



# Youth Talks Tribunal on AI : A crucial debate for our democracy

Youth Talks is the world's largest consultation inviting people aged 15 to 29 to share their opinions, concerns and aspirations for the future. Launched in 2022, the project was initiated by the Higher Education for Good Foundation.

## Our mission and commitment

*We aspire to a world where young people's voices are heard, and where they have an impact on building a sustainable future.*

- Youth Talks is a tool designed to inspire change, that is meant to become the world's largest international youth forum. It's a safe space for young people to express themselves and share with the rest of the world what's important to them on different topics, without being locked into a single way of thinking or existing models.
- This first edition received around 1,000,000 contributions from over 45,000 young people in 212 countries and areas.

## A.I.: a key issue for democracy's future

**A.I. for a more inclusive and participatory democracy**  
 Experts and citizens came together to discuss how AI can benefit democracy. Core subjects discussed: the opportunities offered by AI to better meet citizens' needs, encourage greater participation, and serve the common good. Together, they explored the field of possibilities and sketched out recommendations to ensure the ethical use of technologies.

**A "tribunal" format for an immersive collective intelligence experience**  
 The Youth Talks Tribunal on A.I. & democracy was an opportunity to address a complex issue and initiate a necessary dialogue between different A.I. & democracy players. Participants were invited to use trial elements to understand the dilemmas raised by the use of AI, and to identify its limits, risks and opportunities for shaping the future of education.

[Discover the results here!](#)

**Youth Talks**  
**ON A.I.**  
**Youth Talks Tribunal**  
**A.I & Democracy**

# Youth Talks Tribunal : Are our democracies suffering from the digital?

**Charge 1 :**  
Manipulation of public opinion and electoral interference

Use of AI to unduly influence public opinion and manipulate electoral processes via the use of bots on social networks, the analysis of personal data for micro-targeting campaigns, and the creation of deepfakes to discredit candidates or opinions.

**Charge 2 :**  
Erosion of privacy and mass surveillance

Systematic violation of citizens' privacy through mass surveillance techniques. Personal data collected without explicit consent has been used to profile citizens, influencing their political choices.

**Charge 3 :**  
Reinforcement of inequalities and social exclusion

Reinforcement of socio-economic and political inequalities through algorithmic biases that have been used in critical areas such as employment, justice, and access to public services, and have disadvantaged minorities and marginalized groups.



**Kristy Anamoutou,**  
Associate Director  
bluenove

## The Attorney General: Countering the risks and seizing the opportunities of A.I. for democracy

In a world where artificial intelligence (A.I.) is revolutionizing every aspect of our lives, what place should it occupy in democracy?

### RISKS

- Manipulation and misinformation
- Bias and discrimination
- Lack of transparency
- Invasion of privacy
- Carbon footprint
- Destabilization of our institutions

### POTENTIAL

- Precise customization
- Precise feedback
- Improving individual efficiency
- Fostering creativity

## MANIPULATING AND POLARIZING PUBLIC OPINION

Social media has transformed the way information is produced and disseminated, creating environments conducive to the manipulation of public opinion. Political figures exploit these platforms to mobilize supporters, often by disseminating erroneous or polarizing information. The rise of "alternative facts" and the spread of conspiracy theories contribute to extreme polarization of the population, weakening democracy and eroding trust in institutions and electoral processes. The loss of credibility of traditional media and the popularity of alternative sources aggravate this situation, leaving citizens vulnerable to misinformation.

## RADICALIZATION AND COORDINATION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Recent events, such as the assault on the U.S. Capitol, demonstrate the power of social media to radicalize and mobilize crowds for violent action. These platforms enable the rapid dissemination of extremist messages and the coordination of anti-democratic actions. The examples of successful political projects such as Brexit, Bolsonaro, Meloni, and Orban's campaigns show how social media can be used to promote populist and authoritarian movements in Europe and elsewhere. This digital radicalization represents a serious threat to the stability of democracies around the world.

## PREPARING FOR AND ADAPTING TO THE DIGITAL AGE

Faced with these challenges, it is crucial to question and understand the profound transformation that digital technologies are imposing on our societies. Citizens and institutions must adapt quickly to technological innovations, while political figures have already become accustomed to them. The need for in-depth reflection on the impact of digital technologies on social cohesion and democratic stability is paramount. The risks for European democracies are real, and measures must be taken to prevent the excesses seen in the United States. Protecting our democracies in an increasingly digitalized world requires adequate preparation and regulation of digital technologies and artificial intelligence.

## Youth Talks Tribunal : Are our democracies suffering from the digital?

### The Prosecution takes the stand

*The prosecution has built its case against A.I. by claiming that this technology could exacerbate existing inequalities and discrimination in our societies, manipulate public opinion and increase disinformation.*

*According to the prosecution, A.I. is responsible for the decline of democracy.*

#### Charge 1 :

Manipulation of public opinion and electoral interference

#### A.I. is not neutral!

AI development is neither controlled nor regulated! Nobody really knows who owns it, or how it is developed. As long as it is not regulated by an ethical authority, and as long as it is not transparent, it will continue to represent a risk to the democratic process. We urgently need to establish accountability and address these governance issues.

#### Soon we'll all be deceived by technology!

How many of us have been deceived by A.I.? A.I. contributes greatly to the manipulation of opinion and interference. It has been proven that A.I. affects the direction of our political choices. It enables us to deceive more effectively, notably by reinforcing the credibility of fake news.

#### Too much demagogy with A.I.!

A.I. is inherently anti-democratic! It doesn't encourage pluralism; on the contrary, it adds fuel to the fire and increases "click-baiting", while reinforcing the emotional, instantaneous and "reactive" dimension of public opinion.

## Youth Talks Tribunal : Are our democracies suffering from the digital?

### The Defense takes the stand

*The Defense built its case in favor of A.I. based on its role in facilitating the democratic process and citizen participation, combating misinformation, and bringing about a cognitive democracy.*

*For the Defense, fear does not stop danger. A.I. is already present in all fields, so why should it be excluded from democracy?*

*Here, the Defense makes its case for ethical A.I..*

#### Charge 1 :

Manipulation of public opinion and electoral interference

#### Ethical A.I. already exists!

Harmful A.I. is not inevitable; democratic A.I. can be achieved with safeguards. There are labels for sourcing A.I. and supervising it. A.I. is not inherently bad, but the responsibility lies primarily with the person setting it up.

#### A.I. didn't invent lies or manipulation!

There has always been interference and manipulation in politics. We need to advocate ethical A.I. with its own legislation that corresponds to democratic expectations. We need to act preventively and sign a European "A.I. act", co-constructed with researchers and academics.

#### No demagogy, long live democracy!

A.I. is already here, so we might as well use its power to strengthen democracy! It can enable greater pluralism by reaching out to a wider public who can refine their political opinions, get informed and discuss public life.

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#### Charge 2 :

Erosion of privacy and mass surveillance

#### A.I. tracks us everywhere, all the time!

In addition to fabricating opinion, A.I. harvests our personal data and uses it to profile and influence us. For example, during a public consultation on nuclear energy, geolocated personal data was used to send targeted information to consultation participants.

#### Our data doesn't belong to us anymore!

A.I. is capable of revealing our information (personal, medical) without our consent. In the U.S., for example, a scandal arose following the leak of medical data from an application tracking the menstrual cycle, just a few weeks after the rollback of abortion rights.

#### A.I. is not for the common good!

The people in charge of A.I. only serve their own personal interests. They are not designed to serve the wider world. For example, AI is generated from a dominant culture (Anglo-Saxon and American) which constantly feeds it, and therefore does not serve the collective interest.

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#### No one is forced to use A.I.!

Internet users already permanently consent to the use of their data, by accepting the General Terms of Use and cookies. In the same way, they are not obliged to use A.I. and choose to consent to using it.

#### The state already owns our personal data!

Governments didn't wait for the emergence of A.I. to collect our personal information. For several years now, our private data has been leaking onto electoral registries.

#### For a "democratic" A.I.!

It's easy to imagine a "democratic" A.I. that doesn't ask for all private data. A.I. will be what we choose to make of it.

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#### Charge 3 :

Reinforcement of inequalities and social exclusion

#### A.I. sees us through a racist lens!

A.I. reinforces racial and sexist biases and discrimination. Multiple problematic situations have been reported, such as in the Netherlands, where the A.I. was reported for fraud after accusing women of foreign origin of crimes, or in Austria, a chatbot advised men and women differently on the same subject.

#### A.I. widens the economic gap!

A.I. has a significant economic and social impact, contributing to the destruction of jobs, the reinforcement of the division of labor (Global South) and the low cost of labor from developing countries. It is a threat to the inclusion of all publics, and therefore not beneficial to democracy.

#### A.I. is a threat to social bonds!

In this frantic race for progress, social interaction is being lost. Everyone is becoming hyper-dependent on A.I., and this can be extremely paralyzing in the event of cyber-attacks, which can be critical during elections or in the administration.

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#### We can't afford to miss out!

Several political parties are already using A.I. to explain their programs, create political campaigns and democratize political propaganda. Let's not be left behind, let's get to grips with the subject!

#### Let's make democratic life more accessible!

A.I. has the potential to make democracy more accessible, by using natural language, creating approachable content and simplifying access to information. It also allows for greater personalization of content, making citizens want to take an interest in public life.

#### A.I. can further political participation!

Participation rates are falling in our democracies. A.I. can make politics more gamified, more inclusive and more interesting, which could boost participation rates.

## Youth Talks Tribunal : Are our democracies suffering from the digital?

### Final verdict

*The Jury built its verdict on a clear recognition of A.I.'s culpability. For the Jury, the A.I. is responsible because it is not neutral.*

*However, the Jury found it important to issue recommendations in addition to a condemnation. Finally, the Jury called for shared governance of A.I. tools, with a scientific committee.*

#### Charge 1 :

Manipulation of public opinion and electoral interference

#### Let's recognize A.I.'s potential!

A.I. is a good decision-making tool. It is important to give it a technical framework, to work with sociologists to regain sovereignty in the field of A.I., and to demand absolute transparency in the use of A.I. to analyze electoral results. We could also imagine a citizen's council to help regulate AI.

#### Let's create an ethical A.I.!

It is possible to create an ethical AI. We can decide what form tomorrow's A.I. will take: all we need is enough will to prevent discrimination and bias from being reproduced in A.I. It is also possible to legislate to frame A.I. and its uses, create safeguards and avoid filter bubbles.

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#### Charge 2 :

Erosion of privacy and mass surveillance

#### To regulate A.I., let's create a digital shield!

A.I. needs to be regulated to avoid surveillance and invasion of privacy. First, we need to clarify who owns it. Second, we need to create a "digital shield" to protect citizens from infringement of their fundamental freedoms by an ill-intentioned government.

#### For a framework and the creation of a democratic A.I.!

In addition to the democratic shield, let's legislate to make A.I. a democratic tool that cannot threaten individual rights and freedoms. Democracies must be reactive and strong to prevent abuses and make A.I. a beneficial tool for everyone.

#### For a digital revolution!

The problems associated with A.I. are also those of the Internet. Let's review the principle of algorithms in the Internet market to ensure fair digital access.

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### Let's ensure equal access to A.I.!

Let's develop free training for the use of A.I. in education, especially for students and teachers.

### Let's not forget citizens' other needs!

Many citizens do not have access to digital technology. A.I. must be developed and regulated, but we must not forget the primary needs of these populations.

### We need more transparency!

It's essential to keep A.I. open-source, to maintain transparency about how it works and how data is processed. We must also include citizens in the strategic choices linked to A.I. to make it a truly democratic tool.

### For more information:

#### Videos :

[Une playlist dédiée IA & Démocratie](#): watch at your own pace for a better understanding of the concepts, players, theses and issues at stake.

#### Readings:

[Minuit moins dix à l'horloge de Poutine](#), étude [Politoscope](#), David Chavalarias, 30 Juin 2024

[Toxic Data comment les réseaux manipulent nos opinions](#), David Chavalarias, Ed. Champs,

Mars 2023, [conférence école des Points Paris Tech](#)

[Technopolitique comment la technologie fait de nous des soldats](#), Asma Mhalla, 12 février

2024, [vidéo ADN](#)

[Digital Risks to the 2024 Elections: Safeguarding Democracy in the era of disinformation](#),

Stern NYU, February 2024

[Safeguarding AI: addressing the risks of Generative AI](#), Barrett, Hendrix, Stern NYU, June 2023

[L'intelligence artificielle est-elle un danger pour la démocratie?](#), Le Devoir, 02 mai 2024



**Thank you to the participants of the  
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