

30th August 2018

French-Finnish Joint Statement for Cooperation on Artificial Intelligence

Future of Europe in the age of artificial intelligence

Digital transformation and artificial intelligence (AI) are global phenomena that transform our world in unprecedented ways. The digital transformation has cross-cutting effects on society and economy in Europe. For the European Union, public and private sectors and citizens, digitalization is one of the key success factors offering extensive potential for future growth and competitiveness.

AI-based systems are increasingly used in private and public sectors and these technologies are already present in our citizens' everyday lives. Thus, artificial intelligence provides tremendous social and economic opportunities but also challenges to be tackled.

It is crucial for Europe's global competitiveness to stay at the forefront of the development and use of digital technologies by actively supporting innovation, and in particular disruptive innovation.

AI-cooperation between France and Finland

France and Finland recognize the need for governments' active role in promoting fair, inclusive and human-centric vision of artificial intelligence that builds on and fosters trust. In order to ensure confidence and acceptability of artificial intelligence in society, it is essential that citizens and businesses can trust artificial intelligence based systems. The concrete steps we take now will define the future world.

In this context, France and Finland emphasize the importance and growing need for better understanding, estimating and assessing the impact of artificial intelligence to business and society. We acknowledge that solving the policy questions that emerge from artificial intelligence benefit from cooperation, sharing best practices and identifying synergies.

Both France and Finland identify artificial intelligence as a key enabler for future innovation. Accordingly, both countries have national artificial intelligence strategies and investment frameworks in place. Furthermore, they call for an ambitious European dedicated initiative for disruptive innovation under the next framework program, Horizon Europe, which would amplify their respective national efforts, and support the swift adoption of a pilot by 2019.

Finding common priorities and solutions for Europe is vital, and we commit to bilateral cooperation on artificial intelligence focusing on priority sectors and creating mutual cooperation on innovation and research policy for the future of Europe. The key areas for cooperation include:

1. Digital renewal of industry
2. Healthcare
3. Future Mobility
4. Start-up ecosystems

We recognize that in order to fully unlock the potential artificial intelligence holds for society and business in France and Finland, as well as on the European level, we need to build and strengthen trust for developing and interacting with artificial intelligence and thus contribute to European economic dynamics for AI. Therefore, we commit to sharing best practices and producing recommendations on the central issues of trust in AI, accountability and ethics of AI.

Next steps

The governments of France and Finland recognise the importance of bilateral cooperation in the area of artificial intelligence and agree on working jointly to develop and promote joint recommendations in the area of artificial intelligence, including financial issues for AI infrastructures, both at the national and at the European Union level. Considering the importance of the matter and the timeframe, an AI-deployment action group will be set up in October 2018 to carry out the task. A work programme and a timetable for follow-up will be defined in January 2019. Evaluation of the first results of the group's work will be available at the end of 2019. Details concerning the group will be defined separately.