Member States and Commission to work together to boost artificial intelligence "made in Europe"

Brussels, 7 December 2018

Delivering on its strategy on artificial intelligence (AI) adopted in April 2018 today the Commission presents a coordinated plan prepared with Member States to foster the development and use of AI in Europe.

This plan proposes joint actions for closer and more efficient cooperation between Member States, Norway, Switzerland and the Commission in four key areas: increasing investment, making more data available, fostering talent and ensuring trust. Stronger coordination is essential for Europe to become the world-leading region for developing and deploying cutting-edge, ethical and secure AI.

Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip** welcomed this important step: *"I am pleased to see that European countries have made good progress. We agreed to work together to pool data – the raw material for AI – in sectors such as healthcare to improve cancer diagnosis and treatment. We will coordinate investments: our aim is to reach at least €20 billion of private and public investments by the end of 2020. This is essential for growth and jobs. AI is not a nice-to-have, it is about our future".*

Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** added: *"Like electricity in the past, AI is transforming the world. Together with Member States we will increase investments for rolling out AI into all sectors of the economy, support advanced skills and maximise the availability of data. The coordinated action plan will ensure that Europe reaps the benefits of AI for citizens and businesses and competes globally, while safeguarding trust and respecting ethical values."*

Representatives of Member States, Norway, Switzerland and the Commission have met over the last six months to identify synergies and joint actions that will now be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. They prioritised areas of public interest, such as healthcare, transport and mobility, security and energy. They agreed to:

1. Maximise investments through partnerships

Investment levels for AI in the EU are low and fragmented, compared with other parts of the world such as the US and China. In line with the AI strategy presented in April, the plan foresees increased coordination of investments, leading to higher synergies and at least €20 billion of public and private investments in research and innovation in AI from now until the end of 2020 and more than €20 billion per year from public and private investments over the following decade. Complementing national investments, the Commission will invest €1.5 billion by 2020, 70% more than in compared to 2014-2017. For the next long-term EU budget (2021-2027) the EU has proposed to invest at least €7 billion from [Horizon Europe](#) and the [Digital Europe Programme in AI.](#)

Joint actions to achieve these investment objectives include:

- **National AI strategies:** By mid-2019 all Member States should have their own strategies in place outlining investment levels and implementation measures, which will feed into discussions at EU-level.

- **A new European AI public-private partnership:** A new research and innovation partnership on AI will be set up, to foster collaboration between academia and industry in Europe and to define a common strategic research agenda on AI.

- **A new AI scale-up fund:** The Commission will support startups and innovators in AI and blockchain in their early stages as well as for companies in their scale-up phase.

- **Developing and connecting world-leading centres for AI:** European AI excellence centres will be developed and connected, world-reference testing facilities will be established in areas such as connected mobility, and the uptake of AI across the economy will be encouraged through [Digital Innovation Hubs](#) ([€66 million for robotics hubs are announced today](#)). A [European Innovation Council](#) pilot initiative will also be launched to support next generation AI technologies.

2. Create European data spaces

Large, secure and robust datasets need to be available for AI technology to be developed. Together with European countries, the Commission will create common European data spaces to make data sharing across borders seamless, while ensuring full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. The health sector can particularly benefit from AI: in coordination with Member States the Commission will support the development of a common health database with anonymised scans of injuries, donated by patients, to improve cancer diagnoses and treatments with AI technology. By mid-2019, the Commission will launch a support centre for data sharing, to give practical advice to all European participants in the data economy.

3. Nurture talent, skills and life-long learning

Talent in Europe is essential for the development and use of AI, but EU countries face shortages of ICT professionals and lack AI-specialised higher education programmes. That is why the Commission, together with European countries, will support advanced degrees in AI through, for example, dedicated scholarships. The Commission will also continue to support digital skills and lifelong learningfor the whole of society, and especially for workers most affected by AI, as detailed in its AI strategy. For the development of human-centred AI, it is also important that AI is present in education programmes in other disciplines, such as law. Full use of the Blue Card system will also help to retain and attract highly-skilled AI professionals in Europe.

4. Develop ethical and trustworthy AI

AI raises new ethical questions, for example potentially biased decision-making. To create trust, which is necessary for societies to accept and use AI, the coordinated plan aims to develop a technology which respects fundamental rights and ethical rules. A European group of experts, representing academia, business, and civil society, is working on ethics guidelines for the development and use of AI. A first version will be published by the end of 2018 and the experts will present their final version to the Commission in March 2019 after wide consultation through the European AI Alliance. The ambition is then to bring Europe's ethical approach to the global stage. The Commission is opening up cooperation to all non-EU countries that are willing to share the same values.

Background

In its strategy on AI for Europe, the Commission proposed to work with Member States on a coordinated plan on AI by the end of 2018, with the aim of maximising the impact of investments at EU and national levels, encourage synergies and cooperation across the EU, exchange best practices and collectively define the way forward to ensure that the EU as a whole can compete globally. This proposal for a coordinated plan built on the declaration of cooperation on AI that was launched in April 2018 at the Digital Day and signed by all Member States and Norway. It was endorsed by the European Council in June 2018.

Today's coordinated plan for "AI made in Europe" details actions to start in 2019 or 2020 and prepares the ground for activities in the following years. Coordination with Member States will continue and the plan will be reviewed and updated annually. The Commission's new AI knowledge service, AI Watch, will help monitor the development of AI in Europe and the implementation of the coordinated plan.

To make this plan a success, the Digital Single Market and its regulatory framework need to be completed. Member States and the European Parliament need to agree as soon as possible on the legislative proposals on cybersecurity, open data and the next EU budget, which includes funding for research and innovation as well as deployment of AI technologies.

For More Information

Coordinated plan on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Communication

Q&A on coordinated plan

Factsheet on artificial intelligence

More on: €66 million for robotics hubs

Press release Communication Artificial Intelligence for Europe (April)

Press release: expert group on artificial intelligence (March)

Q&A European Approach to AI

Declaration of cooperation on Artificial intelligence

More information on AI

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Press contacts:

Nathalie VANDYSTADT (+32 2 296 70 83)
Joseph WALDSTEIN (+ 32 2 29 56184)

General public inquiries: Europe Direct by phone 00 800 67 89 10 11 or by email