IS THIS TECHNOLOGY BEHAVING 'ETHICALLY'?

The High-Level Expert Group on AI has developed Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence to help developers of AI systems assess the trustworthiness of their AI system. In a previous brAInfood, we looked closely at these Guidelines and the 7 key requirements that were put forward.

But what can you do as a user of an AI technology? How can you determine if an AI technology is 'trustworthy' and behaving 'ethically'? The Knowledge Centre Data & Society has developed a set of questions that you, as a user of an AI technology, can ask yourself in order to determine whether the AI technology is behaving 'ethically' or not according to you.

This set of questions is not exhaustive and we encourage others to complement it with additional questions that enable users to determine their own ethical boundaries with regard to AI and data applications.

brAInfood of the Knowledge Centre Data & Society

START

TRANSPARENCY

Does the provider of the technology explain what the intention is and how the outcome is achieved?
- No, the provider does not clarify this.
- Yes, but I still have some questions.
- Yes, it is clear.

Are you aware of potential limitations and shortcomings of the AI technology?
- No, I am not, there is no information available about possible limitations and shortcomings.
- Yes, I am aware of the limitations and shortcomings of the technology.

Does the company, who developed the AI system, explain why the system is making certain decisions?
- No, it does not, there is no information at hand.
- Yes, it clearly communicates about which decisions are being made and for what reason.

Is the available explanation by the company clear to you?
- No, it is more written for experts.
- Yes, it is understandable.

DIVERSITY, NON-DISCRIMINATION AND FAIRNESS

Can you report issues related to bias, discrimination or a poor performance of the AI system?
- No, I cannot.
- Yes, I can.

Can the AI system be used by those with special needs or disabilities or those at risk of exclusion?
- No, it certainly cannot.
- Maybe, I am not sure of it.
- Yes, I believe it can.

Has the company taken an initiative to allow you to participate in the design and development process of the system?
- No, they did not.
- Maybe, I am not sure of it.
- Yes, they did.

PRIVACY AND DATA GOVERNANCE

Does the AI system collect personal data?
- Yes it does, and there is little information available on how it is collected and stored.
- Yes it does, but clear information is given about which data is collected, how it is stored and who has access to it.
- No, it does not.

Does the technology provider give 'sufficient' guarantees that your personal data and derived information will not be used inappropriately?
- No, there is little information available on how my personal data will be protected from inappropriate use.
- Yes, it guarantees respect for my privacy and data protection.

Are you able to control your personal data?
- No, I do not have any control over my personal data.
- Yes, measures are taken so I can have control over my personal data.

Can you report issues related to privacy or data protection?
- No, I cannot.
- Yes, I can.

TECHNICAL ROBUSTNESS AND SAFETY

Is the AI system secure?
- I do not know for sure.
- Yes, the company has taken measures to minimize possible attacks.

Are the predictions, recommendations or decisions that the AI system produces accurate?
- No, the system is not accurate enough.
- Yes, the system provides accurate results.

Is the AI system reliable?
- No, it is not.
- I do not know for sure.
- Yes, it is.

Can the AI system cause harm to you or any third parties?
- Yes, I believe it can.
- I do not know for sure.
- No, it cannot.

SOCIETAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING

In your opinion, does the system have a rather positive (e.g. increase in efficiency, positive impact on health) or negative (e.g. job loss, deskilling of workforce) impact on society?
- A rather negative impact.
- A rather positive impact.

How would you rate the environmental impact of the AI system's development, deployment and use?
- A rather high impact.
- A rather medium impact.
- A rather low impact.

HUMAN AGENCY AND OVERSIGHT

Can you adjust or intervene in the AI process at any time?
- No, I don't have any control over the AI system.
- Yes, I can control the AI system to some extent.
- Yes, I have full control over the AI system.

When the AI system is implemented in a work or labour process, is the system supporting your work?
- No, it is not supporting but overruling my work.
- Yes, it is supporting my work, without taking over my capabilities.

Do you have the impression that the AI system is trying to manipulate you or is imposing certain decisions on you?
- Yes, I do.
- No, I do not.

How would you rate the impact of the AI system on your freedom and citizens' rights?
- A rather high impact.
- A rather medium impact.
- A rather low impact.

Is the AI system interacting with decisions made by you?
- Yes, but I don't know how the AI system interacts with my decisions.
- Yes, but I'm aware of this interaction and it is not interfering with my autonomy.
- I do not know for sure.
- No, it does not.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Is it clear for you who will be held accountable for the AI system and the outcomes it makes?
- No, there is no information available on who will be held accountable.
- Yes, who is accountable for the system and its decisions is clearly communicated.

Is there any information available on how to make a claim if the AI system causes harm or an adverse impact?
- No, this information is not available.
- Yes, this information is available.

THE RESULT

END

If most of your answers were **green**, your technology can be regarded as 'trustworthy'. If most of your answers were in a **red** box, the technology you had in mind is not behaving 'ethically'. Did you also have some **orange** answers? Your technology can score better, but it is not behaving extremely 'unethically'.

Important: this list of questions is not exhaustive, so an unambiguous answer to the question 'Is this technology behaving 'ethically'?' cannot be given. This checklist can enable users to ask the right questions when choosing and/or using a certain AI technology and/or data application.