



Circle U. Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence – Webinar Series

2nd Appointment

Artificial Intelligence and Democracy: Between Empowerment and Erosion

May 13, 13:15 (CET)

Can AI strengthen democracy—or quietly erode it?

This webinar explores the fragile, shifting boundary between empowerment and risk in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

AI is transforming how citizens access information, participate in public life, and shape collective decisions. Yet, the same technologies can fuel disinformation, manipulation, and the concentration of digital power. At the same time, AI holds promise as a force for global good, supporting innovation, inclusion, and sustainable development.

A tension, then. Not a contradiction, something more subtle, more dangerous.

Speakers

Christoph Fuchs (University of Vienna)

Perceiving AI as labor-replacing reduces democratic legitimacy and political engagement

How people *perceive* AI, whether as job-destroying or job-creating, may shape their trust in democracy itself. Drawing on large-scale European data and experimental evidence, this talk reveals how narratives around AI can influence political engagement and democratic legitimacy, regardless of actual technological outcomes.

Stefano Cresci (CNR)

From AI-powered harms to AI-mediated governance: Rethinking democracy in platform ecosystems

AI is both arsonist and firefighter in today's digital public sphere. This talk examines its dual role in amplifying harms such as misinformation, manipulation, toxicity while also structuring their mitigation through platform governance. What emerges is a deeper question: can algorithmic systems ever align with democratic values like transparency, fairness, and user agency?

Moderators

Dan Banik (University of Oslo)

Francesco Marcelloni (University of Pisa)

Join the conversation.

Because the future of democracy may not be decided *by* AI, but it will certainly be shaped *through* it.

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/ytTFkHjMKQ>