

PREFACE: WHITHER ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?
DEBATING THE POLICY CHALLENGES OF THE
UPCOMING TRANSFORMATION

BIRGITTA WOLFF
GOETHE UNIVERSITY FRANKFURT

In April 2018 the European Commission announced its holistic approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) based on the following three pillars: first, to boost financial support and encourage uptake by the public and private sectors in order to reach investments in AI-related research and innovation by at least 20 billion Euros by the end of 2020. The second pillar aims at preparing for socio-economic changes in terms of the upcoming transformation of the labour market. Finally, the European Commission will ensure an appropriate ethical and legal framework by developing AI ethics guidelines and providing guidance on the interpretation of the Product Liability directive.

Issues of research and training feature prominently in the EU strategy. As providers of both research and training, universities already play a key role regarding the advancement of AI. Rapid developments in AI challenge both scientists and policy professionals. The opportunities and challenges of AI are multi-faceted. They exceed the boundaries of academic disciplines and the policy portfolios of ministries or Directorates General. Therefore, this paper constitutes a modest attempt to provide a concise overview of the policy challenges related to AI.

In order to foster the dialogue between policy professionals and academics Goethe-University Frankfurt launched the Mercator Science Policy Fellowship Programme in collaboration with Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Technische Universität Darmstadt in 2016. Since then, senior professionals from the public sector in Germany, the European Union, media and non-profit organisations have participated in our programme. The Mercator Science Policy Fellowship Programme and the Centre for Science and Policy at Cambridge University organised a joint event on AI in Brussels in July 2018. We decided to compile this publication as a follow-up to our Brussels event.

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