

**Register
now!**

AI GOVERNANCE FORUM

07-08 September 2026



Conference at the AI Governance Forum

Trustworthy AI for Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law

Date: Monday 7 September 2026

Location: ETH Zurich, Audimax, HG F 30

Artificial intelligence is developing rapidly, creating significant opportunities to strengthen public services, widen access to justice and deepen democratic participation. At the same time, its growing use raises fundamental questions about security, accountability and the protection of human rights, democratic institutions and the rule of law.

To mark the second anniversary of the opening for signature of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, the Einstein School of Public Policy and the Council of Europe invite you to an exchange on the opportunities and challenges of trustworthy AI. The conference serves as the flagship event of the inaugural AI Governance Forum at ETH Zurich, a new platform for dialogue on the governance of artificial intelligence across research, policy and society.

The event will bring together representatives from academia, public administration, policy, civil society, and industry to discuss the Framework Convention and its implementation in Switzerland. It will draw on scientific expertise from ETH Zurich and insights on governance from the Council of Europe to ensure that the development and deployment of AI are guided by democratic values and human rights. The conference aims to disseminate the Convention and promote debates on responsible AI, and lay the groundwork for sustained collaboration between ETH Zurich, Switzerland and the Council of Europe at the intersection of AI and public policy.

Organised by:



Programme

10am **Opening remarks**

Prof Dr Joel Mesot, President of ETH Zurich
Prof Dr Effy Vayena, Vice-President for Corporate Relations and Knowledge Transfer, ETH Zurich
Hanne Juncher, Director of Security, Integrity and Rule of Law, Council of Europe

10.20am **Keynote “AI and the New Democratic Pact for Europe”**

Tatiana Monney, Head of Unit - New Democratic Pact for Europe, Council of Europe

10.40am **Session 1: AI, Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law: From Principles to Practice**

This panel discussion brings together the Council of Europe and ETH Zurich to examine what human rights frameworks and the rule of law require from AI systems today, and how those commitments can be turned into practical implementation. It asks what legal safeguards are needed, how AI can be technically designed to respect fundamental rights, and what operationalizing these standards looks like for institutions and organisations deploying AI today.

Moderated by

Albina Ovcearenco, Head of Digital Development Unit and Secretary to the Committee on Artificial Intelligence, Council of Europe

Speakers

Prof Dr Mario Hernandez Ramos, Chair of CDNET, Council of Europe
Prof Dr Celestine Mender-Dünner, Professor of Computer Science, ETH Zurich (tbc)
Prof Dr Nadja Braun Binder, Professor of Law, University of Basel
Prof Dr David Leslie, Director of Ethics and Responsible Innovation Research, Alan Turing Institute
Dr Lisa Bechtold, Head of Group Risk Management, Nestlé

12.00pm **Lunch**

1.30pm **Session 2: Governance of Emerging Technologies**

Building on Session 1's grounding in human rights and the rule of law, this session showcases three technologies at the frontier of AI development: physical AI and robotics, neurotechnology, and quantum computing, and then examines the governance challenges they give rise to. Experts from ETH Zurich present the latest advances in each area, before a joint panel with representatives from ETH Zurich and the Council of Europe explores the governance challenges these technologies raise and how existing frameworks can respond.

Moderated by

Dr Benedikt Knüsel, Executive Director of the Albert Einstein School of Public Policy

Presentations

Presentation on Physical AI: Prof Dr Robert Katzschmann, Professor of Robotics, ETH Zurich

Presentation on neuroinformatics and AI: Prof Dr Benjamin Grewe, Professor of Systems, Circuits and Neuroinformatics, ETH Zurich

Presentation on Quantum x AI: Dr Anu Unnikrishnan, Executive Director, ETH Quantum Center

Panel discussion

Ambassador Thomas Schneider, Vice-Director, BAKOM

Prof Dr Effy Vayena, VP for Corporate Relations and Knowledge Transfer, ETH Zurich

Prof Dr Benjamin Grewe

Prof Dr Robert Katzschmann

Dr Anu Unnikrishnan

2.45pm

Coffee Break

3.15pm

Session 3: Implementation of the Framework Convention in Switzerland

This session turns to Switzerland's path toward implementation. Representatives from parliament, the federal administration, and civil society will discuss what ratification means in practice and what steps are needed to get there.

Moderated by

Andrea Kucera

Speakers

Michael Schöll, Director, Federal Office of Justice

Fabian Molina, Member of the National Council of Switzerland

Rahel Estermann, Co-Director, Digitale Gesellschaft

Jon Fanzun, CEO of Swico

4.45pm

Closing remarks

Prof Dr Tobias Schmidt, Director of the Albert Einstein School of Public Policy

Prof Dr Mario Hernandez Ramos, Chair of CDNET, Council of Europe