

DRAFT Programme “AI in Social Services: Opportunities, Skill Investments, and Regulatory Frameworks”

Event Title:

AI in Social Services: Opportunities, Skill Investments, and Regulatory Frameworks

Date and Time:

27th November 2024, 10.00-12:30, 2.5 Hours, Online (Zoom Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3289650020?omn=82479790941>)

Overview:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds significant promise for transforming social services, enhancing efficiency, and improving outcomes for communities. AI’s predictive analytics, machine learning, and natural language processing capabilities have the potential to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and provide personalised support to those in need.

According to the way the European Union (EU) approaches AI, to help building a resilient [Europe for the Digital Decade](#), people and businesses should be able to enjoy the benefits of AI while feeling safe and protected. Accordingly, the [European AI Strategy](#) aims at making the EU a world-class hub for AI and ensuring that AI is human-centric and trustworthy.¹ In this regard, Human-centered AI (HCAI) refers to the development of AI technologies that prioritise human needs, values, and capabilities at the core of their design and operation. This approach promotes the creation of AI systems that enhance human abilities and well-being rather than replacing or diminishing human roles. It addresses AI's ethical, social, and cultural implications and ensures these systems are accessible, usable, and beneficial to all segments of society².

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-approach-artificial-intelligence>

² <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/human-centered-ai>

The potential use of generative AI can play a crucial role in improving the personalisation of care and support, improving the allocation of resources to make social care and support more accessible, efficient and person-centered, as well as improving the quality of social care and support jobs. However, these changes might bring with it many critical challenges and pressing issues that social services are not prepared to adequately address. The main issues include lack of well-trained staff, digital infrastructure, technical know-how, data privacy risks, etc. The social services sector must also be mindful of the possible ethical risks that arise. AI's dependence on machine learning, which draws on large volumes of data that may not be entirely representative of the people social services support, care, and work with³, comes with a risk that algorithms used to assess service users will incorporate significant bias and inequalities.

The European Commission, therefore, aims to address the risks generated by specific uses of AI through a set of complementary, proportionate and flexible rules. These rules also provide Europe with a leading role in setting the global gold standard through the [AI Act](#)⁴.

The integration of AI in the field of social protection and social integration may result in enhanced efficiency and timeliness, improved service provision to individuals, and better resource management. Nevertheless, despite its widespread adoption, there remains a nebulous understanding of the specific implications of AI on social inclusion by several stakeholders such as service providers, public authorities, politicians, employers, etc. This ambiguity requires a structured dialogue to acquire a clearer understanding of this solution's impacts and to examine strategic pathways for innovation among organisations.

Moreover, the collaboration between social services, people who draw on care and support and the technology developers is of vital importance at every phase of planning, delivery and evaluation. Together social services professionals, people with care and support needs and technologists can harness the full potential of AI to create meaningful positive impact in our communities.

This event aims to explore the opportunities AI presents within the social services sector, identify the critical skills required for its effective deployment, and discuss the regulatory frameworks within Member States and at the EU level needed to ensure its ethical use in the

³ Some possible ways in which AI could be used in social work include: predictive modelling and data analysis, decision support, real time information, administrative tasks, chatbot support, virtual assistance, etc.

⁴ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-approach-artificial-intelligence>

social services sector. By bringing together experts from various fields, the event seeks to foster a collaborative approach to leveraging AI for the betterment of social services.

Objectives:

1. Highlight the transformative opportunities AI offers for social services.
2. Discuss the critical skills and investments needed to develop and sustain AI capabilities in social services.
3. Explore regulatory frameworks to ensure ethical and responsible AI use in social services.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of AI's potential and challenges in social services.
- Identification of key skills and educational investments needed for AI in social services.
- Recommendations for regulatory frameworks within Member States and at EU level to guide AI development and implementation in social services.

Draft Agenda

Opening Remarks (10:00-10:15)

- **Speaker:** Aad Koster, SSE President
- **Keynote Speaker:** Guillaume Hemmert, Policy Officer, DG EMPL

Session 1: Opportunities of AI in Social Services (10:15-10:55)

- **Moderator:** Kostantina Leventi, Head of Policy, EASPD
- **Panelists:**
 - Seb Barker, Co-Founder, Magic Notes
 - Judith Schoch, Head of Unit Institute for Care and Ageing, Evangelische Heimstiftung
 - Kave Noori, Artificial Intelligence Policy Officer, EDF
 - Nina Ždanovič, Associate, Policy Impact Lab

Session 2: Investing in Skills for AI in Social Services (10:55-11:30)

- **Moderator:** Kewan Mildred, Policy Officer, Eurodiaconia
- **Panelists:**
 - Sylvain Renouvel, Director, Federation of European Social Employers
 - Samantha Howe, Policy Assistant, EPSU
 - Borja García Rubio, IT Manager, Fundación ONCE

Break (11:30-11:40)

Session 3: Responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in social services (11:40-12:15)

- **Moderator:** May Agius, Senior Speech and Language Therapist, Chair of EASPD Member Forum on Person Centred Technology, Agenzija Sapport Malta
- **Panelists:**
 - Giada Venier, Policy Officer, Fondazione Don Gnocchi
 - Jolanda Dirckx, Advisor & Lynn Grijssen, Junior Advisor ActiZ NL
 - Bianca Prins-Honkoop, Head of Global Accessibility, ING

Closing Remarks and Future Steps (12:15-12:30)

- **Speaker:** Aad Koster, SSE President