ST.GALLEN SYMPOSIUM 2 Zukunft—Fabrik2050 +Powered by HSG Alumni

Humane Technology: Co-Create a New Generational Contract

Balancing Technological Potentials and Risks

- Proposed Ambition: *We aspire to strike a reasonable balance between the long-term potential and risks of emerging technologies such as AI, by devising agile rules for their safe, trustworthy and responsible use while fostering innovation and allowing commercialization – enabling current and future generations to benefit from the immense potential of technological developments.*
- Revised Ambition:

Cross-generational Challenge

- In dealing with emerging, new technologies at a specific moment in time, societies have a delicate balance to strike: between unlocking the economic and societal innovation potential of technologies, and mitigating associated risks by devising rules and regulations for how we want (or don't want) to use technologies.
    - This has an intergenerational dimension:
        - Young people seem to be more open to innovation: the proportion of people "very interested" in new scientific discoveries and technological developments declines with age, ranging from 38% among 15-24 year olds to 29% among those aged 55 or over (https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2237)
        - Long-term risks of AI are considered a potential "existential risk". Future generations depend on current generations to act wisely, and strike a reasonable balance to this end.
    - At the same time, there is a geopolitical dimension:
        - Based on today's global balance of power, it can be assumed that the USA and China – and influential IT companies based in these countries respectively – will have a dominant influence on the infrastructure and systematic approaches for said new technologies; in particular, these countries/ companies will apply very different approaches to AI in view of data security, legal standards and enforcement, or truthfulness; they might even establish and represent central metaverse systems, which will play a more present role in everyone's everyday's life.
        - Other countries as, for example, Israel, Germany or communities of states such as Europe or Africa, must choose to either join one side or to establish an own approach, whereby such decisions will have – in turn – a crucial impact both on the local companies and industries and the aforementioned intergenerational dimension.

- *What are the potential opportunities and risks of emerging technologies, for instance regarding AI or metaverse systems?*
- *To which generation do such opportunities and risks respectively mainly apply? Can we pinpoint the intergenerational conflicts?*
- *By which means can said opportunities and risks be minimized? How can we solve the conflict?*
- *If the conflict or risk mitigation involves legal standards and regulation, who/ which bodies should be responsible for their enforcement? Is a global governance response required?*

Example Project(s)

- Project A
  - Idea:
  - Description:
  - Benefits:
  - Resources needed:
  - How to start:
  - Team:

Further Readings

- World Economic Forum: What new technologies carry the biggest risks?, January 2014, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/01/what-emerging-technologies-have-the-biggest-negative-consequences/
- N. Beckstead, N. Bostrom, N. Bowerman, O. Cotton-Barratt, W. MacAskill, S.O. hÉigeartaigh, T. Ord: Unprecedented Technological Risks, Future of Humanity Institute Policy Brief, September 2014 https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Unprecedented-Technological-Risks.pdf
- Matthijs M. Maas: Aligning AI Regulation to Sociotechnical Change, Oxford Handbook on AI Governance, 2022, https://www.cser.ac.uk/resources/aligning-ai-regulation-sociotechnical-change/
- V. Klockmann, A. v.Schenk, M. Villeval: Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, and Intergenerational Responsibility, SAFE Working Paper No. 335, 2021, https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-03237437/document/

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Please scan QR Code to engage in this ambition and to receive updates on the cross-generational projects.