

Artificial intelligence in the EU: Regions and cities want to have their say



PUBLISHED OCT 8, 2020
BY [EUROPA](#)

Regions and cities are pivotal in building trust and investment in artificial intelligence (AI), the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) points out in an opinion drafted by Guido Rink (NL/PES), Member of the Executive Council of Emmen. Regions and cities highlight the potential of AI in addressing societal challenges: for example, during the Covid-19 pandemic it has been helping doctors and researchers to diagnose patients, assess risks and prevent hospitals from becoming overburdened.

The European Commission has published a White Paper on Artificial Intelligence as part of its digital strategy for 2020-2025. The CoR shares the Commission's view that AI should be developed and used in a way that is human-centred, ethical and secure. However, it calls for the full acknowledgement of the role of regional and local authorities in promoting the development and uptake of AI and in regulating its ethical aspects.

"Local and regional authorities are best placed to help create an environment propitious to boosting investment in AI in the coming years and building trust in AI. The strength of local communities and networks lies in open, interconnected and adapted local and regional cooperation. This can help in involving policymakers, the public and businesses in the development of AI applications, ethics and regulation. At the same time, we need a common European approach to AI in order to achieve sufficient scale and avoid fragmentation of the single market, with future legislation and compliance monitoring applying to the entire life cycle of the AI application", stresses rapporteur Guido Rink.

The CoR opinion calls for significant EU support to stimulate

private and public investment in AI, using resources from the Digital Europe Programme, Horizon Europe and the European Structural and Investment Funds to meet the needs of local and regional ecosystems. It also highlights the importance of ensuring level playing field in the European market, so that also small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups can benefit from AI.

As the existing EU legislative framework is not specifically tailored to AI applications, the opinion points out that there are currently some gaps in the law. Particular attention must be paid to high-risk applications, such as biometric identification, to avoid discrimination and stigmatisation of individuals and populations. Moreover, AI-specific rules should ensure easy and reliable sharing and re-use of data between businesses and public authorities especially when it can serve the public interest, such as in the case of the Covid-19 pandemic or when it comes to regulating platform economy.

"The future European policy framework should coordinate efforts at European, national and regional level, promote knowledge sharing and ensure cooperation between the private and public sectors. It should allow room and flexibility for innovation, while ensuring that AI is free from bias and does not reproduce discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnicity age, disability or sexual orientation. Moreover, the use of AI technologies must respect human dignity and not undermine working conditions and workers' rights", emphasizes rapporteur Rink.

Rink's opinion will be adopted at the CoR plenary session next week during the European Week of Regions and Cities. The CoR will also publish the first Annual Regional and Local Barometer, which focuses on the effects of Covid-19 crisis in EU regions.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of Europa, on Oct 8, 2020. For more information subscribe and [follow us](#).

Press Contacts

1. **Eric Mamer**
Chief Spokesperson
eric.mamer@ec.europa.eu
+32 2 299 40 73
 2. **Dana Spinant**
Deputy Chief Spokesperson
dana.spinant@ec.europa.eu
+32 2 299 01 50
 3. **Elisaveta Dimitrova**
Head of Unit
elisaveta.dimitrova@ec.europa.eu
+32 2 295 88 38
 4. **Johannes Bahrke**
Coordinating Spokesperson
johannes.bahrke@ec.europa.eu
+32 2 295 86 15
 5. **Vivian Loonela**
Coordinating Spokesperson
vivian.loonela@ec.europa.eu
+32 2 296 67 12
-

Media Assets

Embedded Media

Visit the [online press release](#) to interact with the embedded media.

<https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/europa/releases/en/artificial-intelligence-in-the-eu-regions-and-cities-want-to-have-their-say-351>

Europa

Newsroom: <https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/europa>

Website: <https://europa.eu/>

Primary Email: press@europa.eu

Social Media

Twitter - https://twitter.com/EU_commission

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanCommission>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/europeancommission/>

Linkedin - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-commission>
