



SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The seminar *Artificial Intelligence and its impact on Young People* was organised by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe on 4-6 December 2019 in Strasbourg. It explored the issues, role and possible contributions of the youth sector in ensuring that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is responsibly used in democratic societies and that young people have a say about matters that concern their present and future. The event brought together over 40 youth experts from a variety of sectors – ranging from representatives of youth organisations, youth work, academia, trade unions and public institutions to start-ups, technology and legal experts.

After the three days of seminar, several conclusions can be drawn in relation with AI, young people and the youth sector at large:

1. Youth participation – young people have been recognised as expert and legitimate stakeholders. Nevertheless, proper spaces have to be ensured for their participation in AI decision-making processes at all levels. Empowering young people to act as multipliers and ambassadors of change requires intentional purpose and synergies between different institutions/bodies that are active in the AI field.
2. AI Literacy – there is common agreement that using and understanding what technology is, are two different things. For this purpose, there is a call to invest: in the capacities of young people to become responsible, yet active digital citizens; in the skills of teachers, educators, youth workers and other youth specialist to be better equipped in working with the digital natives generation.

3. Data literacy – complementing AI literacy, education about data is critical. Understanding the value of personal data but also the way data collection works is essential in the AI fuelled world. Shifting from data as any other commodity to data as a highly important asset will require time and an intentional change of behaviour.
4. Youth (digital) work – needs to be supported in all its forms: develop and/or use new AI tools, offer accessible resources to all young people, embrace techniques already used by the business sector to increase its efficiency, without losing its core mission.
5. Need of research – continuous research needs to be supported in order to understand the full impact of AI on young people, particularly those in risk situations. Considering the possible biases of AI and algorithms, research has an important role in researching policies and practices, before they produce harmful effects. Retaining young researchers, with expertise on AI, in academia and public sector should be a priority as right now the private sector is dominating the market, offering more incentives than traditional research hubs.
6. Defining standards and legal frameworks to protect human rights in the new AI context – there is a common perception that regulations are needed, particularly to protect democracy and human rights, and particularly young people’s rights in relation to social rights, the future of jobs and social security, online safety.
7. Youth policy – considering that AI is affecting all dimensions of young people’s lives there needs to be a strong involvement of all stakeholders to shape relevant youth policies, aligned with the digital/AI processes. More synergies have to be created between policies in order to ensure an inclusive approach and a faster response to the needs of young people.
8. The multi-stakeholder approach – platforms for cooperation and networks of expertise have to be transversal in any initiative related to AI and young people. The seminar was proof of how young experts, with different backgrounds, can contribute to the AI debate; yet still learn about other perspectives.
9. Beneficial use of technology – AI is potentially beneficial to improve transparency (e.g. of decision-making processes), solving critical problems (climate change, health) and innovate. This transformative power of technology cannot be denied, yet it has to be done in a mindful manner, with a focus on people and with respect to their human rights. Its affordability has yet to be addressed, as currently the access to advanced technologies still comes with a high price.