



**THE ATHENS ROUNDTABLE**  
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

**THE  
FUTURE  
SOCIETY**

FEBRUARY 2025

# **International Coordination for Accountability in AI Governance**

Key Takeaways from the Sixth Edition of  
the Athens Roundtable on Artificial  
Intelligence and the Rule of Law Held  
December 9, 2024, in Paris, France

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George Gor, Frank Ryan, Tereza Zoumpalova, Niki Iliadis

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# The Sixth Edition of the Athens Roundtable on AI and the Rule of Law

OECD Headquarters, Paris, France  
December 9, 2024

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**Under the patronage of H.E. the President of the Hellenic Republic Ms. Katerina Sakellaropoulou**

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# About The Sixth Edition

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The Sixth Edition of the Athens Roundtable on AI and the Rule of Law, hosted at the OECD in Paris on December 9, provided a valuable platform for engaging with one of the defining challenges of our time: establishing robust accountability mechanisms to ensure AI is developed and governed in alignment with the rule of law. Convening 135 in-person participants—including government ministers, policymakers, civil society leaders, industry executives, and academics—and 830 online attendees from 108 countries, the event underscored the urgency of this task amid intensifying geopolitical competition and an accelerating race for technological dominance.

We were honored to host this event under the patronage of Her Excellency the President of the Hellenic Republic, Ms. Katerina Sakellaropoulou, and in partnership with the OECD, UNESCO, the AI & Society Institute, CNNum, and Make.org, with support from Arnold & Porter and Fathom. Significantly, this year's edition of The Athens Roundtable served as a key milestone for shaping the agenda and deliverables of the AI Action Summit forthcoming in February 2025.

Discussions revolved around four themes: assessing progress in AI governance, identifying gaps in existing governance regimes, crafting solutions, and defining actionable priorities for the AI Action Summit. Participants stressed the importance of international collaboration to

establish binding global AI standards and accountability mechanisms. Rigorous testing, independent evaluations, and third-party audits, supported by AI Safety Institutes, were recognized as vital for building safe and accountable AI. While advancing scientific consensus on AI risks remains essential, our discussions highlighted that immediate governance actions cannot wait. Broader societal participation, especially from civil society, was deemed crucial to ensuring governance frameworks reflect diverse perspectives and global needs.

As we reflect on the outcomes of this event throughout this report, one thing is clear: building effective governance for AI is not an endpoint but an ongoing endeavor. The stakes are high: without effective accountability mechanisms, AI will exacerbate inequality, erode human rights, and destabilize our democratic institutions. As highlighted in our opening remarks: “if AI developers hold themselves accountable to nobody, they won’t be trusted by anybody.” Urgently, we need the collective effort of thousands of individuals worldwide and coordination across geographic regions and sectors. This is how we can facilitate the mitigation of systemic risks posed by AI and the responsible and equitable realization of its promises—not only for ourselves, but for the future of our society.

**With appreciation and hope,**



**Nick Moës**  
Executive Director  
The Future Society



**Niki Iliadis**  
Director, Global AI Governance  
The Future Society



# Recommendations for Key Stakeholders

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Who holds the responsibility for ensuring that the development and deployment of AI serve to benefit humanity? Our view is that this must be a shared effort, requiring proactive engagement from governments, intergovernmental organizations, industry, civil society, and individuals. Each actor brings unique perspectives, resources, and expertise to the governance process. Together, we can tackle the significant work needed to establish robust, effective, and globally consistent frameworks.

Drawing from discussions at the Sixth Edition of the Athens Roundtable on AI and the Rule of Law,

## GOVERNMENTS

### Harmonize International Standards

Engage in bilateral and multilateral efforts to align AI governance frameworks through established international mechanisms such as the OECD AI Principles, ensuring interoperability across jurisdictions. Secure high-level political commitment from heads of state to establish and mutually recognize international standards. This includes supporting a Paris Declaration signed at the AI Action Summit by a diverse coalition of world leaders to foster “constructive vigilance” and proactive oversight in AI development.



*Each actor brings unique perspectives, resources, and expertise to the governance process. Together, we can tackle the significant work needed to establish robust, effective, and globally consistent frameworks.*

we identified key recommendations for what different actors can do to advance AI governance. To derive these recommendations, we analyzed key insights from each session and categorized them based on the actors who could most benefit. This approach synthesized what was voiced during the discussions and transformed those insights into tangible, actionable recommendations. The following overview aims to inspire deeper conversations on practical, tangible actions each can take to bolster accountability and uphold safety and fundamental rights, including the rule of law.

### Establish Enforceable Oversight

Move beyond reliance on voluntary industry commitments to mandatory requirements by creating binding legal mandates. Adopt comprehensive oversight mechanisms and clear red lines for AI development—drawing on the EU AI Act and Frontier AI Safety Commitments—to prevent reckless deployment and protect public interest.

### Require Rigorous Testing, Independent Evaluations, and Third-Party Audits

Mandate frequent and standardized independent assessments of AI aligned with international standards.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### Develop Global Standards

Collaborate with the [International Network of AI Safety Institutes](#) and the OECD to establish and continuously update interoperable standards for AI governance, leveraging the momentum of the [AI Action Summit consultations](#), and ensuring these standards are adopted, or at the very least, recognized across multiple jurisdictions.

### Create Binding International Frameworks

Support agreements that require companies and governments to adopt specific and clear oversight protocols and measurable compliance requirements, including with clear incentives and red lines that align with the EU AI Act. These frameworks should also enable interoperability with evolving global regulatory initiatives worldwide.

### Foster Global Cooperation

Institutionalize joint oversight mechanisms—especially through a permanent structure for the International Network of AI Safety Institutes—to address cross-border risks, support a holistic incident reporting platform in partnership with the OECD, and scale policies for accident prevention globally.

## INDUSTRY

### Implement Transparency Measures

Regularly publish clear, detailed reports detailing compliance with ethical guidelines and regulations, adherence to safety standards, outcomes of risk assessments and model evaluations and testing, and mitigation strategies. These reports should align with internationally recognized disclosure and accountability standards.

### Ensure Responsible and Trustworthy Development of AI

Develop and implement comprehensive safety protocols that include clear ethical use restrictions, robust stakeholder oversight

mechanisms and incident reporting requirements across all stages of AI development and deployment.

### Commit to Lifecycle Accountability

Take full responsibility for AI throughout their lifecycle, including proactively monitoring their impacts post-deployment. Address unintended consequences swiftly by implementing corrective measures and providing transparent updates to stakeholders.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

### Enable Inclusive Participation in AI Governance

Build coalitions across civil society organizations to ensure underrepresented voices are actively included in decision-making forums. Foster equitable representation and create avenues for meaningful contributions to governance discussions.

### Monitor and Assess AI Impacts

Establish independent, well-funded initiatives to systematically track, analyze, and publicly report on the societal impacts of AI. Use these assessments to hold actors (primarily governments and AI companies) accountable for harms, biases, and unintended consequences, while advocating for legally enforceable mechanisms.

### Develop Adaptive Global Benchmarks

Lead efforts to create and update rigorous, globally relevant evaluation frameworks for AI. These benchmarks should standardize metrics for performance, safety, and societal impact, ensuring consistency and accountability while adapting to rapid technological advancements.

## INDIVIDUALS

### Advocate for Transparency and Rights

Demand greater transparency from AI developers and policymakers, ensuring AI aligns with societal values and public interest through active civic education.

### **Push for Enforceable Governance**

Call for stronger accountability measures from governments and corporations, ensuring AI serves the public interest.

### **Participate in Public Consultations**

Contribute to discussions and policymaking on AI governance by engaging in consultations and forums. Diverse perspectives are critical for robust accountability mechanisms.

### **Support Ethical AI Development**

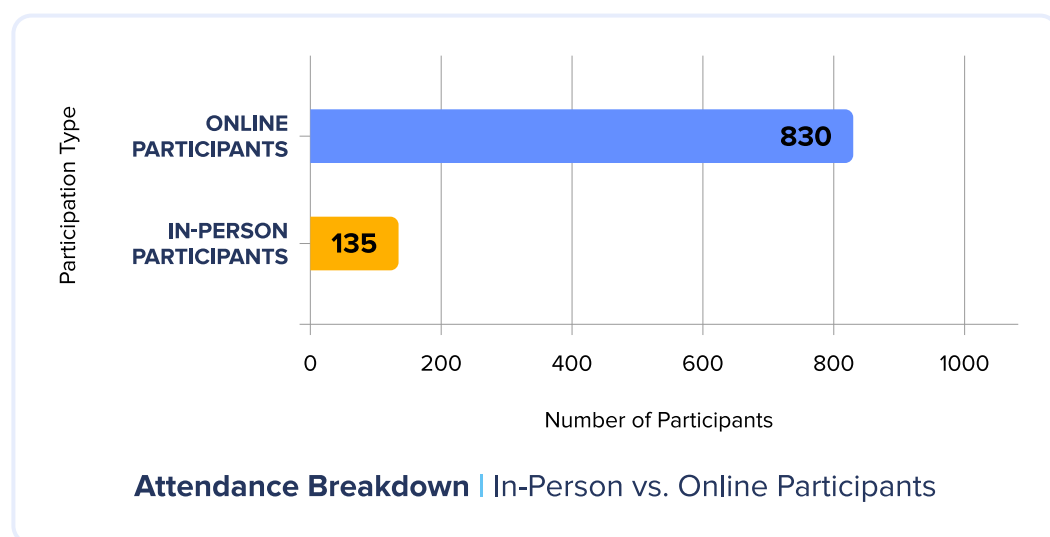
Actively support developers and organizations that prioritize transparency and accountability. Conversely, reject companies or products that fail to meet ethical standards or address the harm caused by their technologies—for example, by choosing not to support or purchase from them.



# The Sixth Edition In Numbers

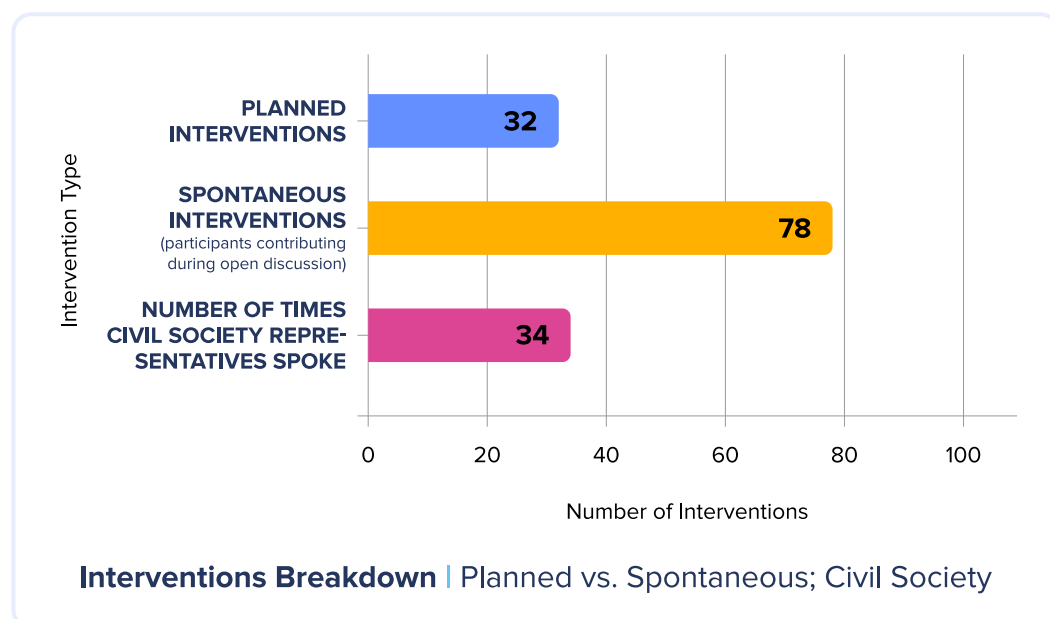
The Athens Roundtable convened a diverse audience, allowing for varied and nuanced perspectives on global AI governance. Below are key statistics highlighting the event's scope and impact.

## ATTENDANCE



  
**108**  
COUNTRIES  
REPRESENTED

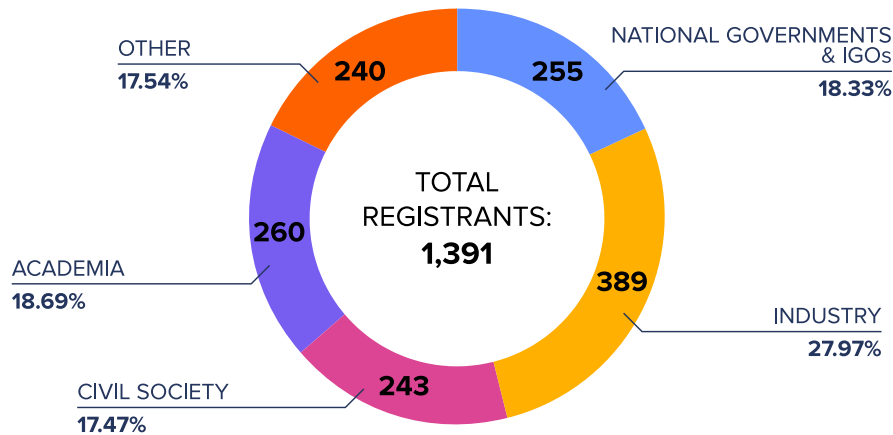
## SPOKEN INTERVENTIONS



  
**144**  
TOTAL  
INTERVENTIONS

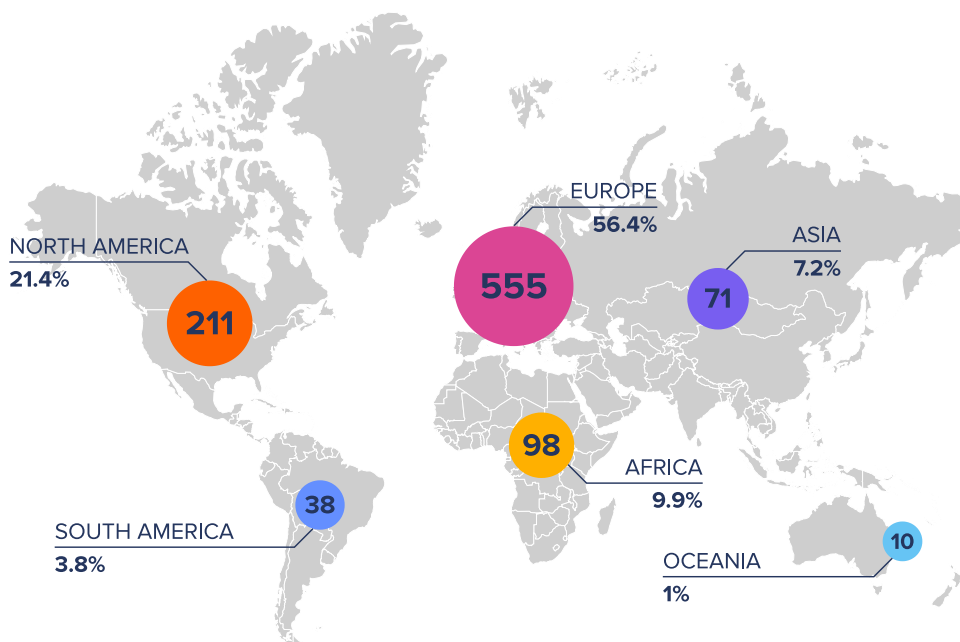


## SECTOR



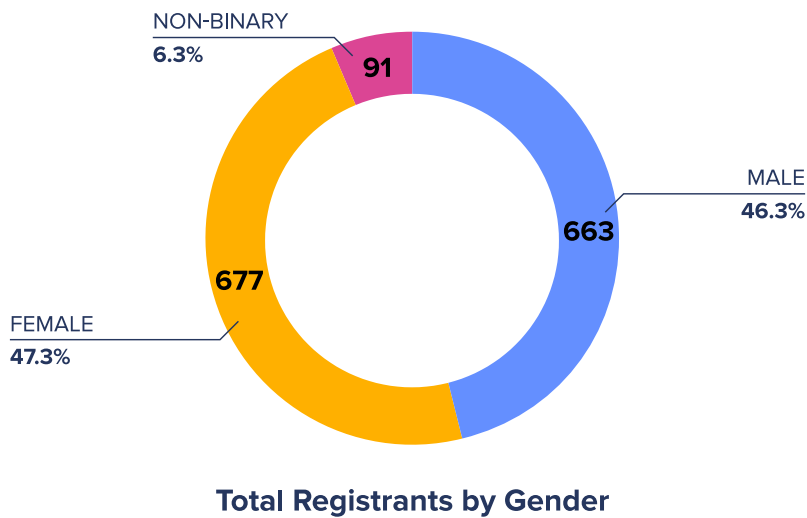
**Total Registrants by Sector**

## REGIONS / COUNTRIES



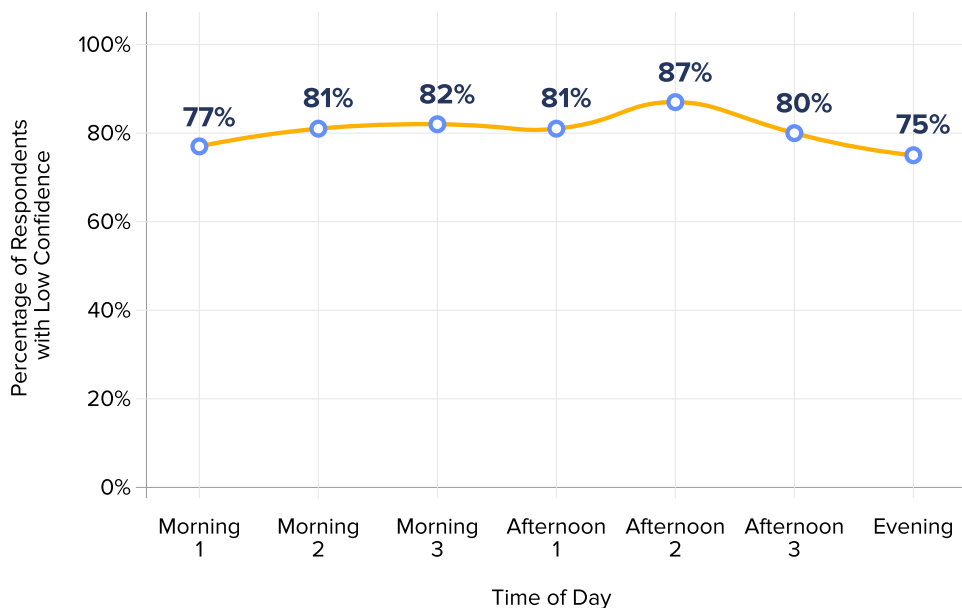
**Total Registrants by Region**

## GENDER



## POLLING OF ONLINE PARTICIPANTS

**QUESTION** | How confident are you that AI will be governed properly to ensure it is safe and trustworthy?



**Change in Percentage of Attendees Marking Their Confidence as Low (1-6/10) Throughout The Day**







# Agenda Overview

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For this edition, The Athens Roundtable focused on enhancing international coordination for accountability in AI governance and served as an official event leading to [France's AI Action Summit](#) in February 2025. The event began with opening remarks emphasizing the need for robust mechanisms to safeguard the rule of law, democratic values, and equitable global innovation. The roundtable discussions followed a dynamic format, combining short interventions from participants and interactive exchanges. Online audience engaged in real time through polls and chat.

**Session 1** mapped the emerging landscape of AI governance, with representatives from key institutions such as the OECD, United Nations, UNESCO, AI Safety Institutes, and the European AI Office showcasing their respective accountability initiatives.

**Session 2** examined core gaps in establishing accountable AI governance, including the drive for stronger global standards, clarity on liability frameworks. Strategies for managing AI race dynamics, and ensuring diverse perspectives—especially from the Global South—were heard. The session also emphasized the need for practical tools to close these gaps, such as adaptable policy frameworks and inclusive decision-making processes.

**Session 3** explored ways to build stronger accountability across AI actors, delving into incentives for responsible development, interoperable evaluations, transparent information flows, and effective incident reporting.

**Session 4** announced the [findings of the AI Action Summit Consultation](#), reflecting input from over 10,000 citizens and 200 civil society organizations on “constructive vigilance” to prevent AI harms and necessary regulatory measures. The session highlighted the importance of leveraging these findings to ensure that civil society voices directly shape global governance efforts and influence policy priorities ahead of the Summit. It also addressed the central role of civil society organizations in shaping global AI governance and proposed forging a dedicated coalition to unify their voices.

Participants closed by discussing next steps to maintain momentum leading into the AI Action Summit. Calls to embed accountability throughout the AI lifecycle, protect human rights, and reinforce democratic principles underscored the entire dialogue. Building on insights shared and drawing from the consultation results, this report details the concrete objectives and deliverables proposed during the Roundtable.

More information on the Sixth Edition's agenda, including a full list of in-person participants, is [here](#).



*Building effective governance for AI is not an endpoint but an ongoing endeavor. The stakes are high: without effective accountability mechanisms, AI will exacerbate inequality, erode human rights, and destabilize our democratic institutions.*

# Session Takeaways

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## Opening Remarks



### SPEAKERS



**Minister Dimitris Papastergiou**  
Minister, Hellenic Ministry of  
Digital Governance



**Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen**  
Deputy Secretary General,  
OECD



**Chloé Goupille**  
Secretary General,  
AI Action Summit



**Nick Moës**  
Executive Director,  
The Future Society

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The opening remarks set the stage for the day's discussions by highlighting the critical need for accountability in AI governance. Speakers underscored the urgency of addressing global challenges and emphasized that facilitating collaboration and interoperability between countries, companies, and the ecosystem as a whole is essential for AI governance to succeed. The remarks established a call for broader societal participation, particularly from global majority countries and civil society, to ensure AI governance mechanisms are more reflective of diverse perspectives worldwide.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### Human-Centric AI Development

Minister Dimitris Papastergiou called for a humanistic and environmentally sustainable approach to AI development. This approach emphasizes three things: protection of minors, equitable benefit distribution, and safeguarding fundamental rights. The Minister advocated for the preservation of cultural diversity through local AI, particularly for lesser spoken languages like Greek, and proposed the creation of a European open-source large language model. This initiative seeks to reduce dependency on third-party systems and promote regional innovation while democratizing AI access and ownership.

### Risks of Regulatory Fragmentation

Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen drew attention to the dangers of regulatory fragmentation, emphasizing the resulting inefficiencies, legal complexities, and risks to the global economy. He advocated for interoperability and consensus-building across governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector. To counter these risks, Knudsen called for the development of cohesive, global AI governance frameworks that

align with democratic principles and shared values, promoting economic and regulatory stability.

### Paving the Way for Inclusive and Action-Oriented AI Governance

Chloé Goupille framed the AI Action Summit as a transformative opportunity to drive consensus and implement actionable practical policies. She stressed the importance of creating a coordinated, democratic governance framework that prioritizes public interest and security while amplifying diverse perspectives.

### Urgency in Developing Accountability Mechanisms

Nick Moës emphasized the need for pragmatic accountability mechanisms to restore public trust and ensure responsible AI development. Moës highlighted the importance of institutional innovation to address gaps in governance and urged participants to leave the roundtable with clear and actionable solutions for their organizations. Moës underscored the importance of balancing innovation with societal safeguards, cautioning against moving “too fast and breaking too many things.”



## KEY QUOTES



*Let's not pretend otherwise: the elephant in the room is the excessive concentration of information, algorithms, traffic, and wealth in extremely few centers. AI must be democratized, opened up and [able to] attract more owners, advocates, and supporters.*

**Minister Dimitris Papastergiou**

Minister, Hellenic Ministry of Digital Governance



*Accountability means that AI actors should apply a systematic risk management approach to each phase of the AI system lifecycle and adopt responsible business conduct to address risks related to AI.*

**Ulrik Vestergaard Knudsen**

Deputy Secretary General, OECD



*The AI Action Summit, planned in February 2025, is a great opportunity [for] a wide range of stakeholders, entrepreneurs, and government officials to take decisions, but, most importantly, actions.*

**Chloé Goupille**

Secretary General, AI Action Summit



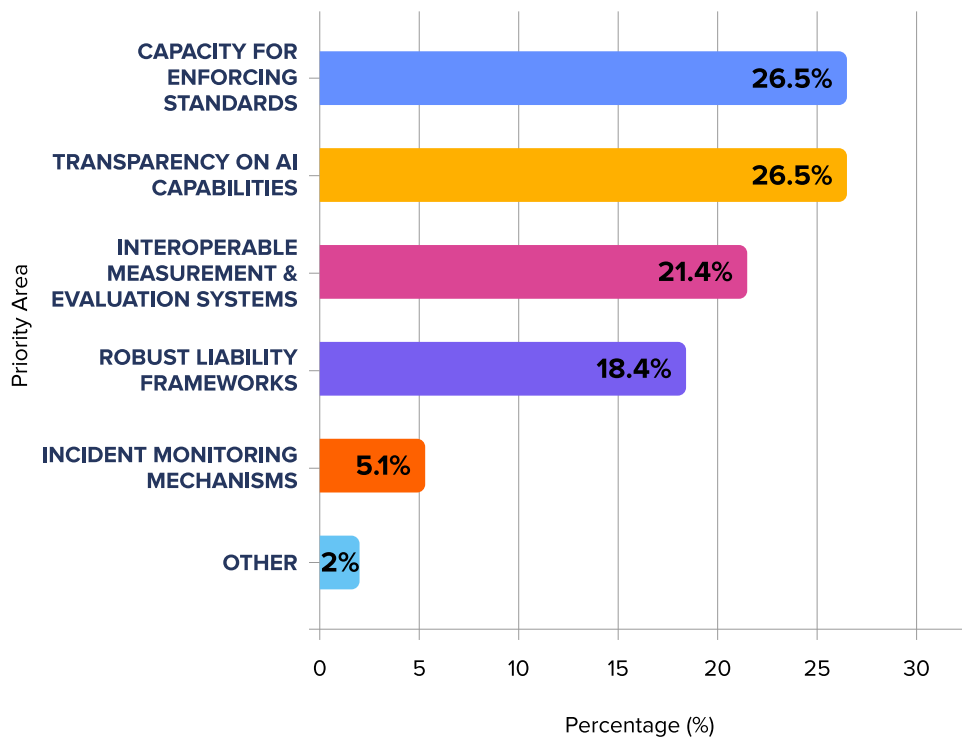
*We will have to design new institutional solutions, to keep industry and ourselves accountable, and to prevent us from moving too fast and breaking too many things.*

**Nick Moës**

Executive Director, The Future Society



## RELEVANT ONLINE POLL RESULTS



**Poll Results** | Which areas should we prioritize to strengthen Global AI Accountability?





## SESSION 1

# Mapping the Landscape of AI Governance and Accountability



### OPENING INTERVENTIONS BY



**Carme Artigas**

Co-Chair at the AI Advisory Board,  
Office of the UN Secretary-  
General's Envoy on Technology



**Audrey Plonk**

Deputy Director, OECD  
Directorate for Science,  
Technology and Innovation



**Cédric Wachholz**

Chief of Digital Innovation and  
Transformation Section,  
UNESCO Communication and  
Information Sector



**Lucilla Sioli**

Director,  
European AI Office



**Elizabeth Kelly**

Director,  
U.S. AISI, NIST



**17**

NUMBER OF SPEAKERS  
DURING OPEN DISCUSSION



**6**

NUMBER OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
INTERVENTIONS

In this initial session, representatives from leading global AI governance institutions—the European AI Office, the U.S. AI Safety Institute, the OECD, UN, and UNESCO—mapped the evolving AI governance landscape. Speakers and the audience outlined key measures to strengthen accountability in the global AI ecosystem, emphasizing inclusivity, transparency, and interoperability.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### Debate About “Open Source” AI

There was significant disagreement about the marginal risk of open source AI. Jack Clark from Anthropic raised concerns about misuse of open weights, citing cases where image generators were used for child exploitation after safety features were removed. Several others argued that open source increases transparency and accountability, drawing parallels to cybersecurity where open systems have proven secure. Benjamin Prud'homme, Mila - Quebec Artificial Intelligence Institute, suggested moving past the open/closed binary to discuss specific "model sharing modalities."

### Ethics versus Governance

Carme Artigas highlighted the limitations of ethical AI guidelines, noting that they often lack enforceable accountability mechanisms, are subjective, can shift with changes in leadership, and are culturally dependent, varying by context. She argued that governance must complement ethical guidelines by establishing concrete instruments and mechanisms to ensure that companies and governments act ethically and are held accountable. Lucilla Sioli emphasized the growing concerns around the risks AI posed to fundamental rights and safety. February 2025, in her view, will mark a critical milestone in this effort, with approximately 1,000 stakeholders from industry and civil society actively contributing to the drafting of the General-Purpose AI Code of Practice.

### The Limits of Voluntary Commitments

Many speakers underscored the insufficiency of voluntary commitments for effective AI governance. Gaia Marcus from the Ada Lovelace Institute asserted that “voluntary commitments are no longer defensible” due to competing private sector incentives. Paul Nemitz called reliance on voluntary measures “naive,” advocating instead for enforceable rights of action for both individuals and civil society—against companies and enforcement bodies alike.

Lucilla Sioli highlighted the European Union’s regulatory approach as an example of enforceable frameworks in action. By implementing a comprehensive framework, the EU has taken significant steps to mitigate risks to fundamental rights and safety. This serves as a clear contrast to the limitations of voluntary measures, reinforcing the need for stronger regulatory oversight in addressing the challenges posed by AI.



*Effective governance must address both market concentration and the disparities in access and capabilities to ensure AI benefits are distributed equitably.*

### Concentration of Power

Market concentration was identified as a major challenge for AI governance. Sebastiano Toffaletti of the European Digital SME Alliance compared AI development to the open internet, where “everybody has the right to create their own website,” arguing that the centralization of AI development among a few players undermines accountability. While some emphasized the need to decentralize AI development, others argued that governance mechanisms must address challenges regardless of market structure.

Cedric Wachholz highlighted another dimension of this issue: unequal access to AI tools and training. While many are using tools like ChatGPT, only a small fraction have access to proper guidance or education. This lack of access risks deepening inequalities, as those with the knowledge to leverage AI tools gain significant advantages. Effective governance must address both market concentration and the disparities in access and capabilities to ensure AI benefits are distributed equitably.

## KEY QUOTES



*[T]here needs to be an impartial third party that looks at the potential risks or misuses of AI, whether proprietary or open, or this discussion will be incredibly unproductive and heated forever, and we'll never solve anything.*

**Jack Clark**

Co-Founder and Head of Policy, Anthropic



*Voluntary commitments are no longer defensible. I would say there are too many other incentives on privately based companies to just expect them to respond to voluntary commitments.*

**Gaia Marcus**

Director, Ada Lovelace Institute



*[In] order to have accountability along the value chain of AI, and different accountability [for] the developers [from] the implementers or the users, we need transparency.*

**Carme Artigas**

Co-Chair at the AI Advisory Board,  
Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology

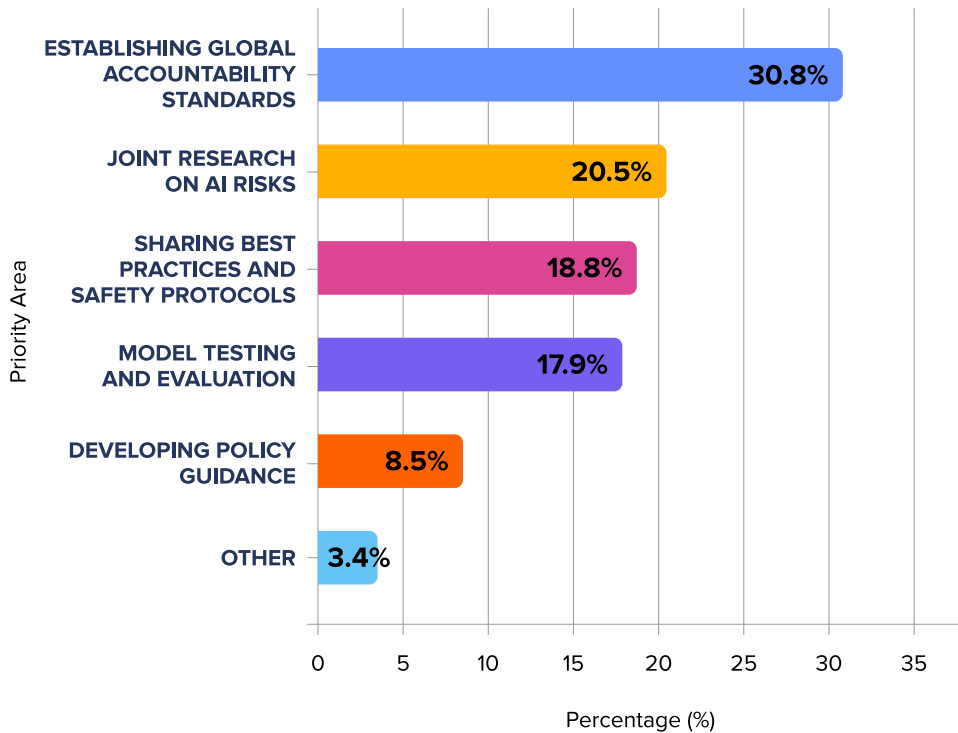


*Our goal with the [AISl] network is really to bring together a lot of these technical experts across countries so that we are able to address some of the most pressing challenges in AI safety and avoid a patchwork of governance approaches that could hamper progress and innovation.*

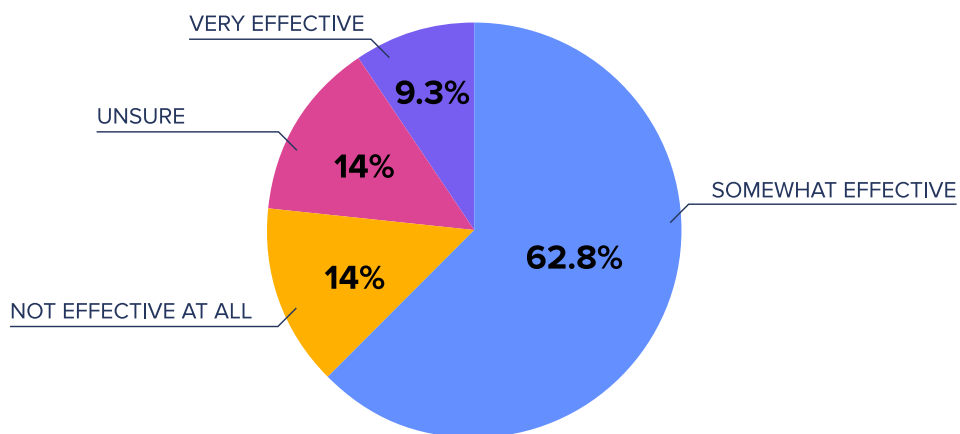
**Elizabeth Kelly**

Director, U.S. AISI, NIST

## RELEVANT ONLINE POLL RESULTS



**Poll Results** | Which areas do you think the International Network of AISIs should focus on to most effectively foster international cooperation, collaboration, and coordination on AI safety?



**Poll Results** | How effective do you think the EU AI Act will be in holding general-purpose AI developers accountable?

## SESSION 2

# Key Challenges for Establishing Accountability In Governance



### OPENING INTERVENTIONS BY



**Ambassador François Nkulikiyimfura**  
Ambassador to France,  
Government of the Republic of  
Rwanda



**Jack Clark**  
Co-Founder and Head of Policy,  
Anthropic



**Brando Benifei**  
Member of the European  
Parliament



**Maya Wiley**  
President and CEO,  
The Leadership Conference on  
Civil and Human Rights



**Barry Lynn**  
Executive Director,  
Open Markets Institute



**Juraj Čorba**  
Chair of AIGO OECD and Co-Chair  
of the Global Partnership on AI  
(Slovakia)



11

NUMBER OF SPEAKERS  
DURING OPEN DISCUSSION



8

NUMBER OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
INTERVENTIONS

This session delved into the challenges and opportunities in accountable AI governance, with perspectives from government officials, civil society leaders, and industry experts. Discussions explored the global digital divide, inclusivity in governance, mechanisms for accountability, and regulatory frameworks, emphasizing the importance of transparency, collaboration, and tailored policies for the Global South.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### Ensure Inclusivity in AI Governance

Ensuring equitable and effective AI governance frameworks necessitates a focus on the unique contexts of the Global South. Rwanda's approach was highlighted as a case study by their Ambassador to France, showcasing its commitment to ethical AI deployment through strategic partnerships and robust local capacity-building initiatives. This model underscores the importance of tailoring governance frameworks to regional needs while fostering global equity.

### Transparency and Accountability

The necessity for transparent AI governance was a recurring theme, with a strong emphasis on the role of clear documentation of AI and algorithms in enabling effective oversight and fostering public trust. Independent third-party auditing mechanisms and safety institutes were proposed as critical safeguards to evaluate AI applications and uphold accountability, ensuring systems meet ethical and safety standards.

### Global Cooperation

Collaborative international governance frameworks were deemed indispensable, particularly to address cross-border AI risks and uphold high safety thresholds. Such cooperation aims to prevent a regulatory "race to the bottom," fostering harmonized approaches to AI governance that prioritize security and fairness.

### Regulatory Lessons

Insights from the EU AI Act were explored, positioning it as a foundational benchmark for

global AI regulation. Participants recommended supplementing the Act with additional measures—especially for applications in defense and generative AI—to achieve more comprehensive oversight and address unique challenges posed by these technologies.

### The Role of Civil Society

Empowering civil society organizations emerged as a key priority, with calls for stronger partnerships between NGOs, industry, and governments. These collaborations are vital to ensuring accountability, addressing systemic inequities, and mitigating the harms embedded within AI. Civil society's advocacy can provide critical checks on both public and private sector initiatives.

### Judiciary Preparedness

The judiciary was identified as pivotal in addressing AI-related harms and risks. However, concerns were raised about whether current judicial institutions are adequately equipped to handle the complexities of AI. There is a growing need for innovative, AI-tailored solutions to disputes, particularly those arising in the context of cyberspace and rapidly evolving technologies.

### Legacy Institutions versus Modern Challenges

Existing institutions often struggle to keep pace with the speed and intricacy of AI developments. Participants called for the creation of innovative dispute resolution mechanisms designed specifically for the dynamics of cyberspace and AI. These mechanisms would complement traditional approaches and ensure governance frameworks are fit for purpose in the modern era.



*Independent third-party auditing mechanisms and safety institutes were proposed as critical safeguards to evaluate AI applications and uphold accountability, ensuring systems meet ethical and safety standards.*



## KEY QUOTES



*We stand ready to partner and provide a testbed for innovative AI solutions that promote global economic growth and equity.*

**Ambassador Francois Nkulikiyimfura**

Ambassador to France, Government of the Republic of Rwanda



*If companies are able to hide the capabilities of their systems, we lose the possibility of governance. Transparency enables governance.*

**Jack Clark**

Co-Founder and Head of Policy, Anthropic



*Competition policy is our first and last line of defense. Without addressing monopolistic power, all attempts at AI governance will fail.*

**Barry Lynn**

Executive Director, Open Markets Institute



*At the end of the day, it will be the judiciary—the judges, in other words, concrete humans—who will decide on harms and risks. No matter whether we introduce legislation or not, as long as people or companies have the opportunity to file an action with the court, the court will need to decide.*

**Juraj Čorba**

Chair of AIGO OECD and Co-Chair of the Global Partnership on AI (Slovakia)

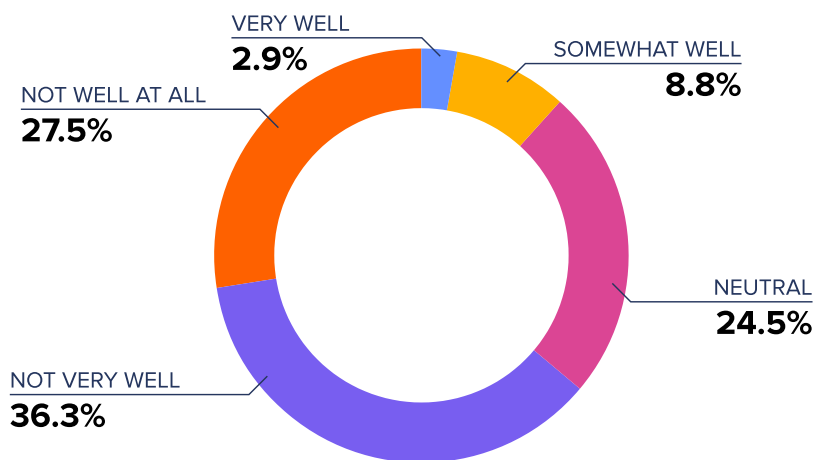


*The most marginalised group when it comes to digital technologies, and now AI, is children.*

**Maria Axente**

Head of AI Public Policy and Ethics, PwC United Kingdom

## RELEVANT ONLINE POLL RESULTS



**Poll Results** | How well do you think perspectives from the Global South are accounted for in AI governance discourses?



## SESSION 3

# Building Stronger Accountability Across Actors Globally



### OPENING INTERVENTIONS BY



**Amandeep Singh Gill**  
Under-Secretary-General and  
Secretary-General's Envoy on  
Technology, United Nations



**Neema Lugangira**  
Member of Parliament, Tanzania,  
Chair, African Parliamentary  
Network of Internet Governance



**Oliver Illott**  
Director,  
UK AI Safety Institute



**Stuart Russell**  
Professor,  
UC Berkeley



**Axel Voss**  
Member of the European  
Parliament



**Xue Lan**  
Cheung Kong Chair Distinguished  
Professor and Dean of Schwarzman  
College, Tsinghua University



**31** NUMBER OF SPEAKERS  
DURING OPEN DISCUSSION



**12** NUMBER OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
INTERVENTIONS

Participants examined the urgent need for international governance and accountability frameworks to guide the rapid development of AI. They discussed concerns ranging from everyday risks—such as bias, misinformation, and data sovereignty—to existential threats posed by advanced AI. Speakers emphasized the importance of ex ante regulation, clear liability structures, and broad global engagement, especially with underrepresented regions. They also called for greater collaboration between policymakers, industry, academia, and civil society to ensure that AI remains a force for societal good.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### Balanced Regulation

The group emphasized the importance of balanced regulatory frameworks that promote innovation while safeguarding citizens from potential AI harms. Key recommendations included the implementation of ex ante safeguards—proactive measures to mitigate risks before deployment—and the establishment of a clear liability framework to hold developers and users accountable for AI-driven outcomes.

### Inclusivity and Data Sovereignty

Speakers highlighted the inequities faced by regions such as Africa, where data is often extracted without adequate compensation or respect for sovereignty. They stressed the urgent need for global AI standards that uphold data rights and address disparities across geographic and economic divides. Recognizing the value of equitable data practices is vital to fostering trust and fairness in the global AI ecosystem.

### Behavioral Red Lines

The concept of behavioral red lines was proposed as a means to codify unacceptable actions by AI. These include high-stakes behaviors such as autonomous self-replication or bioweapon creation. Through rigorous testing and validation, developers would be required to demonstrate that their models do not breach these predefined boundaries and ensure safety and ethical compliance.

### Practical versus Longer-Term Risks

Attendees emphasized the importance of addressing immediate harms already in evidence—such as algorithmic bias, misinformation, and privacy violations—while acknowledging that these issues can evolve over time. They also recognized that advanced AI may pose broader, longer-term challenges. By integrating both present-day realities and a forward-looking stance, the discussion balanced the need to tackle urgent concerns while remaining conscious

of—and working toward mitigating or entirely preventing—potential future risks.

### Collaboration and Capacity Building

The forum called for increased efforts to foster collaboration and capacity building through public-private partnerships, cross-sector initiatives, and international summits. Expanding training programs and knowledge-sharing opportunities was highlighted as essential to keep pace with frontier AI developments and ensure that all regions benefit from advancements in AI governance.

### Diverse Collaboration is Crucial

The importance of diverse perspectives in AI governance was underscored, with participants advocating for the active involvement of academia, industry, civil society, and policymakers. Such collaboration is critical to addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by AI, fostering inclusive and effective governance frameworks.

### Global Momentum for AI Governance

The adoption of the Global Digital Compact at the UN's Summit of the Future was celebrated as a significant milestone by creating a shared foundation for AI governance principles and commitments. This progress reflects a growing consensus on the need for coordinated, global action to ensure the safe and ethical development of AI.

### Establishing Evidence-Based Governance

Initiatives to establish evidence-based AI governance gained momentum, with the United Nations spearheading initiatives such as an International Independent Scientific Panel on AI and a Global Policy Dialogue. These initiatives underscore the importance of data-driven policymaking to guide AI governance decisions. Spain and Costa Rica are leading pursuits toward defining the mandates for these initiatives, reflecting their commitment to shaping inclusive and robust governance mechanisms.



## KEY QUOTES



*We must plan not for today's systems but for AI that are far more capable than human beings.*

**Stuart Russell**  
Professor, UC Berkeley



*Through ongoing dialogue and cooperation, we can ensure that AI serves as a force for progress and that it benefits all.*

**Amandeep Singh Gill**  
Under-Secretary-General and Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology,  
United Nations



*This is probably the least we're ever going to talk about AI for the rest of our lives.*

**Oliver Ilott**  
Director, UK AI Safety Institute



*Data is extracted freely from Africa, and when our governments want to access it, we have to pay for that data—which in fact should not be the case.*

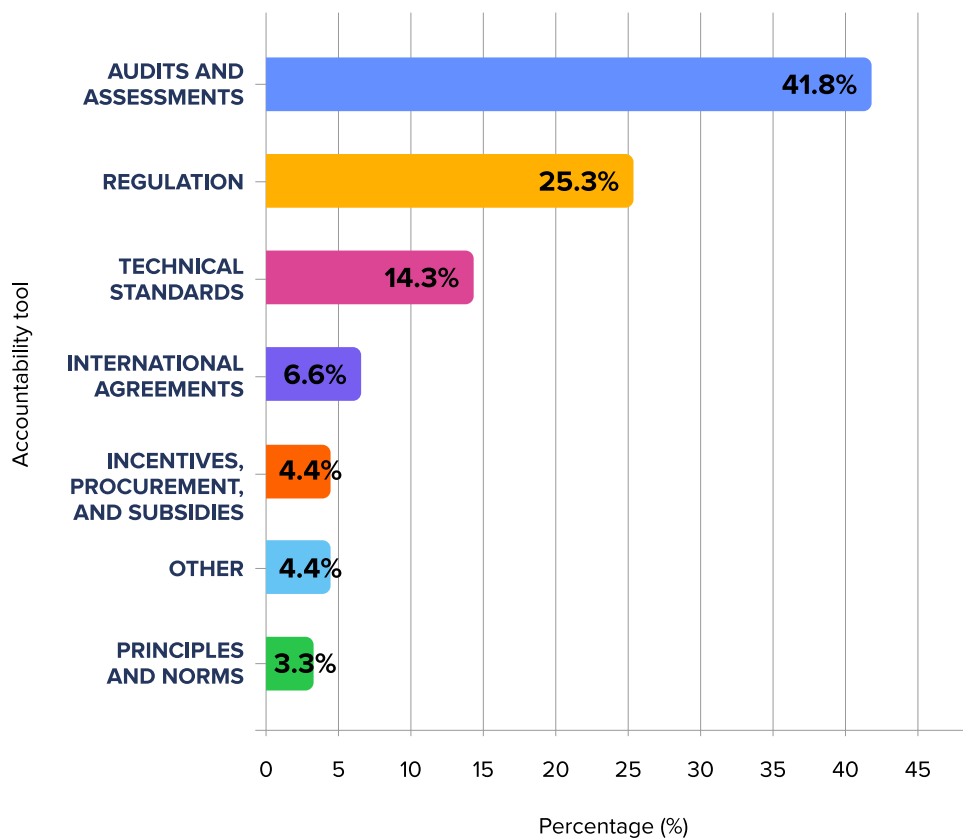
**Neema Lugangira**  
Member of Parliament, Tanzania, Chair, African Parliamentary Network of  
Internet Governance



*It is not helpful to design these mechanisms and try to transpose them to Africa. They work in Europe and North America, 'they should work everywhere else' is not a very strong justification for this strategy.*

**Unyime Abasi Odong** (via online chat)

## RELEVANT ONLINE POLL RESULTS



**Poll Results** | What do you think is the most effective accountability tool currently?





## SESSION 4

# Key Takeaways from the Consultation for the AI Action Summit



### OPENING INTERVENTIONS BY



**Anne Bouverot**

Special Envoy of the French President to the AI Action Summit, Office of the President of the Republic of France



**Axel Dauchez**

President and Founder, Make.org



**Claire Foulquier-Gazagnes**

Advisor to the AI Action Summit Public Interest Envoy; Tech Policy Fellow, UC Berkeley



**Caroline Jeanmaire**

Senior Associate, AI Governance, The Future Society



**Constance de Leusse**

Executive Director, AI & Society Institute



**Pierre Noro**

Advisor, Sciences Po Tech & Global Affairs Innovation Hub



**Roxanne Varza**

Envoy to the AI Action Summit on Innovation & Culture; Director, Station F



**Henri Verdier**

Envoy to the AI Action Summit on Global AI Governance; Ambassador for Digital Affairs, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs



19

NUMBER OF SPEAKERS  
DURING OPEN DISCUSSION



6

NUMBER OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
INTERVENTIONS

This session focused on the findings of a [global consultation of citizens and experts on AI](#) to inform the AI Action Summit in Paris from February 10-11, 2025. Organized by The Future Society, AI & Society Institute (ENS-PSL), Sciences Po's Tech & Global Affairs Innovation Hub, the French Digital Council (CNNum), and Make.org, the consultation gathered views from more than 12,000 citizens and over 200 experts in academia and civil society from across five continents. Citizens and experts alike voiced concerns about potential AI harms and emphasized the need for solutions that prioritize public interest and address societal challenges. By highlighting these voices, the session aimed to strengthen accountability in AI governance and development in advance of the Summit.

## KEY INSIGHTS

### **Establishing Global Standards and Frameworks**

There is strong support amongst both citizens and experts for creating robust international governance frameworks for AI, as evidenced by the consultation. Some proposals discussed in the session include enforceable global standards for auditing AI, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding fundamental rights.

### **Public Engagement and Democracy in AI Governance**

Engaging citizens and civil society is crucial, as they demonstrate a nuanced understanding of AI's risks and opportunities, countering assumptions of low public awareness. We must also foster inclusive governance and representation, through diverse, multi-stakeholder participative processes with a particular focus on meaningful inclusion of marginalized communities.

### **Addressing Current Harms and Systemic Risks**

As in Session 3, participants emphasized the importance of addressing both immediate harms

and long-term systemic threats from AI, such as catastrophic risks. Recommendations include stronger coordination on AI safety research and verifiable enforcement mechanisms for large-scale models.

### **Rejecting AI Solutionism and Unchecked Deployments**

Participants reject the notion of uncontrolled AI deployment and oppose key decision-making being left to private companies. Robust governance frameworks are necessary to protect human agency and safeguard rights.

### **AI for Real-World Impact**

Safe, accountable AI should prioritize addressing concrete challenges, such as health, public innovation, climate action, and combating disinformation. These areas offer high-impact potential for enhancing institutional trust and societal benefits. Measures need to be put in place for these benefits to be enjoyed by citizens globally to avoid deepening inequalities.



## KEY QUOTES



*There is a desire to not just be customers of solutions that are provided by tech companies but also to be part of the shaping of local ecosystems [...] Everyone wants to be able to be part of the conversation.*

**Anne Bouverot**

Special Envoy of the French President to the AI Action Summit, Office of the President of the Republic of France



*There is a kind of general demand of dignity, respect of the rule of law, citizen empowerment, meaningful progress, democratic choices—which are not always what we have first when we go to business meetings [...] We have to pay attention to this. If these two conversations split, we can have some consequences.*

**Henri Verdier**

Envoy to the AI Action Summit on Global AI Governance; Ambassador for Digital Affairs, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs



*There is this resistance to the notion of AI-solutionism. I understand the aspiration of public interest AI [...] but I do think a lot of the technical investment that civil society is looking for is around the audit and accountability space.*

**Deborah Raji**

Fellow, Mozilla Foundation

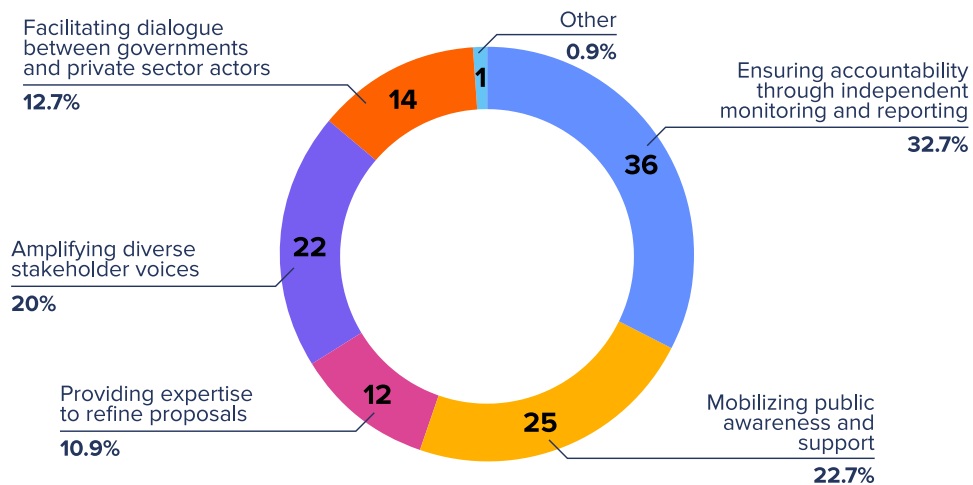


*[Regarding the range of AI risks and concerns] Let's not put any of these things against each other, [...] [We need to] do all of this together at the same time, which is one of the reasons we need multi-stakeholder engagement.*

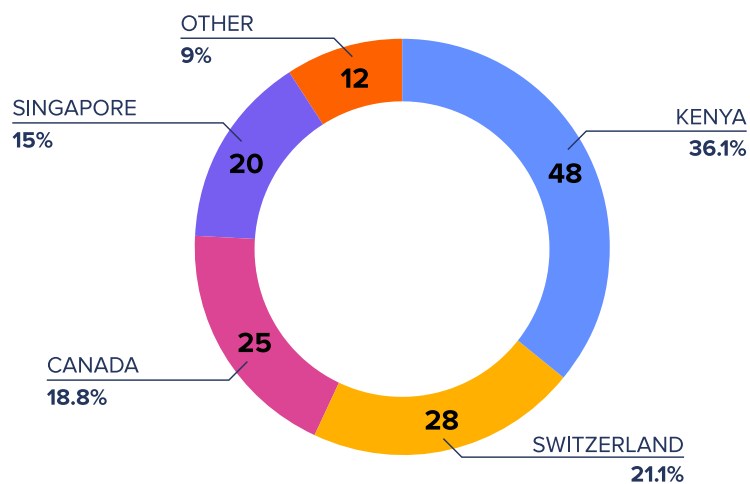
**Maya Wiley**

President and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

## RELEVANT ONLINE POLL RESULTS



**Poll Results** | What is the most critical role civil society can play in the upcoming AI Action Summit?



**Poll Results** | Where do you think the next AI Summit should be?

## Closing Remarks



### SPEAKERS



**Cédric Wachholz**

Chief of Digital Innovation and Transformation Section,  
UNESCO Communication and Information Sector



**Karine Perset**

Head, AI and Emerging Digital Technologies Division, OECD



**Niki Iliadis**

Director, Global AI Governance,  
The Future Society



**Nicolas Mialhe**

Chair of the Board,  
The Future Society

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The Athens Roundtable brought together global experts and policymakers, including representatives from diverse stakeholder groups, to address the pressing challenges in AI governance. Key discussions highlighted the importance of accountability mechanisms, sustainability, and inclusive frameworks that reflect the diversity of global contexts. This year's edition reinforced the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration, independent evaluations, and enforceable global norms to ensure the development and deployment of ethical, trustworthy AI.



## KEY INSIGHTS

### Global Accountability

Establishing robust accountability mechanisms is essential to ensure that AI operates within the rule of law, respects human rights, and minimizes societal risks. Discussions emphasized the need for clear, enforceable frameworks that define responsibilities across the AI lifecycle—from developers to end users. Such frameworks should integrate independent audits and transparency measures to build trust and safeguard public interest.

### Sustainability Focus

The environmental footprint of AI, particularly its high energy consumption, must be addressed as a priority. Participants called for the adoption of energy-efficient technologies and smaller, task-specific models to reduce resource demands. Aligning AI development with sustainability goals not only mitigates environmental impacts but also ensures the scalability of AI innovations in a resource-constrained world.

### Regulatory Backstops

While voluntary commitments and industry standards provide a starting point, enforceable regulations are necessary to ensure meaningful compliance and prevent misuse. Speakers highlighted the importance of proactive governance structures that pair incentives for innovation with penalties for non-compliance, creating a balanced ecosystem where ethical AI can thrive.

### Collaboration Imperative

Multi-stakeholder partnerships were identified as a cornerstone of effective AI governance. By fostering collaboration between governments, private sector actors, academia, and civil society, stakeholders can develop interoperable frameworks and practical tools that address global challenges. Inclusivity in these partnerships is critical to ensuring that diverse voices shape the future of AI governance, particularly those from underrepresented regions.





## KEY QUOTES



*What could be our incentive for accountability? We need to dive deeper into the forms of incentives forcing accountability for managing AI risks effectively.*

**Cedric Wacholz**

Chief of Digital Innovation and Transformation Section,  
UNESCO Communication and Information Sector



*The calls for accountability are getting louder. Public polls show most citizens are concerned about AI's impact on their jobs, and they expect governments to take action.*

**Niki Iliadis**

Director, Global AI Governance, The Future Society



*If the global governance of AI becomes too clean and too perfect, please run away. It has to be respectful of pluralism, and therefore, it has to be imperfect and moving.*

**Nicolas Mialhe**

Chair of the Board, The Future Society



*We need global coordination and accountability mechanisms to make sure we're on track because that's the only way we'll build the world we want.*

**Karine Perset**

Head, AI and Emerging Digital Technologies Division, OECD

# Acknowledgements

The Future Society and its partners extend their heartfelt thanks to all who made the Sixth Edition of the Athens Roundtable on Artificial Intelligence and the Rule of Law a resounding success. We are deeply grateful to all our participants—government officials, civil society representatives, academics, industry leaders, and international organizations—who contributed their time, expertise, and insights to foster a more accountable and trustworthy AI ecosystem.

We also wish to acknowledge, with great appreciation, H.E. the President of the Hellenic Republic Ms. Katerina Sakellaropoulou for her patronage, as well as our host, the OECD, for their support and collaboration. Lastly, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to our partners: UNESCO, France’s AI Action Summit, the AI & Society Institute, CNNum, Make.org, and Sciences Po’s Tech and Global Affairs Innovation Hub, Arnold & Porter and Fathom, whose collective dedication to advancing global AI governance made this Roundtable possible.

As AI continues to revolutionize societies across the globe, it is imperative to ensure that growth and innovation lead to a world where abundance is shared, and values, rights, and dignity remain at the forefront. This Roundtable represented a critical step forward in ensuring concerted undertakings among stakeholders to shape a globally coordinated, transparent, and equitable AI ecosystem—yet substantial progress remains necessary to achieve these objectives. We look forward to working alongside all of you again—across sectors, borders, and disciplines—to strengthen AI accountability and address the pressing questions that will define our collective future.

Thank you once more for your continued support. We look forward to the next edition of The Athens Roundtable, where we will again lift up the diverse perspectives of our global community and come together to foster inclusive governance that truly benefits all.

## The Future Society

*With appreciation to our full team for all their contributions to the Sixth Edition:*

Adeline Sinclair • Amin Oueslati • Bell Arden • Caroline Jeanmaire • Eloise Dunn • Frank Ryan • George Gor • Jonathan Schmidt • Mai Lynn Miller Nguyen • Nick Moës • Niki Iliadis • Robin Staes-Polet • Ryan Fedasiuk • Sam Baskeyfield • Tereza Zoumpalova • Toni Lorente

**Under the patronage of H.E. the President of the Hellenic Republic Ms. Katerina Sakellaropoulou**

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# Summary of Key Insights and Considerations

These key insights and considerations emerged through rich discussions in our sessions. Each conversation brought forward important interventions on AI governance, highlighting both challenges and opportunities. From these exchanges, we identified the most pressing insights that shape the policy landscape.

To make these findings clear and easy to engage with, this section has distilled each key insight into a concise policy consideration. The result is a summary that gives you, the reader, a quick yet meaningful grasp of the key takeaways and their practical implications.

SECTION	KEY INSIGHT	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Opening Remarks</b>	Human-centric AI development focusing on cultural diversity	Develop AI that preserve cultural diversity and democratize access through local initiatives
	Risks of regulatory fragmentation	Build cohesive global AI governance frameworks to avoid inefficiencies and legal complexities
	Inclusive and action-oriented AI governance	Drive consensus and implement coordinated, democratic governance frameworks prioritizing security
	Urgency in developing accountability mechanisms	Create pragmatic accountability mechanisms to restore public trust and ensure responsible AI development
<b>Session 1</b>	Open-source AI debate	Balance transparency benefits with safeguards to prevent misuse of open-source AI
	Ethics versus governance	Establish enforceable governance mechanisms to complement ethical AI guidelines
	Limits of voluntary commitments	Transition to enforceable regulations to ensure compliance and accountability in AI governance
	Market concentration challenges	Address centralization of AI development to promote accountability and equitable access
<b>Session 2</b>	Inclusivity in AI governance for the Global South	Tailor governance frameworks to regional contexts and foster global equity through partnerships

SECTION	KEY INSIGHT	CONSIDERATIONS
	Transparency and accountability mechanisms	Ensure transparent documentation and independent audits of AI to build public trust
	Global cooperation to prevent regulatory “race to the bottom.”	Foster harmonized global frameworks to address cross-border risks and promote fairness
	Lessons from the EU AI Act	Expand regulatory measures to address unique challenges in defense and generative AI
	Empowering civil society	Strengthen partnerships with NGOs to address inequities and ensure accountability in AI governance
	Judiciary preparedness	Equip judicial systems with innovative solutions to resolve AI-related disputes effectively
<b>Session 3</b>	Balanced regulation with ex-ante safeguards	Implement proactive safeguards and clear liability frameworks to mitigate AI risks pre-deployment
	Inclusivity and data sovereignty	Uphold data rights and address inequities to promote fairness and trust in the AI ecosystem
	Behavioral red lines for AI	Define and enforce unacceptable AI behaviors to ensure ethical compliance and safety
	Practical “versus” existential risks debate	Address immediate harms while preparing for long-term existential AI risks comprehensively
	Collaboration and capacity building	Promote public-private partnerships and expand training to advance AI governance capabilities
	Diverse collaboration in governance	Actively involve academia, industry, civil society, and policymakers in governance efforts
	Evidence-based AI governance initiatives	Leverage data-driven policymaking through initiatives like the UN’s Global Policy Dialogue
<b>Session 4</b>	Establishing global standards and frameworks	Develop enforceable international standards for AI accountability and rights protection
	Public engagement and democracy in governance	Foster inclusive governance through participative processes and representation of marginalized communities
	Addressing immediate harms and systemic risks	Coordinate AI safety research to mitigate both near-term harms and systemic risks



SECTION	KEY INSIGHT	CONSIDERATIONS
	Rejecting AI solutionism and unchecked deployments	Establish robust frameworks to prevent uncontrolled deployments and protect human agency
	AI for real-world impact	Prioritize the use of AI to address societal challenges like health, climate, and misinformation
	Safeguarding accountability through enforceable frameworks	Pair ethical innovation incentives with penalties for non-compliance to ensure accountability
<b>Closing Remarks</b>	Global accountability mechanisms	Define enforceable responsibilities across the AI lifecycle to build trust and minimize risks
	Sustainability in AI development	Align AI with energy-efficient technologies to mitigate environmental impacts
	Regulatory backstops for enforceable compliance	Create proactive governance structures to incentivize compliance and deter misuse
	Collaboration as a cornerstone for governance	Build multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop interoperable frameworks addressing global AI challenges

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