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| PERIOD 20182020  | **ACTIVITY REPORT** TEMPORARY STUDY GROUP ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCEDIRECTORATE C – LEGISLATIVE WORK PRESIDENT : CATELIJNE MULLER |

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| Introduction *Artificial intelligence (AI) is undergoing a number of important developments and is being deployed in society. In May 2017, the Committee was amongst the first EU institutions to present an own-initiative opinion on the impact of AI on society. This opinion is broadly considered the inception report of the discussion on AI that is safe, secure, ethically aligned and adherent with (existing) laws and regulations. Since, AI has become one of the priority topics of all EU institutions. The creation of this Temporary Study Group on AI (TSG AI) in 2018 was therefore very timely and fitted very well in the institutional and European context.* *Over the past two years, the European and global debates around AI advanced towards the widely carried opinion that AI should be human-centric, respect our European values and laws and serve society as a whole. The TSG AI contributed to the discussion with four important opinions and maintained its standing as a trusted advisor to the EU institutions. It also promoted significantly the involvement of different stakeholders in the debate around AI, by organising meetings and events.**While a lot of progress has been made to date, it is necessary to actively keep the topic of AI on the EU agenda and keep consolidating the involvement of different stakeholders in the process. Especially since the European Commission is working on a legal instrument for AI and the European Parliament has formed an intergroup on AI.* *The discussions around AI penetrate nowadays all sectors in our society. The work of all EESC sections is influenced by the advent of new technologies and digitalisation as a whole. In the context of the EESC’s future mandate, work on these subjects could continue in a new structure to monitor the evolution and impact of digitalisation on our society.*Catelijne Muller President of the Temporary Study Group  |

Activities & main findings

*The TSG AI identified* ***several priority topics****, such as education, work and labour market, industry, consumers and AI that benefits humankind, and invited expert speakers to participate in its regular meetings.*

*Seven meetings were held in Brussels with various experts providing deeper insight into:*

* *Ethical considerations for AI in the Workplace*
* *AI applications that are beneficial to humankind*
* *Consumers' position on AI and on ethical implications of AI*
* *Impact of AI on learning, teaching, and education*
* *Joint Research Centre initiative AI Watch*
* *Industry position on AI and AI in China*
* *Work of the High-Level Expert Group of the European Commission on AI*

*These discussions fed into the work programme of the TSG AI, allowed the members to deepen their knowledge about latest AI developments and to use it when drafting opinions. In January 2019, the TSG AI released a short* ***position paper "AI for Europe"*** *which presents civil society recommendations for AI in Europe. The paper was shared with almost 100 stakeholders from EU institutions, trade unions, representatives from the private sector and NGOs.*

*In June 2019, the TSG AI started to work on a report that focuses on* ***civil society participation in shaping national AI strategies****. The purpose of this analysis was to assess whether and how civil society in selected Member States has been involved in the preparation of national AI strategies. In order to answer the main research question, a questionnaire was drafted and two fact-finding missions were carried out. The findings from the questionnaire and the fact-finding missions will be sent to the EU institutions and other stakeholders.*

*During the whole mandate of the TSG AI, there was a fruitful cooperation with the TEN section's* ***Temporary Study Group on the Digital Agenda*** *(TSG DA). The two presidents coordinated the work of both TSGs and participated to each other's meetings. The two groups also released a joint brochure resuming all EESC opinions focusing on digitalisation. This cooperation resulted in organising a big event in Helsinki, together with the Finnish presidency, focusing on digitalisation for the well-being of citizens.*

*The TSG AI member, Ms Tellervo Kylä-Harakka-Ruonala, was also representing the TSG AI and the EESC in the* ***European Commission's High Level Group on AI****. This role permitted to collect an amount of information on substance and the views of different stakeholders and policymakers.*

*The main objectives of TSG AI set out in its work programme have been fulfilled. The TSG AI has enabled the EESC to deepen its expertise in this area, especially in the priority topics listed above, and to promote a* ***unified voice and strategy in the EESC's work on AI****. The members of the TSG AI have thus shared very concrete proposals with the European institutions and other key stakeholders, which was very timely and fed into the preparation phase of the future legislation on AI.*

*The EESC also aims at promoting its positions and opinions and the TSG AI was very useful in this respect. One example could be the big event organised jointly with the Finnish presidency. Even though the mandate of the TSG AI comes to its end questions related to AI and more widely to digitalisation remain valid. This is why, for the next EESC mandate, the TSG AI could be merged with the TSG DA to create a new Observatory of the Single Market and the Digital Transition.*

Appendix I – List of meetings and events

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|  | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **Total** |
| **TSG AI meetings** | 3 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
|  Meetings in Brussels | 3 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
|  Meetings outside Brussels | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  Extraordinary meetings | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Fact-finding missions**  | 0 | 2 |  0\* | 2 |
| **Conferences and hearings organized by the TSG AI** | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| **Participation in events, meetings** | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
|  In Brussels  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  Outside Brussels | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

*\* The TSG AI had anticipated two more fact-finding missions to Sweden and Lithuania, but these were cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis.*