

Dear all,

Before I begin my speech, I would like to heartfully thank the Foundation of the Cyprus House of Representatives for the organization and hospitality, the Foundation of the Hellenic Parliament for Parliamentarism and Democracy for the honourable invitation to put my thoughts to the debate, its President - and my professor - Mr. Hadjivassiliou and especially all the participants from the European Parliaments for the honour of being with us today.

It's a great pleasure to address you on a topic that could be the common ground for your collective actions. European integration is neither an abstract concept nor a mere wishful thinking. It is implemented through actions such as today's and on subjects that may be far from the limelight, but which are of paramount importance for our democratic edifice. The Hellenic Parliament Foundation for Parliamentarism and Democracy and the bonded foundations you represent have a duty to support this effort, at all times and in all years, updating the needs of societies for high-quality democracy.

In this era of exponential change, it would be ostrich-like to claim that democracy and institutions are immune to social changes. The speed of the spread of new technologies, one of which is AI, is defining new situations. AI, either as a tool to strengthen democracy or as a threat, is the new holy grail of democratic societies.

Artificial intelligence presents a transformative opportunity for parliamentary processes by streamlining various functions such as debate transcription, document summarization, legal drafting support, and communicating with citizens.

Forward-thinking parliaments are already experimenting with AI, revealing substantial benefits in enhancing transparency and informed decision-making. AI can analyse extensive legal documents to identify patterns and suggest improvements, while algorithms can summarize lengthy reports, making them more accessible. Additionally, AI chatbots can engage citizens by providing real-time information about parliamentary activities, fostering public participation and finally enhancing the quality of our democracies. Moreover, predictive AI models can forecast trends and policy impacts, allowing lawmakers to proactively address emerging issues and

improve parliamentary effectiveness. This is undoubtedly an issue that your Foundations should rely on.

Many countries, including some of the guests, have already adopted practical uses of AI in their legislative process. An example is Italy, which uses AI systems both to classify documents, create drafts, and targeted amendments to bills, but also to interact with citizens and promote more democratic functioning of its processes. Other countries such as Finland, Israel, Estonia, Finland and the European Parliament itself have similar examples.

If we want to be a little bit more specific and especially more forward-looking, how would you consider an AI system creating the first draft of a bill according to the existing needs?

Language models are trained on historical data and are used for projecting trends into the future. These simulations (or projections) are designed to capture the dynamics of complex systems like the economy or social aspects. These models are good at capturing the “emergent properties” of complex systems where individual decisions add up in unusual ways. In 1964, economist George Stigler said, “*We do not know the relationship between the public policies we adopt and the effects these policies were designed to achieve.*” ML models can help uncover just this. The main focus should be uncovering the drivers of a particular problem, understanding which interventions could be effective, and finally understanding the trade space of a given issue. This space can then be filled with the new legislation.

However, even sophisticated AI simulations cannot make value judgments or determine the best option; they can only evaluate the optimal choice based on the values and assumptions defined by humans at the outset. Nevertheless, by compelling the human component of the human-machine collaboration to clearly specify these values and assumptions, AI simulations could potentially revolutionize legislative processes.

Human-machine teaming has the potential to bring significant benefits to the legislative process. Of course challenges exist in areas such as data quality, security, and managing the human component. By focusing on the tasks, risks can be controlled

while still realizing transformational benefits. Different tasks require different controls, such as ensuring clean, accurate data for ML models.

Data and model governance are crucial, as AI outputs are only as reliable as the model and the data of the input. Frameworks like those from each country's National Institute of Standards and Technology provide guidance for managing risks in AI use and of course, it is also worth mentioning the directives and action plans that the European AI Act could contribute towards this direction.

AI simulations are based on assumptions about how factors relate to each other, and transparency in these assumptions is key. ML models are vulnerable to data poisoning, while AI simulations require safeguards on variables, assumptions, and outputs to prevent manipulation. Security measures are essential to protect AI tools from manipulation by adversaries. Overall, careful consideration and governance are necessary to ensure the transparency, accuracy, and security of AI tools used in the legislative process.

New technologies are transforming legislative processes, requiring lawmakers to acquire new skills and adapt to innovative tools. AI models are offering insights that go beyond traditional data sources, such as geospatial data and statistical relationships, which necessitates the use of data visualization and data science skills. Additionally, AI can provide real-time decision support, enabling policymakers to adjust models and evaluate conclusions as new data emerges, potentially increasing the time spent advising decision-makers.

As might be expected, successfully integrating AI into the legislative process demands strong leadership, commitment, and investment in training and business practices. Insights from other industries highlight the need to focus on key problem aspects rather than attempting to model everything, advocating for the development of AI-enabled platforms over isolated solutions to maximize benefits without having to reinvent tools for each policy debate.

But all the above are of no value if reskilling and upskilling of the human resources handling them is not achieved. Lawmakers and MEPs need to become familiar with the new technologies in order to make the most of them.

Prioritizing the human element in the human-machine partnership is vital for the long-term success of digital transformations and overall use. While AI excels at calculations and simulations, it cannot make value judgments, making human input crucial for legislative decision-making. Combining AI with the right personnel and processes can enhance legislative debates, promote consensus, and yield meaningful outcomes for the public, enabling legislators to effectively utilize AI as a tool for assessments and simulations.

I understand that there might be fear that AI will replace us. You know, many people ask me exactly this. Maybe a colleague here today is concerned about whether Artificial Intelligence will one day draft policy papers in our absence, and we are out of a job.

But ladies and gentlemen, there have been 24 other technological breakthroughs before AI and none have shaken the foundations of Democracy. On the contrary, every time humanity found a way to tame them - such as writing and printing- for his benefit and for the benefit of his Democratic values.

What makes us believe that he will not succeed with AI as well?

After all, what is the point of Democracy if it is not enjoyed by the people? All the efforts are made for humans, and tools like AI are here to support us humans in a parallel symbiotic evolution with them.

With these thoughts and the emphasis on the human factor behind each technology, I will close my placement.

Thank you once more for the invitation, wishing a very fruitful Symposium.