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YOUTH DELIBERATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO ENHANCING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND FRONTIER DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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Acknowledgements

This policy brief is based on the author's experience as a post-doctoral researcher in the Horizon 2020 EuComMeet project. The project focuses on studying the impact of online deliberation in digitally advanced multilingual, multi-country environments. The author is also currently engaged in promoting youth inclusion and participation in the Euro-Mediterranean region as the liaison officer in Brussels for the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation.

Introduction

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into deliberative participatory processes can significantly improve digital interactions and foster local and international youth engagement, promoting their active and global citizenship. Nevertheless, AI-powered technologies also pose technical, security, political and ethical challenges that warrant attention. Addressing these challenges is vital as we progress towards a more digital world.¹

¹ A recent example is the open letter signed on 29 March 2023 by hundreds of tech entrepreneurs and distinguished AI researchers and academics, asking technology labs to immediately pause the training of AI systems to allow public authorities, and non-governmental and private actors the time to develop safety protocols and regulatory procedures: <https://futureoflife.org/open-letter/pause-giant-ai-experiments/>

This paper responds to the Council of the European Union 's call to explore innovative digital tools to enhance youth participation in governance. It focuses on the Euro-Mediterranean region² and suggests a thoughtful examination of AI's current and future role. This paper offers practical suggestions for European Union (EU) and Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) policy-makers to empower Euro-Mediterranean youth in three main areas: education, engagement and research.

Youth participation in the Euro-Mediterranean region: current state and institutional initiatives

Youth participation refers to the active involvement of young people in action-oriented processes that affect their lives and communities (OECD, 2017). As a form of "thin engagement",³ it can take many shapes, from indirect participation through voting to more direct forms such as participating in petitions, surveys and polls, or contributing to advocacy and activism (Nabatchi & Leighninger, 2015; Weiss, 2020). Involving young people ensures that their voices are considered, and their needs are addressed. It also helps them develop leadership skills, increase civic knowledge and engagement, and foster a commitment to their community and society.

Although youth participation is crucial in tackling today's challenges, young women and men are often excluded from the daily decisions on the future of our communities, nations and planet in the EU and the wider Euro-Mediterranean region. Besides structural and organisational hurdles, limitations to youth participation start at the individual level with administrative, legal and financial barriers, a lack of confidence in institutions and politicians, a lack of civic education and knowledge about political processes, and a dearth of candidates relatable to young people. These factors influence how young people see and experience participation, especially regarding representation.⁴ In the Southern Mediterranean region, youth unemployment, social exclusion and political instability have contributed to disillusionment and disengagement among young people. In the EU, rising inequalities, recurring financial and economic crises, and declining civil society hinder youths' potential (Bárta et al., 2021).⁵

There have been multiple suggestions for laws and policies that aim to promote the interests and rights of young people. The EU and its Mediterranean partners have acknowledged the importance of youth involvement in political processes. Furthermore, institutional-level discussions have emphasised that the active citizenship of young people contributes significantly to the governance dynamics, including regional ones. Building on an institutional reflection of at least twenty years in the making,⁶ the EU and the UfM have recently updated their youth policy objectives to promote, develop and enable young people's civic engagement in the region. These include the UfM Youth Strategy 2030 (2021), the European Union Youth

² In this paper, the term "Euro-Mediterranean region" refers to the ensemble of EU member states and countries located on the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean participating in the UfM: <https://ufmsecretariat.org/who-we-are/member-states/>

³ "Thin participation" refers to activities that enable individuals to express their opinions, ideas or concerns without requiring significant time or effort. The focus is on facilitating easy involvement. See Nabatchi & Leighninger (2015, pp. 17-20).

⁴ See, for example: "Youth and Elections", The Electoral Knowledge Network: <https://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/yt/yt10/yt220/obstacles-at-the-individual-level>

⁵ These considerations refer to general trends. The Euro-Mediterranean region is a vast and complex area bringing together countries and polities experiencing different cultural, social, economic and political environments. Diversity persists among Euro-Mediterranean partners regarding youth policies and active youth participation.

⁶ The EU has been developing a youth policy since the early 2000s. The first institutional initiatives on youth participation in Europe are even older than that; take, for example, the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life adopted by the Council of Europe in 1992.

Strategy (2019), and the Youth Action Plan in EU external action (2022). Considering the obstacles to participation, this policy framework can be used as a foundation to explore fresh ways of engaging young people in policy and politics to promote real inclusion.

Exploring the role of deliberative practices for active youth citizenship

Deliberation is a process of dialogue among participants to make informed decisions based on reasoned argumentation (Fishkin, 2018; Grönlund et al., 2015; Habermas, 1984). While it is part of participatory approaches, which include a more dispersed and polyhedral set of experiences allowing citizens to act, deliberation is a “thick engagement”⁷ that requires the deep and long-term involvement of groups of citizens in specific decision-making formats, from small-N groups such as mini publics and councils to large citizens’ assemblies, juries, consensus conferences, or participatory budgeting (Gastil, 2008). The impact of deliberation on individual skills, attitudes and behaviour, as well as on decision-making processes and policy outcomes, is still unclear and is currently being explored (Gastil, 2018; van der Does & Jacquet, 2023). However, a growing body of data indicates that deliberation might work in several ways (Minozzi et al., 2023).

At the individual level, empirical studies show that deliberative practices can lessen polarisation through informed and controlled discussion and reinforce anti-populist beliefs (Fishkin, 2018; Grönlund et al., 2015; Strandberg et al., 2021). Evidence from deliberative mini publics demonstrates that participation in deliberative group debates frequently results in significant opinion changes, regardless of the makeup and dynamics of the group (Farrar et al., 2009; Luskin et al., 2002). Deliberation promotes more in-depth thought, fosters civic tolerance, raises participants’ political literacy, and fosters trust and perspective-taking (Andersen & Hansen, 2007; Grönlund et al., 2015). Finally, participation in the deliberative process positively impacts political trust and political efficacy (Boulianne, 2019).

Although more tentative and limited, there is evidence that deliberation can directly influence political decisions, inducing more informed and inclusive policy outcomes (Goodin & Dryzek, 2006; Nabatchi et al., 2012; Barret et al., 2012; Rikki et al., 2022). However, recent experience also shows that the roadblocks hindering the direct transmission of deliberative results into policy-making remain substantive, including structural and operation hurdles, not to mention the resistance of some governance systems to direct democratic participation (Hoppe, 2011; Rask, 2013; Lee, 2014).

Beyond empirical evidence, deliberative practices have gained space locally⁸ and transnationally⁹ in Europe. The EU is interested in using deliberative approaches to address societal challenges and has started supporting research on the topic (Horizon 2020 programme 2014-2020¹⁰, Horizon Europe 2021-2027¹¹) and citizens’ grassroots engagement and participation (e.g., the CERV Programme 2021-2027¹²). Due to political and governance systems that differ from those in the

⁷ “Thick participation” involves engaging large numbers of people to make decisions in small groups. It is impactful and meaningful but requires time and effort. See Nabatchi & Leighninger (2015, p. 14).

⁸ For an overview of local participatory practices worldwide, see: <https://participedia.net/>

⁹ A few examples at the European international level are: “Meetings of minds”, a European citizens’ deliberation on brain sciences (2005/2006), <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/13649>; Europolis (2009), <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/225314/reporting>; and the “European Citizens’ Panels of the Conference on the Future of Europe” (2022), <https://wayback.archive-it.org/12090/20230216155930/https://futureu.europa.eu/en/>

¹⁰ For example, EuComMeet (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/959234/it>), DEMOTEC (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/962553>), and EUARENAS (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/959420/it>)

¹¹ For example, ORBIS (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094765>), REAL_DEAL (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101037071>), and CLIMAS (<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101094021>)

¹² <https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/justice-and-consumers/>

EU (Sarsar & Datta, 2020, pp. 119-142), decision-makers in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries have yet to explore the full potential of citizens' deliberation. However, participatory practices are emerging at a smaller scale, indicating a growing interest in and recognition of the importance of inclusive processes. For example, some municipalities in Tunisia have introduced participatory budgeting,¹³ while participatory planning is carving its niche in urban development in Turkey.¹⁴

Organising deliberative processes can be challenging, especially in international and transnational settings where participants come from different countries and speak different languages. This task can be costly and logistically complex, regardless of the group size. However, in recent years, digital and technological advancements have provided the opportunity to make deliberation thicker, more impactful, and at a larger scale.

Online deliberation: connecting citizens through technology

Online deliberation has gained popularity as a means of promoting collective decision-making, especially when it comes to involving young citizens in the democratic process.¹⁵ Digital tools, such as online forums, social media and collaborative technologies, encourage individuals to engage in discussions. Technological advancements have undoubtedly expanded the opportunities for young people to participate in various levels of governance, from being consulted to actively making decisions. Thanks to improved access to higher education and the lower cost of accessing digital information, young people are more connected and informed than ever.

Over the past decade, the use of digital technologies among young people in Europe has significantly increased. Online digital activism is on the rise (Belotti et al., 2022), with youth using the internet to interact with public authorities rising from 43% in 2013 to 61% in 2021. In 2020, almost all youths aged 16-24 in the EU (93%) used the internet daily or almost daily (Eurostat, 2021). While young people on the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean often face more significant obstacles to fully accessing the participatory benefits of digitalisation,¹⁶ recent history and current practices testify to the role of online activism and participation in the region.¹⁷

The rise of digital technology has an impact on intercultural dialogue too. Studies reveal that young individuals from both sides of the Mediterranean acknowledge the significance of digital tools in promoting exchanges. A vast majority believe that using digital technology can enhance communication between individuals from diverse cultures by increasing the frequency of interactions and reducing the consumption of time and resources (ALF, 2020). An example of combining traditional and digitally enhanced deliberation and participation in Euro-Mediterranean multilateral cooperation was the "Plaidoyer pour la Méditerranée 2030"¹⁸, a consultation of hundreds of young representatives from all over the region organised by the French Presidency in 2021 and 2022. The consultation resulted in policy recommendations for the UfM member states and led to the successful launch of the Mediterranean Capitals of Culture and Dialogue Initiative¹⁹ in April 2023.

justice-and-consumers-funding-tenders/funding-programmes/citizens-equality-rights-and-values-programme_en#:~:text=The%20CERV%20programme%20in%20a%20nutshell&text=It%20was%20created%20along%20with,on%20the%20rule%20of%20law

¹³ <https://participedia.net/case/4261>

¹⁴ <https://participedia.net/case/4610>

¹⁵ See, for example, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desapolicy-brief-no-149-promoting-youth-participation-in-decision-making-and-public-service-delivery-through-harnessing-digital-technologies/>

¹⁶ For more information, see the Digital Development Dashboard of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU): <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Dashboards/Pages/Digital-Development.aspx>

¹⁷ For example, following the Lebanese "garbage crisis", civil society in Lebanon has experienced a surge in youth mobilisation, which has been facilitated by digital means. See <https://participedia.net/case/4610>. On digital engagement in the region, see also Banaji & Moreno-Almeida (2021).

¹⁸ <https://expertisefrance.fr/actualite?id=861228>

Online deliberation can be just as effective as in-person discussions, as research suggests (Min, 2007; Chen et al., 2009; Kies, 2010; Nyerges & Aguirre, 2011; Kennedy et al., 2021), and it has proven its potential to promote democratic participation, enhance public deliberation, and improve decision-making (Sullivan & Hartz-Karp, 2013; Pena Lopez, 2017; Noveck, 2018; Itten & Mouter, 2021).

At the same time, online deliberation has limitations that must be overcome to be effective. Challenges such as self-selection can result in opinions and perspectives being misrepresented. Negative sentiments and difficulty reaching a consensus can also hinder its effectiveness as a decision-making tool (Baek et al., 2012). Online deliberation can prioritise quick solutions over meaningful engagement and thoughtful reflection, and inadequate discussions often fail to explore complex issues fully. Even when decision-makers are committed to influential outcomes, online deliberation platforms have yet to prove inclusive or representative (Hartz-Karp & Sullivan, 2014). Scaling up online deliberation to reach a larger audience can be challenging due to technical issues and difficulty managing the process with more participants. This limit may lead to a lack of diverse viewpoints and opinions being captured (Kim & Grönlund, 2012). Finally, online forums may lack critical elements for effective deliberation, such as organised debates, clear guidelines and impartial moderators. Without these, discussions may become unproductive and divided (Lampe et al., 2014).

Advancing online deliberation: the role of artificial intelligence

AI is still uncharted territory, but its potential to enhance youth participation and tackle challenges is promising. Advanced algorithms can enable AI to make deliberative processes more inclusive, provide greater access to trustworthy information, simplify discussions, and promote more efficient collaboration towards shared solutions (Chambers & Gastil, 2021).

Integrating AI technology in online discussions can significantly enhance the overall experience for participants. This is due to the ability of AI to enable interactive content, such as games, quizzes and surveys (Gastil, 2022). Additionally, AI algorithms can personalise recommendations based on individual interests and preferences, encouraging active participation. However, it is essential to acknowledge that AI-powered online deliberation processes still have limitations in reproducing the nuances of face-to-face discussions (Shortall et al., 2022). Furthermore, the utilisation of AI algorithms may result in biases, whether they are human, computational or systemic (Alnemr, 2020; Schwartz et al., 2022).

The inherent complexity in scaling engagement and promoting inclusivity can be managed using AI, specifically via structured debate mechanisms. Clustering algorithms can group participants based on shared interests or viewpoints, while network analysis can identify key opinion leaders to drive the conversation forward. Additionally, AI can monitor and analyse participant demographics to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented. AI-powered translation services can facilitate communication among participants who speak different languages, thereby reducing language barriers (Dabre et al., 2020). Furthermore, AI can provide moderation through speech recognition and automated chatbots, promoting objectivity in monitoring discussions and addressing instances of bias, harassment, or disruptive behaviour. AI technology can establish clear guidelines for participation and structured debate, benefiting the overall process.

Unfortunately, according to recent research, while AI technology has made significant advancements, it still faces challenges in accurately translating technical, nuanced and complex discussions (Wang et al., 2022). This limitation has implications for the inclusivity

¹⁹ <https://ufmsecretariat.org/mediterranean-capitals-of-culture-and-dialogue/>

and accessibility of online deliberation and raises questions about the effectiveness of AI in moderating real-time interactions. As highlighted by Gorwa et al. (2020) and Gillespie (2020), these challenges must be carefully considered to ensure that AI-powered tools are used to their fullest potential.

In this regard, a note of caution is in order. Integrating AI into existing and future practices requires a cautious approach, as numerous technical, social, ethical and political challenges must be addressed to ensure its safe implementation (Sunstein, 2017). In particular, using AI technology in online deliberation presents vulnerabilities that could directly impact fundamental rights, making it a critical issue (Buhmann & Fieseler, 2023). Given the concerning trend of democratic backsliding (Boese et al., 2022), these challenges must be met with non-stop attention. At least since the Asilomar Conference on Beneficial AI (2017),²⁰ non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been increasingly reflecting on the implications of AI growth, and international and national institutions have been struggling to develop policies to regulate it²¹ with a sharp increase in legislative activity.²² With the Artificial Intelligence Act in the making, the EU is taking its chances to act as a global norm setter and contributing to establishing legal frameworks and safeguards against AI threats and challenges.²³

Recommendations for Euro-Mediterranean policy-makers

Train. In line with the Conclusions of the European Council on the participation of young people in decision-making processes (2021:13), the EU Youth Action Plan call to enhance high-quality digital education and enable youths to lead the digital transition (2022, p. 11), and the UfM Youth Strategy call to reduce digital inequalities (2022, p. 19), it is argued here that AI-moderated deliberative experiences in non-formal education settings can help young people learn how to participate and make good use of AI frontier technologies. As empirical evidence suggests (Christensen et al., 2017), participation in online deliberative training can stimulate young people's appetite for more participation. Training programmes of this kind also have the potential to foster critical thinking, advance debate and technological skills, and provide thorough information about decision-making processes and specific policy issues. Taking inspiration from the launch of the European Year of Skills 2023, AI-supported deliberative training could be integrated into EU-funded programmes operating in the Euro-Mediterranean region. This means:

- Favouring the implementation of proposals on Euro-Med youth-related participatory education methodologies and online deliberation platforms that incorporate AI technologies in calls on global learning offered to civil society organizations (CSOs) and

²⁰ The Asilomar Conference on Artificial Intelligence (2017) was one of the first attempts by a multi-stakeholder platform to develop AI governance principles. See <https://futureoflife.org/open-letter/ai-principles/>

²¹ A few examples: the multi-stakeholder International Panel on Artificial Intelligence launched by the Canadian and French governments in 2018 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2019/05/declaration-of-the-international-panel-on-artificial-intelligence.html>), the 2018 European AI Alliance (<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/european-ai-alliance>), the 2019 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Principles on Artificial Intelligence (<https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/oecd-legal-0449>), the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (2020) <https://gpai.ai/>, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) "global standard-setting instrument on ethics of artificial intelligence" (2021) (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137>).

²² According to the latest Artificial Intelligence Index Report released in April 2023 by the Institute for Human-Centered AI (Maslej et al., 2023, p. 256): "An AI Index analysis of the legislative records of 127 countries shows that the number of bills containing 'artificial intelligence' that was passed into law grew from just 1 in 2016 to 37 in 2022. An analysis of the parliamentary records on AI in 81 countries likewise shows that mentions of AI in global legislative proceedings have increased nearly 6.5 times since 2016."

²³ The AI Act (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021PC0206&from=EN>) will add to the EU framework regulating the digital world, which already includes the EU Digital Services Act Package <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-services-act-package>, the EU general data protection regulation (GDPR) <https://gdpr.eu/what-is-gdpr/>, and the 2022 Code of Practice on Disinformation <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/code-practice-disinformation>

youth groups in the framework of the Development Education and Awareness Raising Programme (DEAR); as part of the youth participation and capacity-building of Erasmus+; in the framework of the upcoming Youth Empowerment Fund, especially engaging vulnerable and marginalised groups; in actions enabling an accessible environment for civil society and more inclusive CSO participation in dialogue under the Thematic Programme for Civil Society Organisations of the NDICI-Global Europe; or as part of the EU4Youth programme actions.

- Promoting the establishment in the region, preferably in a non-EU member of the UfM, of a Jean Monnet Chair in AI-enhanced Youth Participation or a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence on AI, digital technologies, and youth participation under the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Actions.
- In general, giving more visibility to AI-related training initiatives on the European Youth Portal. Providing more user-friendly resources would increase engagement among young people and create a more knowledgeable and engaged generation of European and Mediterranean citizens.

Engage. While it is paramount to provide young Euro-Mediterranean citizens with the competencies and knowledge to make the most out of technologically advanced deliberative participatory processes, it is also crucial to explore ways of embedding such processes in the multilevel system of governance of the region, as well as involving youths in discussions and decisions on the future of AI. This is necessary to generate greater consequentiality between meaningful youth participation and policy and public impact and minimise the widespread tendency to youth tokenism. In this regard:

- The EU could implement AI-supported features for enhanced deliberative and participatory actions in consultation processes under the EU Youth Strategy 2021-2027. Besides the EU Youth Dialogue, the European Youth Forum, and the European Union Youth Conferences, such improvements could extend to: the Youth Sounding Board for International Partnerships; the mandatory consultations of youth organisations in the Neighbourhood, Development, and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe (NDICI-Global Europe) programming process; and the youth advisory structures providing advice to EU Delegations (EUDs).
- As part of the UfM Regional Dialogue on Youth,²⁴ the UfM could take the occasion of the current formulation of an action plan for the implementation of the UfM Youth Strategy 2030 to envisage a thorough introduction of the latest technological advancements in future initiatives tackling the priorities of the UfM mandate, especially Education and Training, and Social Inclusion and Participation.

The EU Artificial Intelligence Act is expected to come into force in early 2024 and will apply in full within 24 months.²⁵ The EU wishes it to be “a powerful basis to engage further with its external partners, including third countries, and at international fora on issues relating to AI” (EI AI ACT, 2023, p. 5). Therefore:

- Being the main political framework in the Euro-Mediterranean region, the UfM could exploit the momentum, identify the regulation of AI as a key strategic area, and launch a common regional agenda with a specific chapter on AI governance;
- to ensure a diverse range of perspectives is considered, UfM ministerial dialogues on AI governance could foresee the involvement of young representatives from both sides of the Mediterranean;
- furthermore, specific instruments could address the intersections between AI, regional integration, the protection of fundamental rights, and youth inclusion in governance for equal access to decision and policy-making;
- finally, building on the outcomes of the UfM Regional Platform on Digital Economy and Internet Access²⁶ and keeping in mind the objectives of the UfM Regional Dialogue on Youth, the UfM could launch a specific Regional Dialogue Platform to involve the academy, civil society, and the private sector in a reflection on AI regional policy dimensions.²⁷

²⁴ <https://ufmsecretariat.org/platform/ufm-regional-dialogue-on-youth/>

²⁵ <https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/context/>

²⁶ <https://ufmsecretariat.org/platform/ufm-regional-platform-on-digital-economy-and-internet-access/>

²⁷ This action is particularly needed concerning youth. Although the proposal for an EU AI regulation was based on a stakeholder's broad consultation and a solid collection and use of expertise, it seems to have failed to include youths as a specific stakeholder group. Moreover, the current version of the EU Artificial Intelligence Act does not seem to reflect implications for young citizens as

Study. The desire for online participation and the political will to make it possible must be substantiated by empirical research to inform policies by assessing and understanding its effects on youth involvement in political and policy processes and the added value of AI technology. An empirical addendum is necessary to determine the impact of multilevel and AI-supported online deliberation on youth participation. On the other hand, advanced scientific research is needed to develop and implement responsible and ethical AI for better digital public engagement. This means tackling the weaknesses mentioned above: technical limitations, the digital and technological divide, AI's (still) limited capacity for deliberation, language inaccuracy, and biases in AI algorithms. At the EU level, these research drivers might be taken forward in different ways:

- Deploying advocacy actions targeting the Horizon Europe (HE) strategic planning 2025-2027 process. In the next HE work programme, new strategic orientations could be introduced that allow for specific multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary²⁸ calls to strengthen the interrelation between work on AI, inclusive and participatory governance, and youth. This would allow us to connect a human-centred and ethical development of digital technologies with innovative research on governance and participation.
- Raising awareness among the young Euro-Med research community, especially in less performing areas of the region, about the aforementioned priorities and encouraging early career researchers to design high-quality frontier research and access European Research Council (ERC) funding. The ERC mentoring scheme could include coaching and advice initiatives on a plethora of underexplored or ill-explored dimensions, including the role of frontier technologies in integrating deliberative processes in robust governance (Boswell et al., 2023), the technological development of unbiased, inclusive, and safe AI, or the assessment of the effects of AI-enabled deliberative processes on policy impact (Freiss & Eilders, 2015).
- Enhancing international cooperation under HE and extending third-country associate status to all non-EU member states of the UfM. This would allow more collaboration on big projects (e.g., HE) and the advancement of early career researchers in the Euro-Mediterranean region (e.g., ERC).

Conclusion

In today's complex and rapidly evolving global landscape, many urgent issues are proliferating, demanding concerted and inclusive action across various levels of engagement, from local communities to international cooperation. As our world becomes increasingly digitalised and technology-dependent, the potential for AI to play a pivotal role in addressing these challenges is immense. Nonetheless, we must exercise prudence and judicious political decision-making to ensure AI's responsible and effective implementation. By empowering young people to access advanced digital technologies and engage in these conversations, we can ensure that the benefits of AI are realised safely and equitably.

a specific category of stakeholders. "The absence of youth in the emerging AI governance processes" has already been identified as an emerging issue in the European policy landscape (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 2)

²⁸ These three terms are often used interchangeably but refer to highly differentiated scientific activities. For a review on the topic, see Lamonica and Angelucci (2018). For a review of transdisciplinary policy-making, see OECD (2020).

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