

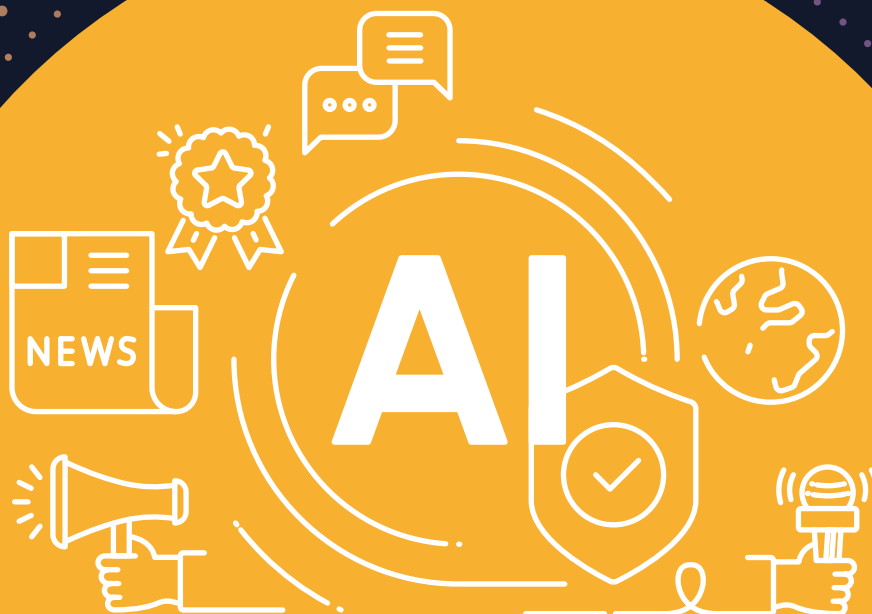
AI4Media Results in Brief: **What policies do we need to ensure a responsible future for AI and Media?**

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Insights from an internal workshop in AI4Media

During the 9th General Assembly in the AI4Media consortium, the University of Amsterdam together with KU Leuven organised a workshop focusing on the question of 'What policies do you need to build a better future for AI and media?' The workshop included participants from partner organisations in the consortium present in Pisa, including several technical experts and industry partners. The workshop was aimed at qualifying the [Pilot Policy Recommendations](#) produced by AI4Media.



A regulation wishlist



Based on the participants' discussions of needed regulation to ensure the responsible use of AI in the media sector, we have distilled the following six predominant wishes amongst the participants.



1

Openness and Open-source: There is a need for regulation that ensures that critical AI infrastructures and models (e.g., LLMs) will be openly available to all (open-sourced) to enable a diverse landscape of AI developments.



2

Transparency of development and use: Regulation should require higher transparency measures oriented towards both the research and expert community and the end-users. For the former, this could include transparency about the process (how the model was trained), the tech (how the infrastructure is built), and the results (e.g., benchmarks) to ensure others can understand the function of the system. For the latter, this could include disclosure and clear explainability elements oriented to the end-users, such as explainability cards.



3

Data access: The need for regulation to support open data access and open APIs for researchers and other stakeholders. Furthermore, regulation should generally support data access and shareability of datasets.



4

Better (global) governance: There is a need for better global governance of AI that is oriented towards societal welfare as opposed to only economic growth. This should entail regulation that would ban certain usages of AI, be more strict for large players, be focused on the purpose of the application as opposed to the application itself, and would account for vulnerable groups in society (e.g., minors).



5

Stimulating research and responsible AI development: Regulation should also stimulate research and responsible development of AI via, for example, the support of public-private partnerships and funding schemes. Furthermore, such schemes should be focused towards 'AI for Good purposes' and should have a long-term focus to ensure that the developed tools are not 'quick fixes', but rather that projects can properly assess and prevent long-term societal harms of AI.

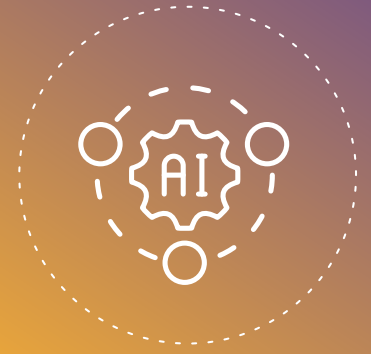


6

Regulating AI's effect on climate change: There should be regulation that prevents the negative effects of AI on the climate by, for example, requiring that large AI models are CO2 neutral and by providing clear climate impact rules.



Tensions around AI across three landscapes



Based on the participants' discussions of several provocative statements regarding AI's role in the media sector and the role of regulation, we here summarise the debates and what was highlighted as problematic and potential solutions. The discussions are divided into three landscapes:



The media
landscape



The research
landscape



The regulatory
landscape

Media landscape



Statement one:

Generative AI should increasingly be used to write news

A few found the **statement concerning**, particularly the word increasingly, and some also noted that this is an **unstoppable wave**.

Several highlighted the need to have humans-in-the-loop continuously and also that authentically **human-produced content should continue to hold value**.

Many foregrounded that it would **depend highly on the use case**, whether this was problematic or not and **highlighted that economics should not be the only driver** for implementing such a system. Rather it would be important to reserve space for other values such as creativity and societal value.

Several also argued that such usage should be **followed by regulation, guidelines and reflection**, which would, for example, demand that content produced with generative AI should be labelled appropriately for transparency.

Statement two:

Editorial content from media organizations should never be removed by private platforms if not illegal

Many highlighted the **importance of removing illegal content**, but also how it can be difficult for platforms to judge and how related problematic **content such as dis- and misinformation is not illegal**, but still highly problematic.

Oppositely, many highlighted the need to **protect freedom of expression of media organizations**, already subject to ethical and editorial standards. It was underlined that the platform's decision-making process **requires more transparency** on how such decisions are made.

Several were **critical towards the questions of 'who' judges**, foregrounding the editorial power the platforms have in this regard and whether **this power should be in the hands of private companies as opposed to public institutions**.

Statement three:

Media organizations should simply use easily accessible AI solutions (like OpenAI) rather than open-source in-house development

This statement was one of the few where there was **clear agreement that this would be highly problematic**.

Some highlighted the **risk of producing AI monopolies** in the hands of large AI companies and how this would **minimise diversity and innovation in the solutions made**.

Several pointed to how this **might minimise the ethical considerations** around the model development, because easily accessible was not seen as mutually inclusive or ethical.

A few highlighted how such a scenario might become a reality due to the **limited budget and resources of media** and how this would be a business decision. However, it would be important to better understand the risk of adopting such models in terms of, for example, **data security and rights**.

Research landscape



Statement one:

API privatization like on Twitter (now X) will become standard practice and research access will be lost

There was strong agreement amongst the participants that this is problematic, but also a reality. Participants generally agreed that there is a **need to ensure access to data for researchers, NGOs, journalists and other civil society** actors via legislation. Some also pointed to how this is already part of emerging EU legislation (e.g. in the DSA).

Several also pointed to how privatisation is not the only issue, **it is also the rising cost of access that comes with that privatisation** and the lack of incentives or legislation pushing in the opposite direction by e.g., promoting open source or building public alternatives.

Some also pointed to the larger issues connected to the **concentration of power amongst big tech** via their power over knowledge and data and how this also threatens diversity in AI innovation, as other actors would have limited access.

Statement two:

Training data becomes a problematic trade-off - either you cannot get the data you need due to strict regulation or you have to use illegal/unethical datasets

Several pointed out how this statement was more a **fact than a controversy**, illustrating the problematic nature of current data practices.

Several highlighted the fact that current research **is reducing the amount of data needed**, which would partly mitigate the issue, as smaller datasets could be more ethically developed as this is currently a resource-intensive process. Several also highlighted the need for more **collaboration and global legislation to ensure standards for ethical dataset production** to produce lasting effects.

Statement three:

AI development/research should never rely on funding from big tech (e.g. Google DNI, Meta)

This statement led to varying responses from the participants, where some fully agreed and others disagreed. Several pointed to the need to ensure **better and more transparent terms of the funding to continue to uphold media and research independence**.

Others pointed to the positives of **private-public collaborations** as a way to both secure funding but also produce relevant research. Some also highlighted the role of private companies in supporting innovation beyond their ecosystem, but that such collaborations should lead to **transparent and open-sourced solutions**.

Yet others pointed to risks connected to such funding, such as continued dependence and the **growing power of big tech**, which holds access to data, infrastructure and funding to push innovation in certain directions.

Regulatory and policy landscape



Statement one:

Big tech wants strict regulation of AI to eliminate small competitors, such as small media organizations or start-ups

This statement **produced some dissensus**. Some found that the statement resonated, highlighting how big tech **can favourably compete in highly regulated spaces**, while others argued against the statement noting that big tech does not seem to **favour regulation as the absence of regulation would by default make them implicit regulators**.

There was a **strong consensus that regulation is important** and that big tech should be regulated even more strictly (also by imposing data sharing obligations), but some also highlighted the **disconnection in the regulation in the EU**, because the big tech companies are in the US and China.

Others noted that **big tech does not fear small competitors** and even if they wanted regulation this would not be the reason.

Statement two:

The use of AI should always be transparently disclosed - this should be a strict regulatory demand

There was a **consensus that disclosure is vital**, but varying opinions on how to decide when and to what degree disclosure is needed.

Many warned that disclosure **could become like 'cookies consent'** with no real function if done too broadly. Some highlighted that it could be a **case-by-case judgment** where high-impact uses should be disclosed, whereas minor less impactful uses did not (e.g., using it in the process, not direct production).

Others highlighted **potential exemptions of creative uses** in movies or entertainment, as it would ruin the user experience.

Statement three:

All applications of AI in media should be high risk in the AI Act

This was the most consensus-making statement, **here everyone disagreed with the statement**, but for varying reasons.

Some highlighted **it would not be feasible**, while others noted **that it should depend on the application of AI** and not on the media domain. Here some suggested that impact assessment should drive the risk score instead and include editorial checks.

Some raised the **question of why and noted down low to no-risk applications**, such as retrieval, classification and annotation, which should not be subject to stringent AI Act requirements.

Statements from participants



The media landscape



"Increasingly sounds concerning. It seems inevitable so we should try to identify and evaluate real cases."



"Private platforms will have a lot of editorial power."



"We don't need more monopolies!"



The research landscape



"Paid access must be made affordable, otherwise it will lead to a great inequality in education and research."



"This is a fact (i.e., API privatization), not a statement. But still problematic."



"Never is impractical but independence should be protected."



The regulatory landscape



"Regulation = EU - Big Tech = US and China."



"Try to find a non-invasive way to disclose it, to avoid the cookie feeling."



"The AI is not high risk, the application is."

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 9th General Assembly in AI4Media took place from October 3-4 and included representatives for the majority of the involved partner organisations.

The workshop took place on the second day of the General Assembly and had a high attendance of around 30-40 participants. The participants came from varying organisations including industry partners, research institutes and universities.

The workshop was held under the Chatham House Rules, meaning that participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed. The AI4Media team behind the workshop included Anna Schjøtt Hansen from the University of Amsterdam (UvA), Lidia Dutkiewicz and Noémie Krack from KU Leuven (KUL).

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

The workshop was divided into three parts that are outlined below:

1. First the participants were given a presentation of the pilot policy recommendations produced by AI4Media.
2. Second, they engaged in the first exercise titled 'Prototyping Policies'. This exercise was inspired by the use of provotypes within participatory design which are understood as: "'types' that embody tensions surrounding an area of interest, in order to support collaborative analysis of that area and to collaboratively explore design possibilities"¹. The participants were asked to move to three different corners of the room, which represented the media landscape, the research landscape and the regulatory and policy landscape. In each corner they were presented with three provocative
3. Third, they were introduced to a last exercise 'The Wishing Well', where they were asked to first write down three wishes for policies that they felt were highly needed. These could be based on the previous discussions or personal experience within their field. Once everyone had written three wishes, they were divided into smaller groups and asked to group the wishes into themes. As the last part of the exercise they were asked as a group to rank each of the overarching themes from most important to least important and finally present this to the other groups.

¹ Boer, L., & Donovan, J. (2012). Prototypes for participatory innovation. In Proceedings of the designing interactive systems conference (pp. 388-397).

CONTACT AND MORE INFORMATION

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