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Use of artificial intelligence by parliaments: risks and opportunities

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools present significant opportunities and profound challenges for parliaments. According to the 2024 World e-Parliament Report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, almost a third of the world's parliaments use AI-powered technologies in their daily work. As AI's integration in parliamentary contexts continues to grow, it is crucial to assess both the potential benefits and the risks associated with its use.

The deployment of AI in parliaments can enhance efficiency, improve decision-making processes, increase the impact of civic participation, and result in a better quality of governance. AI-powered applications used for debate transcription, analysis of large datasets, and public engagement tools could transform the way parliaments operate.

AI also raises critical issues regarding transparency, accountability, data privacy, and ethics. AI systems can amplify existing biases present in the data they are trained on, potentially leading to discriminatory legislative outcomes. The concentration of technological expertise and influence within a few large corporations raises concerns about undue influence and the erosion of public trust in democratic institutions. The opaque nature of AI decision-making processes can hinder transparency and democratic oversight. Reliance on AI must be scrutinised to ensure that it does not undermine the human element essential to the democratic process.

Ensuring that AI serves as a tool to enhance, rather than undermine, democratic functions is imperative for maintaining public trust and the integrity of parliamentary systems. The Parliamentary Assembly should examine ways in which AI can be used by parliaments to maximise its potential, while safeguarding democratic values and the rule of law. The Assembly should consider preparing guidelines on the basis of best practice. This would also be in line with the new Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (CETS No. 225), which obliges States Parties to protect the integrity of their democratic processes and institutions in the context of AI.

