



Artificial Intelligence: ETNO welcomes EU ethics guidelines, calls for supporting European innovation and investment

Brussels, 18.12.2019 – Better customer service, intelligent networks and advanced analytics for social good. These are just some of the ways in which Artificial Intelligence (AI) is empowering positive transformation in digital communications services and networks. In this context, ETNO welcomes the draft “*AI ethics guidelines for trustworthy AI*” launched today by the European Commission’s High-Level Expert Group on AI.

Building AI that is worthy of trust

The draft AI ethics guidelines place European citizens at the heart of AI development and use, respecting fundamental rights, applicable regulation, and core principles that underpin the ethical purpose for AI. The big vision is to create a culture of “trustworthy AI made in Europe”, which will not only protect and benefit individuals and the common good, but also enable Europe to become a globally leading innovator in AI, as it will generate user trust and facilitate AI’s uptake.

In this context, many European telecom operators have already launched their own [guidelines](#), [manifestos](#), dedicated [work streams](#) or [committees](#). This attests that European companies take an ethics-first approach when developing new products and services enabled by AI.

European AI: we must aim for global leadership

Europe’s new AI ethics guidelines should set the framework for boosting trust-worthy innovation. At present, our Continent is lagging behind China and the US, especially when it comes to private equity [investment](#) or [AI patents](#). For this reason, we need a pro-innovation policy framework as well as a strong and credible EU funding framework. The aim should be to support and multiply the efforts of the private and public sectors, while boosting innovation and investment in AI in Europe.

In this context, European telcos will contribute significantly to increasing opportunities for AI uptake in Europe. Thanks to 5G and network virtualisation commitments, telcos will develop AI-enabled services in areas as diverse as the Internet of Things and cloud, edge computing. This is going to be essential to empower the digitisation of Europe’s industrial fabric.

ETNO committed to AI for telcos

ETNO is contributing to the EU debate on AI through its Artificial Intelligence [Taskforce](#), led by Telenor’s VP for Research **Ieva Martinkenaite**. Similarly, top ETNO members like Orange, Telenor and Deutsche Telekom all contribute to the European Commission’s High-Level Expert Working Group on AI.

Building on the work of the past months, ETNO’s AI Taskforce will contribute to the AI Ethics Guidelines by responding to public consultation.

Lise Fuhr, Director General of ETNO, said: “*The draft guidelines are an important step towards trusted European AI solutions, which are of strategic value for the Continent. Either we allow our companies to develop European AI products and services, or we risk becoming just buyers of solutions developed elsewhere*”.

Read more on telcos and AI: [Ideas for building European leadership in AI](#)