


Basic information	
2020/2216(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Shaping the digital future of Europe: removing barriers to the functioning of the digital single market and improving the use of AI for European consumers Subject 3.30.06 Information and communication technologies, digital technologies 4.60.06 Consumers' economic and legal interests	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	<div>IMCO</div> Internal Market and Consumer Protection		CLUNE Deirdre (EPP)
			Shadow rapporteur GEBHARDT Evelyne (S&D) HAHN Svenja (Renew) KOLAJA Marcel (Greens /EFA) ZŁOTOWSKI Kosma (ECR) BASSO Alessandra (ID)
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	<div>INTA</div> International Trade (Associated committee)		BOURGEOIS Geert (ECR)
	<div>EMPL</div> Employment and Social Affairs		ARVANITIS Konstantinos (GUE/NGL)
	<div>ITRE</div> Industry, Research and Energy (Associated committee)		BEER Nicola (Renew)
	<div>TRAN</div> Transport and Tourism (Associated committee)		ZŁOTOWSKI Kosma (ECR)
	<div>AGRI</div> Agriculture and Rural Development		HRISTOV Ivo (S&D)

	CULT Culture and Education (Associated committee)	VERHEYEN Sabine (EPP)	29/06/2020
	JURI Legal Affairs (Associated committee)	WALSMANN Marion (EPP)	12/10/2020
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (Associated committee)	TARDINO Annalisa (ID)	12/05/2020
	FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	CARVALHO Maria da Graça (EPP)	01/12/2020
European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner
	Communications Networks, Content and Technology		GABRIEL Mariya

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/10/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/10/2020	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
14/04/2021	Vote in committee		
27/04/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0149/2021	
19/05/2021	Debate in Parliament		
20/05/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0261/2021	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2020/2216(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 57_o Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	IMCO/9/04404

Documentation gateway
European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE661.999	09/12/2020	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE663.012	26/01/2021	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE660.406	15/02/2021	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE653.821	25/02/2021	
Committee opinion	JURI	PE660.397	25/02/2021	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE660.188	01/03/2021	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE660.373	03/03/2021	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE660.290	16/03/2021	
Committee opinion	EMPL	PE660.416	22/03/2021	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE660.166	23/03/2021	
Committee opinion	FEMM	PE663.180	30/03/2021	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0149/2021	27/04/2021	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0261/2021	20/05/2021	Summary
European Commission				
Document type	Reference		Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2021)538		09/11/2021	

Shaping the digital future of Europe: removing barriers to the functioning of the digital single market and improving the use of AI for European consumers

2020/2216(INI) - 20/05/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 571 votes to 17, with 105 abstentions, a resolution on shaping the digital future of Europe: removing barriers to the functioning of the digital single market and improving the use of AI for European consumers.

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) brings many benefits but also risks and raises concerns about the ethics, scope and transparency of the collection, use and dissemination of personal data. There is a need to strengthen public trust in AI by providing for respect of fundamental rights, consumer protection, data protection and data security as a default, as well as by encouraging innovation in Europe.

Removing barriers to the functioning of the digital single market

Members believe that the EU's digital policy should create the foundations for Europe's public and private sectors to lead the world in reliable, human-centric digital innovation. A common European strategy is needed to remove unjustified national barriers and provide consumers and businesses with legal clarity that benefits European citizens and enhances competition.

The resolution stressed that the digital transition and emerging technologies such as AI can contribute to achieving the objectives of the EU industrial strategy and the Green Deal and to overcoming some of the difficulties created by the COVID-19 crisis. The Commission is invited to support the adoption of sustainable technology in the realisation of the Green Deal, including by assessing the environmental impact of data sharing and the infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable digital deployment.

Parliament called on the Commission to adopt a balanced, future-proof and evidence-based approach to legislation, respecting the principle of subsidiarity, in order to create a digital single market that delivers public services and is competitive, fair, accessible, technology-neutral, innovation-friendly, consumer-friendly, human-centric and trustworthy, thus building a secure data society and economy.

Stressing the need for substantial investment in AI and other key new technologies, Parliament welcomed the use of EU funding programmes to support the digitalisation of society and industry. It called for increased investment under Next Generation EU, as well as public and private funding.

Members suggested increasing the availability and sharing of non-personal data while ensuring that the risks of increased access to non-personal data, such as de-anonymisation, are limited. Access to more data for SMEs should be encouraged.

In addition, EU legislation should help to support innovation, ensure a high level of consumer protection and improve the rights, trust and security of online users. Clear responsibilities, more transparency and due diligence for online markets would be needed in this respect.

The Commission should update consumer protection legislation to take account of the impact of new technologies and the potential harm to consumers, in particular for the most vulnerable groups, and taking into account the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Improving the use of AI for European consumers

In order to benefit from AI, the Commission, Member States, the private sector, civil society and the scientific community must all work together effectively to create an ecosystem for safe human-centric AI that will benefit the whole society.

Parliament drew attention to the fact that citizens do not always understand the processes by which advanced algorithmic and artificial intelligence systems make decisions. Consumers therefore need a clear and predictable legal framework in the event of a product malfunction.

Members stressed the importance of ensuring that there is an appropriate degree of human control over algorithmic decision-making, ensuring that effective redress mechanisms are in place and empowering consumers by training them in basic AI skills. A mandatory information provision should indicate whether consumers are interacting with AI systems.

Parliament called on the Commission to regulate AI technologies in a comprehensive way to prevent unfair or abusive use of these systems. Any regulatory framework for AI should aim at creating an internal market for safe and reliable products, applications and services. This framework should be based on an ethical, human-centric and fundamental rights-based approach throughout the design, production and life cycle of products.

Members believe that AI used in a high-risk context should only be deployed for specific purposes, in full compliance with applicable law, and be subject to transparency obligations. Furthermore, AI should avoid biases leading to prohibited discrimination.

Parliament called on the EU to cooperate more closely with its partners, for example in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the WTO, to establish global standards for AI. It supported cooperation on international regulations, including the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, and in this context supported work on a transatlantic agreement on AI.

The resolution also highlighted the immense potential of AI in the transport sector and its ability to increase automation in road, rail, waterborne and air transport. It called on Member States to include projects on the digital transition of transport in their recovery plans.

AI will play a key role in solving agricultural production and food supply problems.

Monitoring with automated and digital tools can help reduce the environmental and climate footprint of agriculture. Members called for increased resources and investment in the agricultural sector for these purposes.

Lastly, pointing out that the fourth industrial revolution will depend, among other things, on access to raw materials such as lithium and rare earths, Parliament called for the EU to reduce its dependence on such imports by limiting its absolute consumption and building on its own environmentally responsible mining activities. It suggested a more proactive circular economy policy applied to digital devices and semiconductors.