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Motion

Mitigating AI threats

Signed by: Youth and Environment Europe (YEE)

Co-signed by: Estonian National Youth Council (ENL)

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the technology that enables computers to perform tasks that require human-like intelligence.¹ Today, we cannot imagine a world without it. From autocorrecting our written texts to analysing data in statistical programmes, all of these tasks make use of machine learning technologies. Recently, another kind of machine learning has been gaining traction: generative AI. This type of machine learning is able to create new content,² enabling computers to write lengthy motions, photoshop pictures and producing music. However, technology is never neutral.³ Indeed, generative AI can be used for good, but also for the bad and the ugly. In this regard, there are two main points of concern: the environment and our safety. As young people will live the longest with the consequences of our choices today, it is of special importance that the technologies we choose to work with are in line with our values.

Environmental aspects

AI has a large environmental impact. The footprint of AI usage is mainly due to the use of water, electricity and materials. Currently, datacentres consume millions of litres of water daily and if we do not act, they are projected to use 7 times more water.⁴ If we do not act, AI is going to use 3000 TWh electricity annually from 2030 onwards. This is the equivalent of approximately 150 years of household energy consumption in a country, similar to the Netherlands.⁵ In other words, if we do not act, we would use a vast amount of scarce resources that should be used responsibly. Therefore it is important to make AI more sustainable and improve its efficiency. To do so, the European Youth Forum proposes using renewable energy for datacenters. This needs to be implemented in good faith and without the intention or appearance of greenwashing.

1. <https://www.eur.nl/en/about-university/vision-strategy-2030/aieur/what-ai>

2. <https://www.kennisnet.nl/artificial-intelligence/wat-is-generatieve-ai/>

3. R. J. Whelchel, "Is Technology Neutral?," in *IEEE Technology and Society Magazine*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 3-8, Dec. 1986, <https://doi.org/10.1109/MTAS.1986.5010049>

4. Herra, M., Xie, X., Menapace, A., Zanfei, A & Brentan, B. (2025). Sustainable AI infrastructure: A scenario-based forecast of water footprint under uncertainty. In *Journal of Cleaner production*, 526 (146528). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2025.146528>

5. <https://www.milieucentraal.nl/energie-besparen/inzicht-in-je-energierekening/gemiddeld-energieverbruik/>

Safety aspects

Our information economy is built on access to reliable information. This can be enhanced by AI usage, but there are also dangers. First, AI can be biased or can hallucinate results. Bias occurs when the data that the AI model uses to learn is biased. This often occurs due to omitted data, or wrong or misleading information input.⁶ AI is also often trained to guess results rather than acknowledging knowledge gaps.⁷ It is therefore important for educational institutions to ensure ethical use of AI, to teach AI literacy and to incorporate critical thinking skills about its overall use. In order to do that, educational institutions need to build their internal capacity on AI literacy as well.

Even more risky are the potential applications of deepfakes. This is generated content that forges real or fictional people or things.⁸ While it potentially has applications that can be used to benefit humanity, it is better known for manipulation and harm. For example, deepfake technology can be used to spread convincing misinformation, as it is difficult to separate fact from fiction. Additionally, deepfakes have been used to commit fraud by impersonating people.⁹ Moreover, deepfakes have been used to intimidate experts and decisionmakers.¹⁰

Recommendations

Considering the above-mentioned observations, the European Youth Forum calls upon:

The European Union and the Member States of the EU

- To create an AI strategy that keeps the EU independent from the United States, China and other hegemonies;
- To adopt and implement the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence;¹¹
- To develop mechanisms and frameworks for the reporting and disclosure of AI's environmental impacts by organisations that offer AI products and services;
- To make regulation that encourages the use of green datacentres, renewable energy sources and carbon-offset practises to reduce environmental impact;
- To criminalise any abuse of AI technologies that are aimed at influencing opinions by harming people and their reputations.

National governments and educational institutions

- To encourage critical thinking and ethical usage of artificial intelligence, in line with UNESCO's competency framework on AI literacy;¹²
- To build capacity of educators, students and pupils on responsible AI usage.

6. <https://azure.microsoft.com/nl-nl/resources/cloud-computing-dictionary/what-are-large-language-models-llms>

7. <https://cdn.openai.com/pdf/d04913be-3f6f-4d2b-b283-ff432ef4aaa5/why-language-models-hallucinate.pdf>

8. <https://competition-bureau.canada.ca/en/how-we-foster-competition/education-and-outreach/publications/canadian-digital-regulators-forum-synthetic-media-digital-landscape>

9. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/deepfakes-and-crisis-knowing>

10. <https://pointer.kro-ncrv.nl/bners-en-artsen-slachtoffer-van-deepfake-videos>

11. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/recommendation-ethics-artificial-intelligence>

12. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ai-competency-framework-students>

Member Organisations of the European Youth Forum

- To create internal policies that enable the responsible use of artificial intelligence;
- To build internal capacity on the use of AI and on AI literacy;
- When using artificial intelligence, to use programs that have low carbon emissions and a smaller impact on the environment;
- To reduce the usage of artificial intelligence where possible;
- To help co-create a paragraph on AI in the next update of the European Youth Forum's strategic plan.



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