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AFRICA TECH FOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE-AFRICA4DEV CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE STEERING COMMITTEE ON ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AND GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION CALL FOR INPUT

I. Developing an EU Seal of Recognition

The EU and its member states should develop an EU AI Seal to be used in rewarding and certifying organizations and tech companies that adhere to anti-discriminatory, diverse, and inclusive, gender equal development, deployment and use of AI. It would through this seal reward safe, efficient, verified and gender inclusive AI technology. This EU seal will attract high tech companies from across the globe to come to the EU to test and develop AI that advances the frontiers of equality and inclusion. The EU seal will be a mark recognizing high quality and pro -inclusion AI companies and will consist of four levels of use approval to include Public Sector Level, Private Sector Level, Institutional Level, and Product Level.

II. Annual EU Report on Equality and AI

Member states should integrate an Annual Report framework that will give updates on the current state of AI and its impact on Equality, inclusion in the EU. Relevant executive or relevant agencies should be mandated to submit annual reports various parliament on the state of AI equality compliance, risks identified, measures taken, and progress made. Each member states should then submit to the EU the Annual reports on Equality and AI in their country as this will enable the EU carry out proper assessment and action in advancing anti-discriminatory, equal and inclusive AI for all.

III. Develop an Equal Inclusive and Non-Discriminatory AI ecosystem

The EU Government can play a strong role in making sure AI is utilitarian and delivers the greatest public value, by making all citizens and residents feel valued, happier and participatory for all. Member states should adopt an inclusive AI ecosystem policy that ensures every person is opportune to not only access AI developed facilities or systems but also part of the AI process. Non-discriminatory and equal funding opportunities should be available to advance an AI ecosystem inclusive of all and divisive of none. All groups and persons must enjoy equal access to grants and mentorship opportunities as this will encourage equal growth of AI skilled personnel amongst diverse groups. Member states should establish funding schemes that will promote AI innovations which support equality, inclusion and advance non-discriminatory AI development. Member states should support challenges focused on addressing inequality in diverse sectors. Member states should support local innovation ecosystems, particularly amongst underserved or marginalized groups

IV. Public Employee Inclusive Up skilling

As the wave of artificial intelligence leads to more automation of jobs, this will have a major impact on the public sector workforce and needs to be carefully managed. 72% of EU citizens fear that technology may steal people's jobs¹ due to automation from key sectors, hence an inclusive training and up skilling for public workers become more essential. Member states must ensure equal, non-

¹ Cedefop, 'Machines, robots and the threat of automation to EU jobs' (28 February, 2019), <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/blog-articles/machines-robots-and-threat-automation-eu-jobs#note3> accessed 25th April 2025

discriminatory and inclusive training and up skilling opportunity for all to gain necessary experience and knowledge to remain employed, employable and relevant in the ever dynamic AI driven job market.

a. Public AI Training

Member states should ensure that all EU citizens have access to free training in digital skills and artificial intelligence (AI). This will help people learn how to use new tools and to evaluate sources critically, to stay updated in the job market and to feel more confident in a digital world. Member states in the EU should prioritize investment in free online courses, local training programs, and support for people with disabilities and underserved groups. These skills could range from basic digital skills to more advanced AI skills. The member states should ensure these free courses are being run help raise awareness and understanding of AI technologies. Member states should establish AI Camps to support the efforts of future knowledge transfer and building a generation capable of adopting advanced technologies in developing solutions for various future challenges.

By offering digital education to everyone, the EU can reduce inequality between people in different areas and social groups, support lifelong learning, and ensure no one is left behind in the digital transformation age.

b. Upskilling EU Students in AI

Member states in the EU should formulate an inclusive and equality regulatory policy that will ensure AI education is taught to students from schools to universities with mentorship provision for women, those with disabilities and marginalized groups to engage more in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Artificial Intelligence and Mathematics) areas. Member states in the EU should mandate its private and public higher academic institutions to offer upskilling STEM graduates from marginalized groups with specialist AI courses as this will provide the fastest short-term solution to increasing the number of AI experts from these groups. This upskilling will also provide a stronger pipeline of students from marginalized groups to undertake post-graduate training in AI to develop the pool of EU talent able to build AI systems.

c. Establishment of Government AI office for Training of Government Workers

Member states should establish an AI Office tasked with offering more advanced courses for all Government employees with an inclusive mandate to ensure non-discriminatory practices and equal opportunities for all gender and groups. The aim is to ensure that all groups are given the platform to thrive, trained and versed in AI and capable of advancing into senior roles in the future. Given the public sector is a major employer and potential user of AI in the EU, The AI Office has a huge role in advancing equality and non-discriminatory practices in the age of AI for government employees.

V. Creating an Inclusive and Non-Discriminatory Research Opportunity

The gender group research gap in the EU can be closed if the benefit of research can be shared openly and equally to all groups and persons. In order to boost diversity and inclusion in innovation, member states need to work on creating an open-access digital library of research and papers for all group and gender as well as in all language English, French and Arabic, Portuguese etc. This will be enable people from diverse background and language living in the EU benefit from this initiative to boost the research sector in the EU. Member states should also endeavor to create accessible summaries of EU funded AI research and programs in order to help encourage the development of inclusive and Non-discriminatory AI solutions. The AI Library will be a joint collaboration between academia, industry and government.

VI. Mandate AI developers to Reflect Regional and International protection on equality, non-discrimination and Inclusion in AI systems

Member states should adopt a unified EU equality, non-discrimination and inclusion standard modeled after international treaties such as ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, CRPD, CERD. Member states should ensure that such standards are manifestly seen to have been adopted in the stage of development, deployment of AI systems whether for public or private use. Member states should enforce penalties for non-compliance or default as this will prevent cross-border discriminatory practices

REFERENCE

Cedefop, 'Machines, robots and the threat of automation to EU jobs' (28 February, 2019),
<<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/blog-articles/machines-robots-and-threat-automation-eu-jobs#note3>> accessed 25th April 2025



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