

# Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of AI and Big Data for a More Inclusive Civic Participation

## Spotlight on KT4D Webinar Highlights

9 October 2023

**Keywords:** #Democracy #ArtificialIntelligence #BigData #CivicParticipation #KnowledgeTechnologies

### SPEAKERS



**Eleonora Lima**  
Research Fellow at  
Trinity College Dublin



**Bogna Gawrońska-Nowak**  
Associate Professor  
at IRMIR



**Anna Björk**  
Research Area Lead  
at Demos



**Andrés del Álamo**  
UX Researcher at  
Cibervoluntarios



**Jennifer Edmond**  
Trinity College Dublin,  
KT4D Coordinator

In an era dominated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data, these technologies have far-reaching implications for democratic governance, offering opportunities and challenges. The Horizon Europe Project Knowledge Technologies for Democracy (KT4D) aims to leverage AI and Big Data while focusing on ethics and human values.

KT4D's inaugural webinar, "Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of AI and Big Data for a More Inclusive Civic Participation," moderated by **Jennifer Edmond**, introduced the three-year project, featuring four key speakers representing the four project Use Cases:

**Anna Björk**, Research Area Lead at Demos Helsinki, emphasized ethical and normative aspects in the Brussels Use Case.

**Andres del Álamo Cienfuegos**, a Digital Anthropologist and Project Manager, discussed the Madrid Use Case, focusing on educational materials and video games for digital literacy.

**Bogna Gawrońska-Nowak**, an Associate Professor, introduced the Warsaw Use Case, sharing initial pilot project results.

**Eleonora Lima**, a Research Fellow, highlighted the importance of self-awareness in academic and industrial software development in the Dublin Use Case.

## HIGHLIGHTS

The webinar "Exploring the Benefits and Challenges of AI and Big Data for a More Inclusive Civic Participation" introduced the concept of "knowledge technologies" as technologies that emerge at the intersection of cultural sense-making practices and engineered objects. These technologies influence how we interact with information and the world, making it crucial to understand and navigate their impacts. **KT4D** aims to address rapid changes in technology and use AI and big data to foster more inclusive civic participation and democracy. The project presented four use

cases: building capacity for citizens and civil society organizations, creating regulatory tools and services for policy, and improving awareness of ethical and democratic design principles.

✔ **Use Case 1 - Regulatory Tools in Brussels** focuses on working closely with policymakers and decision-makers to regulate AI democratically. It aims to identify questions and gaps in current regulatory approaches and develop a governance framework that supports democratic and trustworthy use of AI, ensuring it aligns with European values and fundamental rights.

✔ **Use Cases 2 and 3 - in Madrid and Warsaw** - are focused on developing educational materials and games centred around critical digital literacy and technologies. They aim to identify what people think about AI and big data, their knowledge of these technologies, and their level of political interest. The project will test existing materials with participants to determine the content and format that works best, especially for different generations.

✔ **Use Case 4 - in Dublin** - aims to raise awareness among software developers about democratic and ethical AI design. The project emphasised the difficulties of teaching computer ethics and the complexity of AI ethical principles.

The speakers highlighted how participants in the project workshops showed an advanced understanding of AI, perceiving it as performing automated tasks, using large datasets, and mimicking human abilities. Initial attitudes towards AI were positive, but perspectives became more negative when considering its impact over the next 10 years. Participants had mixed feelings about AI tools like facial recognition and chatbots, often expressing concerns about data privacy and one-sided algorithms. Discussions in the workshops highlighted both opportunities and challenges associated with AI in areas such as healthcare, work, education, entertainment, politics, and society. Highlighted challenges in AI ethics included limited education on computer ethics, multiple isolated ethical guidelines, and difficulties in deciding when and at what level to implement these principles.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Question:** Could you elaborate more on the process after having accessed the videogames/educational material? What will the participants be asked to do? To what extent did you design this study of public perception based on previous studies - so for example adapting or reinventing methodologies from previous researches (e.g, Ada Lovelace/ ATI). Or did you start from a different starting point?

**Answer:** Andres del Álamo Cienfuegos and Bogna Gawrońska-Nowak explained that their approach involves practical experiences, combining citizen science and applied social science methodologies, as well as mixed methods, qualitative approaches, and various interactivity modes, like workshops. They emphasized

that it's a collaborative and multifaceted approach, involving citizens in various ways.

**Question:** How do the outcomes of the workshops align to create a shared understanding or AI Ethics?

**Answer:** Jennifer Edmond highlighted the importance of coordinating and consolidating knowledge at the project level to ensure that the system works for all, even though different actors may have varying perspectives on AI ethics. The second interaction of the project, the digital democracy lab experience, was mentioned as an exciting and innovative approach to draw out differing perspectives on AI ethics from various players in the ecosystem.

## WEBINAR IN NUMBERS



Registrants: **143**

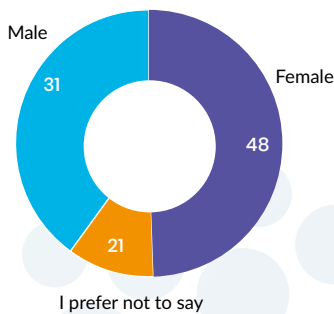


Poll Participants: **53**

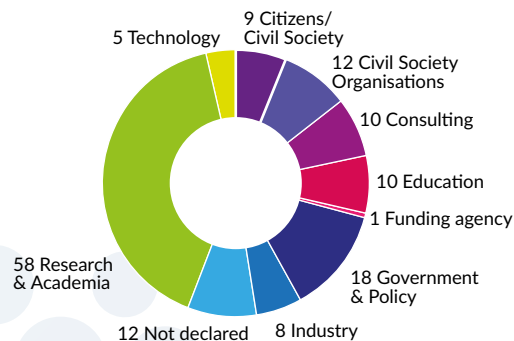


Actual duration: **60 min.**

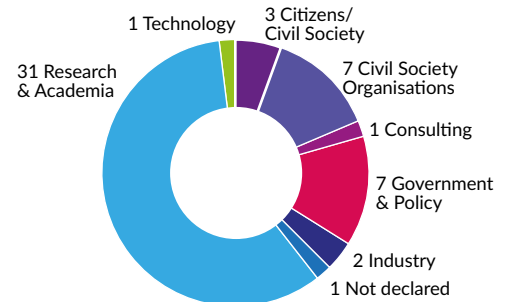
Registrants by gender



Registrants Stakeholders Group



Poll results Attendees by Stakeholders Group



## Useful links shared in the chat box

1. Knowledge Technologies for Democracy (KT4D) project website: <https://www.kt4democracy.eu/>
2. Tilburg Law Review article: <https://tilburglawreview.com/articles/10.5334/tilr.303#abstract>
3. ORBIS Project website: <https://orbis-project.eu/>
4. Scottish AI Alliance online course: <https://learn.thedatalab.com/browse/scottishai/courses/living-with-ai>

## Watch the recording and download the slides!

Link to the webpage of the event where you find video recording and slides:



Let's keep in touch!