

# Parliamentary Conference on Artificial Intelligence

Organised by the Parliamentary Assembly  
of the Council of Europe  
and the Parliament of the United Kingdom

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**CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE, MR THEODOROS ROUSOPOULOS**



## **Conference Conclusions by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Mr Theodoros Rousopoulos**

### **I. Artificial intelligence: a democratic reality and a democratic responsibility**

One overarching conclusion stands out clearly: artificial intelligence is no longer a future issue. It is already shaping public authority, democratic processes, information ecosystems, economies and everyday life.

For parliaments, this means something fundamental: AI governance cannot be left to technical experts, markets or executive authorities alone. Decisions about how AI is designed, deployed and regulated are political decisions. They determine how power is exercised, how accountability is ensured, and how rights are protected.

And this is why the message heard strongly in London, and reflected in the Parliamentary Assembly's long-standing work, is so important: technology must be at the service of representation, not its substitute. Parliaments must remain the place where society sets the boundaries and the safeguards.

We were also reminded that Europe is not operating in a legal vacuum. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law remain fully applicable in the digital age. Our task is not to invent new values, but to ensure that our common standards are effectively upheld in the design, deployment and oversight of AI.

### **II. The positive role of AI for democratic institutions**

While much attention is rightly paid to risks, this conference also highlighted the considerable potential benefits of artificial intelligence when it is designed and deployed responsibly.

In parliamentary contexts, concrete examples discussed included multilingual services, real-time transcription, speech recognition, summarisation of complex documents, improved access to legislative information and enhanced channels for engagement with citizens.

Beyond parliaments, AI can also help public institutions at all levels improve the quality and accessibility of public services. When properly governed, it can support more responsive administration, facilitate access to information and rights, reduce administrative burdens, and improve service delivery in areas such as social protection, health, education and justice – all while respecting fundamental rights and due process.

For citizens and the public at large, responsible AI has the potential to lower barriers to participation, make institutions more understandable, and bring public decision-making closer to people's everyday concerns. Tools that provide clear, accessible and timely

information can strengthen trust, empower individuals to engage more meaningfully in democratic life, and support social inclusion.

Responsible innovation is not a threat to democracy. On the contrary, when aligned with human rights, the rule of law and democratic values, it can become one of democracy's allies.

But, and this is essential, these opportunities only materialise if public authorities remain in control, if safeguards are built in from the start, and if parliaments ensure transparency, accountability and meaningful oversight.

### **III. Grounding AI governance in human rights, democracy and the rule of law**

Throughout the conference, speakers consistently reaffirmed that AI governance must remain firmly anchored in human rights, democracy and the rule of law. This is the heart of the Council of Europe's mission, and it is the compass that must guide our policy choices.

AI systems used by public authorities can directly affect human dignity, equality, due process and access to rights. The risks are particularly important for vulnerable and marginalised groups, including migrants, women, children and minorities.

A strong conclusion from Session I was that AI systems are not neutral. Bias, discrimination and exclusion can arise from data, design choices and institutional contexts. If left unaddressed, these risks may be amplified at an important scale.

It was also emphasised that certain uses raise particularly acute concerns, especially systems claiming to assess emotions, intentions or credibility. The view expressed was clear: such practices lack a reliable scientific basis and pose serious risks to human dignity and fundamental rights. They are incompatible with human-rights standards and should not be used by public authorities.

For the Parliamentary Assembly, this reflects a core principle running [through its work on artificial intelligence](#): the development and use of AI involve multiple actors, but public authorities have a specific responsibility to ensure compliance with human rights, democracy and the rule of law when AI is used in the public sphere. Accountability cannot be outsourced to private developers or hidden behind technical complexity. Individuals must have access to information, meaningful human review, and effective remedies when AI-assisted decisions affect their rights.

In this respect, the Council of Europe's practical work on risk and impact assessment, including the [HUDERIA methodology and the HUDERIA Academy](#), offers concrete tools to translate standards into governance practice.

## IV. Human oversight, accountability and parliamentary control

A central message across all sessions was clear: AI may assist human decision-making, but it must never replace human judgement in matters affecting rights, liberty or democratic participation.

Human oversight must be meaningful, informed and accountable. Responsibility for decisions taken with AI support remains fully with public authorities and, ultimately, with elected representatives.

This is precisely why parliaments have a crucial role: through legislation, budgetary control, scrutiny mechanisms and ongoing oversight of executive action.

And we heard an important operational point: oversight must cover the full AI lifecycle. Not only the moment of deployment, but procurement, design choices, training data, testing, documentation, use in practice, incident reporting, and, where appropriate, decommissioning.

Several speakers spoke of the need to “future-proof” our work. We cannot regulate by chasing every technical novelty. But we can regulate through principles, through enforceable duties of due diligence, and through impact-based oversight that adapts as the technology evolves.

## V. Parliamentary oversight: building the capacity to govern, not merely to react

Another conclusion, and I would like to highlight the importance attached to it by all speakers, concerns the role of parliaments themselves.

If AI is changing the exercise of power, then parliaments must build the capacity to govern it. That includes:

1. sustained parliamentary debate - not sporadic, but regular and structured;
2. committee scrutiny and hearings with independent expertise;
3. requests for evidence and systematic review of high-impact uses;
4. and the development of internal parliamentary rules and guidance for the safe use of AI.

We heard a practical example of this approach: the United Kingdom Parliament has produced [a guidance for Members on the safe and responsible use of AI](#) in support of parliamentary duties. This type of tool is not merely technical. It is a democratic safeguard, because it helps ensure that parliamentarians remain informed users, not passive recipients of automated outputs.

We also heard that parliamentary leadership in this field is emerging in several member States, including work on AI ethics and governance developed in the German Bundestag and other national parliaments. Our task now is to connect these efforts: to share practices, to learn from one another, and to ensure that all parliaments, large and small, can engage actively.

## **VI. Democracy, elections and the information space**

The conference devoted significant attention to the impact of AI on democratic processes, particularly elections and the information environment.

AI-driven disinformation, deepfakes and foreign information manipulation and interference pose serious risks to electoral integrity, public trust and social cohesion. Women in public life, journalists and human-rights defenders are often disproportionately targeted.

We heard that disinformation is not only a matter of “content”; it is also a matter of incentives, amplification systems and targeting capabilities. AI can increase the speed, volume and sophistication of manipulation campaigns.

The conclusion for parliaments is straightforward: we must take a proactive role in safeguarding democratic debate, ensuring platform responsibility, protecting victims and upholding freedom of expression and media pluralism.

This also requires strengthening democratic resilience through public communication and education. Citizens must be equipped not only with digital skills, but with critical thinking about the ethics, bias and reliability of AI-generated information.

## **VII. Ethics, responsibility and the pacing gap**

Ethical AI governance extends beyond addressing bias and discrimination. It also requires ensuring due process, traceability, liability and the prevention of deliberate misuse that obscures human responsibility.

Several speakers highlighted the growing gap between the rapid pace of technological development and the slower adaptation of legal and institutional frameworks. This “pacing gap” calls for anticipatory governance, independent expertise and flexible regulatory approaches.

We should be clear: the response to this gap is not resignation. It is parliamentary preparedness.

This includes:

1. principled regulation, rather than overly prescriptive rules that quickly become obsolete;
2. enforceable due diligence and process audits for high-impact systems;
3. clarity on liability and redress;
4. and an institutional commitment to keep pace through training and expert support.

A recurring theme in our discussions was the need to push back against a persistent myth: that regulation stifles innovation. The view expressed here is the opposite. Good regulation, when rights-based, proportionate and coherent, builds trust and therefore creates the conditions in which responsible innovation can thrive.

## **VIII. Participation, inclusion and public trust**

Another strong conclusion of the conference concerns participation. AI governance must not involve only citizens in a narrow sense, but all people affected by AI systems, including migrants, non-citizen residents and other rights-holders.

Meaningful involvement of civil society, youth and affected communities strengthens legitimacy, trust and the quality of policy outcomes. Participation is not an obstacle to innovation; it is a condition for sustainable and democratic AI governance.

The youth perspective presented during the conference offered a clear, practical framework for meaningful engagement, structured around four principles:

1. thinking with young people;
2. learning from and with young people;
3. participating with young people;
4. and acting with and for young people.

The message was clear: young people do not want to be treated as passive “users”. They want to be involved in shaping the governance of systems that will influence their education, employment, access to services, and the integrity of the information environment in which they live.

Deliberative formats such as citizen assemblies, structured dialogues and co-creation processes were highlighted as concrete tools that parliaments can use, alongside investment in AI literacy, ethics education and critical thinking.

## **IX. The Council of Europe Framework Convention on AI and the way forward**

Colleagues,

The Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence represents a historic step: it is the first binding international treaty placing AI within the framework of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

But the success of this instrument will not be measured by signatures and ratifications alone. It will be measured by implementation and by parliamentary ownership.

Parliaments have a decisive role to play in ratification, implementation and effective oversight. This includes translating principles into law, ensuring adequate resources for supervision and enforcement, and monitoring real-world impacts.

The Parliamentary Assembly will continue to serve as a platform for dialogue, cooperation and democratic leadership on AI governance.

## **X. A practical proposal: develop and strengthen parliamentary exchanges and cooperation**

To make the way forward operational, I suggest a pragmatic course of action: strengthening exchanges among national parliaments through the Parliamentary Assembly, with a view to deepening mutual learning and reinforcing parliamentary capacity on artificial intelligence. Rather than creating new instruments, the Assembly could use its existing structures and networks to facilitate regular parliamentary exchanges on concrete experiences, challenges and solutions related to AI governance. Such exchanges could build directly on the discussions held at this conference and evolve in line with technological and regulatory developments.

Within this framework, national parliaments could be invited to exchange practices and approaches in a number of key areas, including:

1. Internal arrangements for Members and staff, including rules or guidance on the responsible use of AI, data protection safeguards and ways to avoid undue reliance on automated outputs, drawing for example on experience gained in parliaments that have already developed such tools;
2. Parliamentary reflection on the use of AI within legislatures, including risks and opportunities for parliamentary work, in line with the Assembly's standards and ongoing activities;

3. Access to expertise, including advisory arrangements, cross-party or cross-committee cooperation, and practices for systematically hearing independent experts, regulators and civil society;
4. Transparency and documentation, such as approaches to identifying and documenting the use of AI within parliamentary administrations, appropriate disclosure in parliamentary communication, and rules governing procurement and accountability of external providers;
5. Oversight of government use of AI, including requests for information on bias, accountability, liability and redress, regular reporting practices, and the use of structured risk and impact assessment tools, including [HUDERIA](#);
6. Democratic resilience, notably parliamentary responses to challenges relating to elections, disinformation and deepfakes, and cooperation with national authorities and online platforms, while fully respecting freedom of expression and media pluralism;
7. Citizen and youth participation, including deliberative formats, participatory hearings and co-creation processes enabling those most affected by AI systems to contribute meaningfully to parliamentary debate.

Such PACE-facilitated exchanges would support parliamentarians in engaging more actively and consistently with AI-related challenges, while ensuring that smaller parliaments and delegations can benefit from shared experience, peer learning and common democratic standards.

## **XI. Recommendations : priorities for parliamentary action**

In conclusion, the conference points towards several clear priorities for parliaments:

1. Support the signature, ratification and effective implementation of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law.
2. Institutionalise parliamentary oversight of AI through regular debates, committee scrutiny and reporting requirements.
3. Require transparency, documentation and risk assessment for public-sector AI systems, including registers of use and structured impact assessments.
4. Guarantee effective remedies and human oversight wherever AI affects individual rights, ensuring access to information, human review and redress.
5. Protect electoral integrity and the information environment, including by addressing deepfakes, disinformation and foreign interference, and ensuring platform responsibility in line with human rights standards.

6. Embed participation and trust-building, with permanent mechanisms for citizen and youth engagement and sustained investment in AI literacy and critical thinking.

## **XII. Concluding remarks**

Artificial intelligence will continue to evolve rapidly. Our democratic principles must therefore be translated into durable institutions, procedures and oversight mechanisms.

The message of this conference is clear: if responsibility remains in human hands, and if parliaments fully exercise their role, AI can serve democracy rather than weaken it. This is the direction in which the Parliamentary Assembly is called upon to lead.