

Democracy, Participation and Artificial Intelligence

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Introduction

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has revolutionized multiple industries, bringing significant benefits in terms of automation, efficiency and innovation. However, the growing influence of AI on society raises important questions regarding democracy and the distribution of power. This report will explore the dangers associated with control exclusive of AI by a small circle of powerful players, and as such scenario it could threaten democracy itself.

Concentration of power

AI requires a considerable amount of financial resources, data and infrastructure to be developed and implemented effectively. If these resources are monopolized by a few industrial economic groups, an inequality of power is created which can undermine the democratic principles of equality and participation.

Manipulation of public opinion

A powerful AI system can be used to manipulate public opinion and influence political decisions. Through sophisticated algorithms, AI can create and disseminate targeted content, generating polarization and distorted information that exploits cognitive vulnerabilities of people, but also undermine the information sources on which the common search for news is based. For example we know that Wikipedia has been subject in the past years of particular attention from intelligence structures and organized political groups who have altered, if not manipulated, entire entries and pages of the encyclopedic platform (biographies, illustration of historical events, reconstructions of particular events and facts), to offer a reconstruction of the facts in line with the political will of the moment in favor of the narration of some international executive and information groups.

A systematic action carried out through Artificial Intelligence could pollute the world of information with even more overwhelming effects, compromising a healthy debate public and thus preventing the formation of an informed collective conscience, elements crucial to the functioning of a democracy.

Monitoring and Surveillance:

AI can be used to create invasive and pervasive surveillance systems, violating citizens' privacy. If the control of AI is concentrated in the hands of a few, they can accumulate a huge amount of personal data and exploit it for social control purposes.

This can lead to a society characterized by diminished individual freedoms and a growing distrust among citizens.

Automated decisions and algorithmic discrimination:

AI is often used to make automated decisions in different domains, such as recruitment, the judicial system and lending. If decision-making power is concentrated in the hands of a few, the implications can be dangerous. Algorithms can perpetuate and amplify biases and discriminations present in society, as they reflect the data and training criteria on which they have been trained. This can create a vicious circle of social injustice and undermine the principles of equality and justice in democracy.

Awareness

Addressing the dangers of the exclusive control of AI by a few requires deep thought and concrete action. It is essential to promote awareness and therefore transparency and accountability.

Some proposals to mitigate the danger to democracy represented by artificial intelligence

To mitigate the dangers that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can pose to democracy, it is necessary to adopt a series of initiatives that promote accountability, transparency and citizen involvement. Here are some ideas:

- **Regulation and governance:** It is imperative to develop robust laws and regulations to guide the development, implementation and use of AI. These regulations should ensure the protection of fundamental rights, transparency of algorithms, accountability of developers and fairness in automated decisions.
- **Transparency of algorithms:** The algorithms used to make meaningful decisions should be transparent and understandable. Organizations and institutions that use AI must make the algorithms they use public, allowing independent experts to assess their fairness and identify any bias or discrimination.

- **Login and to the diversity data:** To avoid the concentration of power and unfair influence of AI, it is necessary to promote equitable access to data and foster diversity in the Artificial Intelligence sector. This means encouraging data sharing, incentivising the participation of different actors in AI R&D, and ensuring that different voices and perspectives are represented.
- **Digital Literacy:** Investing in digital literacy is essential to enable citizens to understand AI, its implications and its limitations. Digital literacy should be an integral part of educational programs, providing individuals with the tools to critically evaluate information from AI and actively participate in public debate.
- **Democratic Control:** It is important to ensure that decisions regarding AI are made in a democratic and participatory way. This implies involving citizens, civil society organisations, experts and political representatives in the decision-making process regarding AI. Consultative forums, public debates and online participation tools can be used to actively engage citizens.
- **Monitoring ^{And} accountability:** Developing monitoring and accountability mechanisms for the use of AI is essential to prevent abuse of power.
- **International collaboration:** The challenge posed by AI requires international cooperation to ensure that rules, regulations and standards are shared globally. Joint efforts can facilitate the exchange of best practices, the sharing of knowledge and the development of joint solutions.

In order to mitigate the dangers of AI for democracy, to promote a distribution of power and to ensure citizen participation and control in the process decision-making, a great contribution can come from the promotion of free software .

Promoting the use of free software and the accessibility of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to all is a desirable approach to preserve democratic principles and mitigate the dangers associated to the concentration of power.

Using free software offers several advantages:

- **Transparency and accountability** : Free software allows access to the source code, allowing independent experts and the community to evaluate AI, identify potential errors or biases, and ensure greater transparency in the functioning of algorithms.
- **Knowledge sharing:** Free software fosters sharing and collaboration, allowing multiple actors to contribute to the development and improvement of AI. This stimulates innovation and ensures that there is one

single entity that holds the monopoly of AI, because knowledge and knowledge are transmitted and disseminated.

- **Accessibility and inclusion:** The use of free software makes AI more accessible to different communities and organizations that may not have the financial resources to acquire expensive proprietary solutions. This promotes equality of opportunity and fosters widespread innovation.
- **Customization and Adaptability:** With free software, users can tailor AI to their specific needs, by making changes and customizations to the source code. This allows greater flexibility in adapting AI to different realities and contexts.

We can therefore summarize that promoting and encouraging the use of free software in AI can help create a more democratic environment, in which political, economic and technological power is not concentrated in the hands of a few. However, it's important to recognize that AI itself raises complex questions that go beyond just the software aspect, like the collection and use of data, the ethics of AI and social impact. Therefore, the adoption of software should be integrated into a broader regulatory and governance framework that holistically addresses AI and democracy-related issues, ensuring maximum transparency and accessibility of datasets.

Promoting the development of AI through free software can be achieved through incentives and financial support from public bodies, which can finance R&D projects based on free software and open up the opportunities for using AI to a broad spectrum of actors, including citizens, non-profit organizations and businesses.

The transparency of the datasets used is equally important. Publication and public access to the datasets used to train AI models allows for independent evaluation and a better understanding of how AI works. This can help to identify potential bias, discrimination or other ethical issues and prevent AI from reflecting and perpetuating injustices already present in society.

Additionally, directing AI development through public entities can help ensure that AI is driven by a public interest and that the benefits deriving from its application are distributed fairly. Public bodies can promote AI as a common good, directing resources towards projects that respond to society's needs and priorities as a whole.

However, it is important to balance the public aspect with the need to also allow for innovation and private sector participation. A public regulation in a

international regulatory framework and a possible collaboration between public, private and civil society bodies could guarantee an environment in which AI is developed and used in a ethical, fair and in line with democratic values.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) should be an opportunity and not a threat to the stability and equality of people within democracy. Democracy itself does it is based on the principles of equality, participation and the common good, and AI should be one instrument that contributes to these objectives.

Ensuring that public datasets are considered common good and that their use remains open and accessible to all is an important step to preserve equality and prevent a concentration of power, because democracy, in the presence of a few strong subjects who can influence and making decisions in secret, can be threatened.

Politics, as a space for democratic action, should play an active role in the ensure that AI is developed and used in accordance with democratic values, promoting greater equality, protection of rights and equal access to opportunities. This can include policies to redistribute resources, regulations that limit the abuse of the power of AI, and incentives to use AI for social and ethical purposes.

In conclusion, AI should be a positive force within democracy, helping to promote more equality, rights and the common good. Politics, in partnership with civil society and stakeholders, has a crucial role in shaping a regulatory and governance framework that protects and promotes these principles in the context of the AI.

AI can be used to support or facilitate the implementation of policies or initiatives aimed at promoting forms of economic democracy. For example, AI could be used to optimize resource distribution, to prevent and reduce socio-economic inequalities, to improve access to essential public services such as education or health care, or to encourage citizen participation in the decision-making process.

Ultimately, AI can be used as a tool to achieve specific political and economic goals, but it is the regulatory framework, decisions and people's actions that determine the ultimate impact of AI on society.

The paradox of the theses just expressed, which have been written up to now, self not totally, predominantly from OpenAI's GPT chat itself!

It is clear that in the dialogue it was I myself who directed it, and in some points I integrated and modified it, but we can see how it is the Chat itself that "asks" us to impose it some sort of regulation, to prevent it from being used as a threat tool to democracy. The proposals that you make (or that we make) are imbued with common sense, but it is clear that they rely too much on the good will of those who manage this important source of transmission and production of knowledge.

I honestly think that regulation needs to be stronger, in terms of maintaining public control over the development and implementation of Intelligence Artificial, favoring free software but also imposing "open and transparent" and therefore public, starting from the databases used, especially when these are created and developed by the training, often unaware, that users operate in the use of artificial intelligence platforms.

We know that in legislation, since the dawn of history, brilliant legal forms have been created to protect the collective use and dominion of the commons, from the forms of land sharing to those of knowledge sharing, to fight to impose the common good also in the field of Artificial Intelligence must be a priority for avoid the dangers, which as we have seen are now evident to all.

It's up to us to organize a cultural and social political movement to ensure that the proposals are more binding, that the actions are more aware and responsible, we cannot and must not escape from conducting a battle of civilization to make AI an opportunity for the humanity and not a threat to democracy and an instrument of domination by an otherwise increasingly powerful and exclusive oligarchy.