# AI strategies for inclusive and sustainable development

**Side event organized by the Permanent Mission of Turkey and UNCTAD during the
United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development
Twenty-fifth annual session**

**Tuesday, 29 March 2022, 16.45-18.00 (CEST)**
**Geneva and online**

**Concept note**

## Background

We live in a time of rapid technological change, in which we already see how digital technologies are transforming the economy and societies and we grasp the potential of the full deployment of even more powerful technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). We have seen many examples of how AI is being used to address the COVID-19 pandemic, from tracking the disease to helping to developing vaccines.

According to some estimates, in 2020, AI represented a USD 40 to 50 Billion market and it could grow to a USD 360 to 640 Billion market by 2028.[i] The finance and manufacturing sectors are early adopters to AI; thus, these are the sectors in which business will experience more changes first. Still, we will only see the full potential of these technologies and the impact that they will have in our lives when they are applied more broadly throughout the economic activities. This new wave of technological revolution will tend to further a human interaction with technology that is mobile, tasked-based and ever-present. It will also enable interaction with technology that is more based on partnerships between human and machine, augmenting our potentials.

However, the deployment of these technologies and the transitions that they bring may create winners and losers. There are grave concerns about the impact on jobs and inequality. There is also concerns that the uneven technological capacities in AI would increase the technological and economic gaps between developed and developing countries. Another major concern nowadays are related to the biased design and unintended consequences of AI, which can arise in several such as because they employ biased algorithms or they use biased data for training.

How can people and firms in developing countries harness this rapid technological change for the beneficial integration of these countries in global trade and their sustainable development?

Ultimately, the way to be prepared to benefit from AI is by promoting the use, adoption, adaptation and development of the technology.  There is no one-size-fits-all strategy on how this could be

done, but it requires that the relevant ecosystem of innovation be exposed and actively interact with the new technologies. Governments have a critical role to play in setting a AI strategy that ensures countries competitiveness, reduces the associated risks, and that also promotes inclusive and sustainable development.

**Objective and guiding questions**

The objective of the side event is to discuss the formulation and implementation of national strategies for promoting the deployment of AI in productive sectors and the development of AI capabilities for inclusive and sustainable development. The side event will seek to address the following questions:

- How governments have approached the formulation of their national AI Strategies?
- How these strategies have promoted the development of capabilities in AI?
- How they seek to ensure that AI does not increase inequalities?
- What are the governance mechanisms adopted to implement the AI strategy?
- What is the role of international cooperation in supporting national AI strategies?

**Background document**

- UNCTAD (2021): Technology and Innovation Report 2021, Catching technological waves: Innovation with equity.
  https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tir2020_en.pdf

**Format of the side event**

The side event will be organized online as a moderated discussion with four panellists, and Q&A at the end. After a short opening, the moderator will pose two rounds of questions for each panellist. It is expected that each panellist will take around 5 min to answer each question.

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[i] https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/industry-reports/artificial-intelligence-market-100114;
https://finance.yahoo.com/news/artificial-intelligence-market-size-worth-141500692.html