



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, CONTENT AND TECHNOLOGIES

Directorate for the Digital Single Market
E-Commerce and Online Platforms

Algorithmic decision-making and online platforms: state-of-the-art and potential case studies

Internal workshop

25th January 2019, 9:30-17:30

25 Avenue de Beaulieu, Brussels (BU25 2/DROOM)

1. Context

Algorithmic decisions are increasingly influencing our lives. They can give us meaningful access to a world of information, they optimise processes and help us save time and money, ensure fair treatment and traceability of decisions. At the same time, algorithms have been ‘blamed’ for tipping over major elections, fostering unfair and uncompetitive trading practices, discriminating against vulnerable segments of the population.

While it is clear that automation is a great opportunity, not without challenges, risks and the difficulties of any major digital change, it is also necessary to step away from the hype and fears and consider the scientific evidence underpinning the fears spurred by algorithmic decision-making.

The European Commission is conducting a pilot project, at the proposal of the European Parliament, on Algorithmic Awareness Building, to further the evidence base and the understanding of areas where further policy intervention might be needed. The workshop is part of this reflection, and aims at informing the internal reflection in the European Commission. The event also comes at a point when the study underpinning the project is validating the findings in its [draft state-of-the-art report](#).

2. Objectives for the day

The workshop follows a three-fold objective:

- Inform the Commission’s reflection on the challenges related to algorithmic decision-making and policy responses, by discussing the map of issues and solutions emerging.
- Contribute to the peer review on the state-of-the-art report and gather feedback from the participants on possible gaps and areas which need further analysis.
- Collect ideas and input on the main areas of concern which would usefully be explored in future case studies and brought to the attention of the European Commission.

3. Workshop scenario

The workshop will be conducted under the Chatham House rule, with the participation of around ten leading experts from academia and policy, twenty European Commission officials, as well as the AlgoAware study team.

It will map the areas of concern and challenge the evidence gaps, feeding the internal reflection in the Commission as well as the research questions the AlgoAware project should address in the following months. The starting point of the discussion will be the presentation of the [draft state-of-the-art report](#) proposed by the AlgoAware pilot project and open for peer review until the 4th February. The discussion should then build on, but not exclusively focus on, the report.

The day will be structured in several parts:

- Fire-starter: provocative thoughts from Prof. Mireille Hildebrandt, followed by a brief presentation of the [AlgoAware draft state-of-the-art report](#)
- Two panel discussions with leading experts from policy or academia, first to further discussing perspectives and areas which deserve further policy and research attention in the state of the art, ad, second, to present and discuss emerging policy and governance approaches.
- An interactive session will complete and discuss the long-list of case studies of algorithmic decision-making with a policy stake.

If there is a particular case study you would be interested in or a pressing question you would like to ask, please let us know in advance (Diana.Vlad-Calcic@ec.europa.eu and Prabhat.Agarwal@ec.europa.eu).

The discussion will be synthesised into a short report which might be made publicly available.

4. Agenda

9:30-9:50	<i>Welcome and introductions</i>
9:50 -10:10	<i>Fire-starter: Algorithmic awareness</i> <u>Mireille Hildebrandt</u> , Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
10:10-10:35	<i>Presentation of the <u>State-of-the-Art findings</u> (AlgoAware)</i>
10:35-10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45-12:30	<i>Perspectives on the State-of-the-Art</i> First panel, with the participation of: <u>Sandra Wachter</u> , Oxford Internet Institute <u>Sophie Stalla-Bourdillon</u> , University of Southampton <u>Ansgar Koene</u> , University of Nottingham <u>Michael Veale</u> , University College London

	Followed by Q&A with the panel and study team and open discussion
<i>12:30-13:30</i>	<i>Lunch break (sandwich lunch offered)</i>
<i>13:30 – 15:00</i>	<p><i>Emerging governance and policy approaches</i></p> <p>Second panel, with the participation of: <u>Charlotte Altenhöner-Dion</u>, Council of Europe <u>Annie Blandin-Obernesser</u>, CNNum <u>Michael Latzer</u>, University of Zurich <u>Joris van Hoboken</u>, University of Amsterdam and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)</p> <p>Followed by Q&A and open discussion.</p>
<i>15:00-15:15</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<i>15:15 – 17:15</i>	<p><i>Interactive workshop designed to identify potential case studies</i></p> <p>If there is a particular case study you would be interested in or a pressing question you would like to ask, please let us know in advance (Diana.Vlad-Calcic@ec.europa.eu and Prabhat.Agarwal@ec.europa.eu).</p>
<i>17:15 – 17:30</i>	<i>Closing of the day and next steps</i>