



CONCEPT NOTE

The High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence

1. INTRODUCTION

On 25 April 2018, the Commission published a Communication ("Communication") in which it set out an ambitious European Strategy for Artificial Intelligence ("AI"). As part of this strategy, the Commission has set up a High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence ("AI HLG").

This concept paper sets out in more details the composition, tasks and functioning of the AI HLG, its timeline in terms of meetings and deliverables, and its link with the European AI Alliance and other groups.

2. MANDATE

The AI HLG has the general objective to support the implementation of the European strategy on AI. Three tasks in particular were set out in the call for experts:

- 1) "Propose to the Commission AI Ethics Guidelines, covering issues such as fairness, safety, transparency, the future of work, democracy and more broadly the impact on the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, including privacy and personal data protection, dignity, consumer protection and non-discrimination".
 - **Concrete deliverable 1: draft AI Ethics Guidelines**

- 2) "Advise the Commission on next steps addressing AI-related mid to long-term challenges and opportunities through recommendations which will feed into the policy development process, the legislative evaluation process and the development of a next-generation digital strategy".
 - **Concrete deliverable 2: policy and investment strategy** on how to strengthen Europe's competitiveness in AI, including guidance for a strategic research agenda on AI and on the establishment of a network of AI excellence centres.

- 3) "More generally, support the Commission on further engagement and outreach mechanisms to interact with a broader set of stakeholders in the context of the AI Alliance, share information and gather their input on the group's and the Commission's work."
 - **Concrete broader task: engage with the European AI Alliance** to seek their input and feedback on the deliverables, encourage stakeholders to join the alliance, and act as ambassadors for the European AI strategy.

3. COMPOSITION

High Level Group

In view of the large number of high quality applicants, the number of selected experts consists of [52 members](#), encompassing representatives from academia, industry and civil society.

As mentioned in the nomination letter, nomination as expert or observer of the AI HLG is done in personal capacity, and thus there can be no alternate representation in case of an unavailability to attend meetings.

The Chair of the AI HLG, Mr. Pekka Ala-Pietilä, has been appointed at the first meeting of the AI HLG on 27 June 2018 by DG Connect.

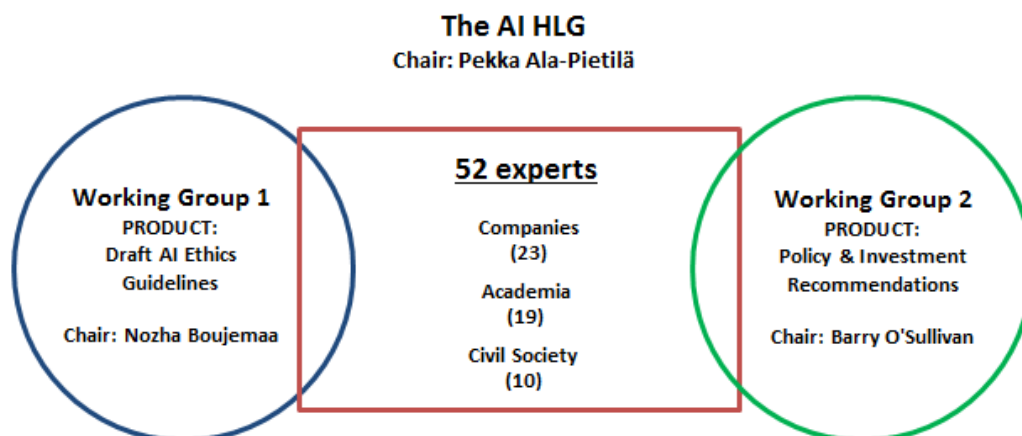
Working Groups

To facilitate the work of the expert group, taking into account the two main deliverables on which the work should be focused in parallel, the AI HLG will be divided into two working groups so as to make the organisation of the work more manageable. **Working Group 1 will focus on the draft AI ethics guidelines, and Working Group 2 will focus on the policy & investment strategy.**

Members will be asked to provide their preference for one Working Group or the other, which the Commission will take into account when setting up the Working Groups. Such preferences are collected after the first meeting¹. **All members will be able to provide input on both deliverables, either during the regular meetings of the full AI HLG (where both deliverables will always be discussed), or in writing.** The final documents prepared by each working group will be adopted by the AI HLG as a whole, after all members of the group have had the opportunity to comment thereon.

For organisational convenience, each Working Group will have its own Chair, to be appointed by DG Connect.

Below is an illustration of what this set-up will look like:



¹ Experts can also opt to be part of both Working Groups, upon the condition that he or she has a sufficient time commitment to this end.

At the first meeting of the AI HLG, it was also decided to set up a small task-force of experts which will examine more closely which definition of Artificial Intelligence should be used for the purpose of the group's deliverables.

Observers

To ensure close cooperation with certain public bodies (European or international) that are not represented in the AI HLG, the public bodies in question have appointed one of their representatives as an observer to the AI HLG. For the full list of observers to the AI HLG, see the Commission's [expert registry](#).

EGE

The European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies (EGE) is an independent advisory body of the President of the European Commission, which provides the Commission with independent advice on ethical aspects of science and new technologies in connection with EU legislation or policies.

The EGE has recently published a statement on Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and 'Autonomous' Systems, which – in accordance with the Communication – will be a basis for reflection when preparing the draft AI ethics guidelines. In order to ensure a close cooperation with the EGE, Mr Jeroen van den Hoven, a member of the EGE, will attend the meetings of the AI HLG and provide a bridge between the two expert groups.

4. CONCRETE DELIVERABLES

1. Draft AI ethics guidelines

In order to organise the work on the draft AI ethics guidelines, at its first meeting the AI HLG was asked to reflect on the core themes around which it would like to work. These themes will then be analysed more deeply and articulated in more specific terms by Working Group 1, in order to concretize their implementation and operationalisation. To facilitate this process and draft the AI ethics guidelines, workshops will be organised around the proposed themes.

The guidelines should be practically implementable in a variety of situations, covering the main domains where concrete ethical guidance is needed (or further research is needed), rather than entailing a list of high level recommendations.

2. Policy & Investment Strategy

In order to organise the work on the second deliverable, at its first meeting the AI HLG was asked to reflect on the main themes around which it would like to work. These themes will then be analysed more deeply and articulated more precisely by Working Group 2. To facilitate this process and draft the policy and investment strategy, workshops will be organised.

The policy recommendations should address key areas of focus in terms of (mid- and long-term) opportunities and challenges to ensure Europe's competitiveness in AI and attract investments. Input should be provided to inform post-2020 activities, and guidance should be given for a European strategic research agenda on AI and the establishment of a network of AI excellence centres.

5. LINK WITH THE EUROPEAN AI ALLIANCE

The European AI Alliance is a broad multi-stakeholder forum engaged in a wide-ranging and open discussion of all aspects of AI development and its impact on the economy and society. One of the AI HLG's tasks is to steer the debate of and seek input from the European AI Alliance, which forms a link between the experts of the AI HLG and European society at large.

Experts of the AI HLG should encourage the relevant stakeholders to join the Alliance and help stimulate a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

Such involvement will occur in multiple ways:

- 1) First, experts can react on and engage with the content, comments and questions posted on the platform by members of the European AI Alliance.
- 2) Second, all experts are invited and encouraged to contribute relevant content to the platform's discussion under "Blog" by **writing a short blogpost in their own name**. In this blogpost they can reflect on a challenge, opportunity or other relevant issue relating to AI that they find particularly interesting or challenging, and present their own opinion on the matter.

This allows members of the European AI Alliance to get familiar with the experts and to understand better what the expert's main focus will be in his or her work for the AI HLG. Each blogpost would for instance conclude with one or two questions on the topic addressed, open for the members of the European AI Alliance to reply to and comment on, thus stimulating a debate and gathering feedback.

- 3) Third, once the work of the AI HLG is kicked off, the platform will be the main tool for the experts to **collect input and feedback from the European AI Alliance** for the purpose of their deliverables. Targeted questions to gather input for the preparation of the guidelines and recommendations are posted online, and draft versions of these work products will be posted on the platform for feedback.

6. LINK WITH THE MEMBER STATES

The Commission's Communication on AI states that the Commission will work with the Member States on a coordinated plan to align and step up investments in AI, building on the declaration of cooperation signed on 10 April 2018. To this end, the Commission has set up a High Level Group of Member States focusing on Artificial Intelligence which is hosted under the Digitising European Industry ("DEI") framework (in the context of which Member States already meet each other a couple of times a year to discuss and implement the Commission's Communication on DEI).

Through this group, Member States will also engage in a dialogue on common priorities around AI, and have a discussion on other related pertinent questions (covering issues from raising investment levels to addressing legal and ethical matters).

A first meeting of the Member States Group to discuss AI already took place on 18 June 2018. To ensure a close cooperation between the AI HLG and the Member States, two joint meetings are planned to coincide with the next meetings of the AI HLG.

7. TIMELINE

- 27 June 2018: First Meeting of the AI HLG (Brussels)

The first meeting of the AI HLG will be chaired by Khalil Rouhana, Deputy-Director General of DG Connect. The AI HLG will adopt the working plan and the rules of procedure, and a chair will be appointed.

The experts will be asked to decide on a number of themes around which they believe the AI HLG should focus its attention for each of the two main deliverables, which will form the basis of the workshops to be held from September onwards.

- September 2018 – December 2018: Workshops will take place (Brussels)

These workshops will be led by the responsible members of the AI HLG to reflect more in depth on the themes of the respective deliverables and to gather input from other experts. Members of the AI HLG reserve list are privileged invitees to these workshops. Moreover, a number of spots are provided for members of the European AI Alliance who can be invited on the basis of the theme of the workshop and the member's expertise. Members of the Alliance who are not physically taking part in the workshops, will be able to provide their input and feedback through the platform.

These workshops will take place in the months when the AI HLG does not meet.

The dates for the Workshops are:

- Thursday 20 September 2018 (Brussels);
- Thursday 8 November 2018 (Brussels);
- Thursday 13 December 2018 (Brussels).

- 8 and 9 October 2018: Second Meeting of the AI HLG (Helsinki)

The second meeting of the AI HLG will take place in Helsinki, in the context of the AI Forum², from 8 October noon until 9 October in the evening. This meeting will also encompass a **joint meeting** with the Member States' High Level Group on AI.

- 22 January 2018: Third Meeting of the AI HLG (Brussels)

The third meeting of the AI HLG will take place in Brussels, and will also entail a **joint meeting** with the Member States' High Level Group on AI.

- End of 1st quarter 2019: First Annual Assembly of the European AI Alliance

As mentioned in the text of the call for experts, it is envisaged to organise an assembly of the broader European AI Alliance once a year. On that occasion, the **finalised draft AI ethics guidelines will be formally presented**, and members of the European AI Alliance can pledge to endorse them on a voluntary basis.

- Summer 2019: Publication of the policy and investment strategy

² The AI Forum concerns a Ministerial Conference on Artificial Intelligence organised in Helsinki on 8 and 9 October 2018 by the Finnish government in collaboration with Commissioner Mariya Gabriel from the European Commission. It aims to bring together Ministers from the 28 EU Member states and EFTA states to reflect upon the challenges and opportunities raised by Artificial Intelligence. More information about this event as well as a formal invitation shall be sent to you soon.