



The risks of Artificial Intelligence for people with disabilities

How to push for our rights

Easy-to-read version

Easy-to-read is information that is written in a simple way so that all people can understand it. You can find more information at: www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read



Who we are

We are the European Disability Forum.
We are an organisation
of people with disabilities in Europe.
In short, we are called 'EDF'.



At EDF, we work to protect the rights
of all people with disabilities in Europe.

We think that people with disabilities
should have the same chances in life
and take part in the community
like everyone else.



We also think that people with disabilities
should decide about their lives.
Nothing should be decided about us without us!

What this booklet is about

At EDF, we wrote this booklet to talk about the risks
Artificial Intelligence has to our rights.

In the next few pages, we will explain:

- What Artificial Intelligence is;
- What risks Artificial Intelligence has for our rights;
- How the European Union tries to protect us from these risks;



- What organisations of people with disabilities can do to protect our rights.

This booklet and other work we do on Artificial Intelligence are possible thanks to money we received from the 'European Artificial Intelligence & Society Fund'.

This is an organisation that helps to make Artificial Intelligence safer, fairer and better for people.



European
**Artificial Intelligence
& Society Fund**

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence is technology that makes devices and programmes do tasks like humans.

For example, they may:

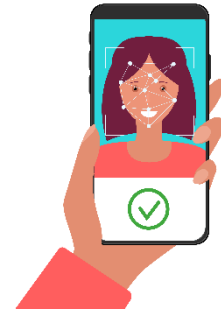
- Chat with us;
- Translate what we say in another language in real time;
- Make decisions based on the information we give them;
- Recognise our faces or voices.



Today, most of us use devices and programmes that work with Artificial Intelligence.

For example:

- We may use programmes that translate what we say in other languages.
- We may use face recognition on our phones. That means that our phones recognise our faces to unlock and be used.



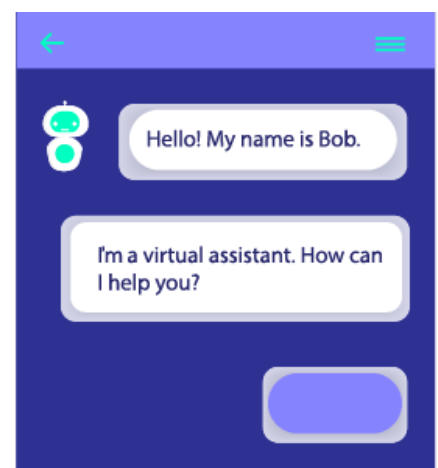
- We may use programmes that recognise our voice and type what we say.
- We may have a robot vacuum cleaner that cleans our floors itself.



Many organisations and companies also use Artificial Intelligence.

For example:

- The police may use programmes that recognise faces or check if a person is lying.
- Banks may use a chatbot where you can write your problem and it gives you advice on how to solve it.
- Companies may use Artificial Intelligence to sort the job applications they receive.
- Online shops use Artificial Intelligence to understand what you are looking for



and show you items
you may be interested in.

Artificial Intelligence can be very useful.
But it can also risk people's rights,
if it is not used right.

What is the Artificial Intelligence Act?

The European Union is a group
of 27 countries in Europe.
These countries work together
to make things better for their people.



The European Union has made a law
to protect people from the wrong or unfair use
of Artificial Intelligence.
This law is called the 'Artificial Intelligence Act'.

The law sets rules that organisations that use Artificial Intelligence must follow.

The law wants to protect people in Europe from the risks caused by Artificial Intelligence systems.



What are the risks of Artificial Intelligence for people?

The law says that different Artificial Intelligence systems have different levels of risk for people.

There are Artificial Intelligence systems that have:

- **Low or no risk for people**

These systems use Artificial Intelligence that has low risk and no harm for us. For example, when we watch movies online, the system understands what movies we like and suggests more movies like these.



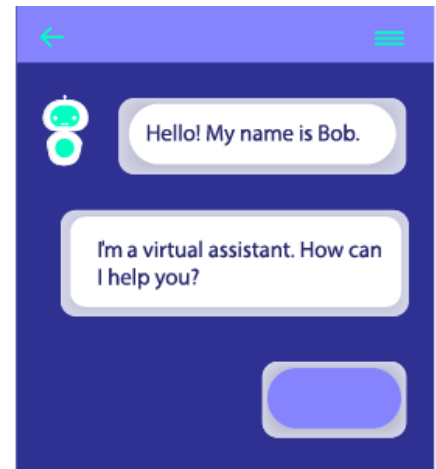
- **Medium risk for people**

These are systems that have a few risks for us.

For example, when we use the chatbot on the website of our bank.

The bank should make it clear to us that we chat with an Artificial Intelligence system.

It is not a human who chats with us.



- **High risk for people**

These are systems that may have a bad impact on our lives.

For example, when we apply for a job, the company may use Artificial Intelligence to sort and choose from the applications they receive.

This system may ignore our disability and may reject our application.

This way, we do not have a fair chance to get the job.



Or when we study at university, the university may use Artificial Intelligence to check who may be cheating in exams.

This system may not recognise our disability and may mark us as cheaters.

For example, if we move or act in a certain way because of our disability, the system may think we are stressed because we are cheating.

This way, we may be punished unfairly.



Or when the police use Artificial Intelligence to check if people lie based on their expressions and moves. These systems may not understand how deaf people use sign language. The systems may think that the moves they make with their faces and hands mean they are angry or stressed.



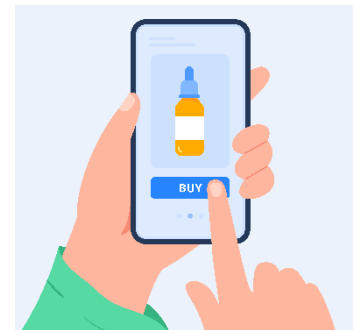
- **Unacceptable risk for people**

These are systems that may use and harm people.

These systems should be banned.

For example:

- Systems that judge people by their skin colour and looks.
- Systems that guess if someone is a criminal just by their personality or looks.
- Systems that use people with disabilities to make money.
For example, if the website of a pharmacy uses your disability to sell you products that are not necessary for you at higher prices.



This is unacceptable.

These systems must be banned.



How to help make the Artificial Intelligence Act happen in our countries

The use of Artificial Intelligence can have a big impact on our lives and rights. That is why we should have a say too when it comes to laws and decisions about it.



As we said before,
the European Union
has made a law to make sure that
Artificial Intelligence is used safely and fairly
for people in Europe.
This law is called ‘the Artificial Intelligence Act’.



The law started in August 2024.
Now all countries in the European Union
must make this law happen.

Organisations of people with disabilities
can play an important role
in making this law happen in their countries.



Amongst others,
organisations of people with disabilities should:

- Share their views with people who work to make this law happen in their countries. They should push them to protect people with disabilities from Artificial Intelligence that can harm them.
- Check the progress their countries make to make this law happen.
- Push their countries to make all systems easy to use by people with disabilities. Artificial Intelligence systems should take into account the needs of people with disabilities too.



- Spread the word about the impact Artificial Intelligence has on our rights. For example, they can do that by:
 - Sharing useful information on social media;
 - Organising training for people with disabilities and their families to help them understand their rights.
- Work with other organisations that protect the rights of people. For example, organisations of patients, organisations of older people and others. Together we are stronger to push for our rights than each of us alone.



More information

For more information about EDF and our work, you can visit our website at www.edf-feph.org.

You can also send us an email at info@edf-feph.org.



This easy-to-read text is written by 'Say it easy'

www.sayiteasy.eu

