*

2. A democratic and socially just approach

- *Any AI legislation must focus on work and labour market aspects, including workers' rights and working conditions, giving a voice to social partners, paying special attention to new forms of work such as gig and platform work. Legislation must ensure decent working and employment conditions for everyone in the AI-driven digital economy, without undermining national rules on employment conditions, including those laid down in collective agreements, where social partners are given an important implementation role.*

- *The EU has to ensure that productivity gains due to the development and use of AI technologies do not just generate profits for owners and shareholders, but also benefit the workforce, through better working and employment conditions, including wages, and serve society as a whole, especially where such gains come at the expense of jobs.*

- *An 'AI tax' could be used to finance social-protection programmes for workers who might be abruptly displaced from the job market as a result of the use of AI.*

- *There must be no undue surveillance, safety risks, abusive HR practices or discrimination.*

- *The uptake of AI in Europe and its legislation must support the implementation of the EU pillar of social rights.*

- *Empowering citizens and workers is key to unlock the new innovations, jobs and growth that can be achieved with AI and the data economy. Social partners at the level of the enterprises and other appropriate levels should proactively explore the potential of digital technologies and AI to increase the productivity and the well-being of the workforce, including the better allocation of tasks, augmented competence development and work capacities, improved inclusion and the reduction of exposure to harmful working conditions.*

- *A democratic oversight over AI technologies can only be achieved if citizens acquire a high level of overall digital literacy, thus making AI understandable to all, through public-awareness activities focusing on the social, legal, and ethical impacts of artificial intelligence.*

- *Transparency requirements on algorithms and data sets, as well as comprehensive reporting obligations, are needed to allow the necessary public oversight. Democratic oversight also needs institutional control, including possibilities for redress and sanctions.*

- *The EU must incentivise job training in digital systems and the implementation of digital tools. The demand for digital specialists in different areas such as data, AI or supercomputers is increasing rapidly and at this moment it cannot be met. These incentive plans must respect gender equality and non-discrimination criteria.*

- *It is vital to encourage the highest possible level of diversity in development teams, as biased algorithms often result from lack of diversity among developers. To this end, advanced digital literacy must be integrated in all school curricula in Europe, with AI-specific curricula in line with the assessment list of the Ethical Guidelines for Trustworthy AI. STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and maths) subjects should be further encouraged as well, especially for under-represented or vulnerable groups.*

3. Protecting citizens, users and consumers

- *The EU's consumer rights acquis ensures trustworthiness and participation in the economy and society. However the existing rules may not be able to adequately address the challenges related to new AI-related products and services, notably in*

the context of the emerging Internet of Things. The legal framework should therefore be updated in line with our social and democratic values.

- *Europe must analyse the challenges for consumers created by AI and how to approach the regulation of consumer rights in order to make the EU's consumer-rights standards fit for the 21st century. Therefore we propose an AI European Certificate of Compliance with the Ethical Principles to ensure citizens can trust AI.*

- *People – as citizens, users and consumers – should always be aware that they are interacting with a machine when using an automated system. They should have the option to reach a human and the right to obtain an explanation of a decision based on automated processing, and for it to be verified and corrected where necessary.*

- *Consumers should always have the choice to actively 'opt in' to personalised services and profiling activities such as targeted advertising, and they should always be able to 'opt out' and seek redress for automated decisions that are final and permanent. In certain circumstances, people should have the choice to refuse to be subject to an automated system. AI technologies which present a higher risk of causing harm or breaching users' rights must be subjected to appropriate human control and oversight.*

- *Due to the significant risks that may emerge from AI technologies, it is necessary to establish a robust and harmonised framework for the risk assessment of AI technologies and to introduce appropriate provisions and safeguards proportional to the degree of risk, in order to ensure that nobody suffers physical harm or is deprived of their rights, and that there is no harm to society as a whole. In cases where damage occurs, clear liability rules must apply. Therefore, it is essential to update the EU's safety and liability rules in light of AI-enabled products and the revision of the General Product Safety Directive and the Product Liability Directive will be key to achieve the right framework.*

- *Europe must push for fair and non-discriminatory use of AI on platforms, apps and marketplaces. In the digital era, consumers must be protected by fair criteria, strict controls and the right to non-discrimination and unbiased AI datasets.*

- *The concepts of profiling and user scoring should ultimately be avoided, and they should be subject to, and fully respect, the applicable consumer and sectorial legislation.*

- *The EU should promote the use of artificial intelligence in electronic public administration and in the development of platforms that facilitate access for citizens and their democratic rights in society. This process should contribute to reducing the administrative burden, in particular on smaller municipalities.*

4. Data and infrastructure

- *Based on the GDPR and the regulation on the free flow of non-personal data, Europe must further pursue the right framework on the flow of data and have the necessary reliable and high-quality infrastructure for the sharing of data. If any of these foundations is missing, Europe will miss out on the possibilities ahead of us.*

- *The software, algorithms and data included in AI, robotics and related technologies should only use high-quality and unbiased data sets and explainable and unbiased algorithms, and they must neither discriminate nor be based on any stereotypes, for example on grounds of gender, ethnic or social background, age, disability or sexual orientation[1]. This objective can be achieved through recognising, avoiding and eliminating any bias, as well as by correcting the data for any inherent biases.*

- *Data-driven technologies, including artificial intelligence, are increasingly becoming the dominant force in the digital economy and are the key factor for Europe's competitiveness and for the transition to a climate-neutral and circular economy. Any regulatory framework in this context will need to address questions on production, inter-operability, use and sharing of non-personal data.*

- *The issue of market dominance by large players must be addressed in order to avoid concentration of data and AI development in the hands of just a few companies. Europe must promote fair competition and access to data for SMEs and start-ups instead of data ownership.*

- *Europe needs European solutions for data storage and the implementation of common data structures that can evolve into European Data Spaces, taking full advantage of the scale of data generated inside the EU.*

- *We call for the development of AI applications based on public data to improve the quality and effectiveness of public services. To this end, shared projects must be tested as prototypes at the European level before being scaled up.*

5. Research, innovation and investment

- *We call for ambitious and long-term research and innovation policies, combining private and public investments. The EU should support new ideas and innovations with a stronger focus on innovation ecosystems, while also supporting new innovations that build on existing capacities and traditional sectors.*

- *The EU must support research into AI in Europe to ensure that our industry is ready for the game-changing AI possibilities ahead of us.*

- *We must encourage the inclusion of artificial intelligence in the entire value chain of industrial and innovation processes, especially supporting SMEs and micro-enterprises to promote its use and base their services on these emerging technologies.*

- *We support investments in AI in order to develop our own European capabilities and to re-enforce Europe's autonomy, in line with European values and laws, for a socially responsible, gender-balanced and environmentally sustainable approach to AI.*

[1] A more comprehensive list may include the following grounds: race, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, physical or genetic features, age, national minority, ethnicity or social origin, language, religion or belief, political or civic participation, citizenship, civil or economic status, education or criminal record.

- *Other global players such as the US and China are already investing much more in artificial intelligence and the EU must respond to this challenge. The EU must regain its digital sovereignty and become the world leader with its European model for AI.*

6. Europe leading the way on setting standards

- *We believe that the European Union has an important obligation to its people and businesses to catch up with other global actors – and not only for financial reasons. The global leadership race will determine how ethical values and standards are defined within the field of AI.*

- *Europe must protect its social and democratic values. It has to become the world leader in terms of trustworthy AI based on fundamental rights, safety features, transparency and strong consumer rights.*

- *The EU model and legislation on AI must go hand in hand with, and contribute to, the objectives of the Green New Deal.*

- *The EU should set the pace in promoting the socially responsible and ethical use of AI and co-operate with international standardisation bodies to further improve standards on ethics, safety, reliability, interoperability and security. Moreover, Europe should promote and develop standards in the field of smart manufacturing, the Internet of Things, robotics and data analysis, as EU-wide standardisation will foster innovation and guarantee a high level of protection for citizens.*

- *The EU needs to work closely on AI regulation with its like-minded partners who share its democratic values in order to tackle the risk of authoritarian states influencing the international norms. The Global Partnership on AI is of crucial importance as a platform for international co-operation.*

- *Prior compliance assessments verified by European certificates of ethical compliance can ensure that AI technologies comply with the necessary requirements and legal obligations. Such certificates could also be a means to promote European standards worldwide. The EU must lead efforts to promote AI technologies that respect fundamental and human rights.*

- *Regulating AI is a global challenge that needs global solutions. The EU should take advantage of its internationally recognised role as a 'regulator of excellence' and be the first mover, in co-operation with other global partners, especially those sharing its values. The EU must lead the efforts to stop and ban applications of AI technologies that may cause breaches of fundamental and human rights.*

- *The European Parliament has a role to play by co-ordinating with other national and regional assemblies, such as Eurolat, ACP or AIPA.*