

PRESS RELEASE

Fostering the wealth of networks

Paris, 07 February 2024 - Following their hearing at the États généraux de l'information, Joëlle Toledano and Anne Alombert call for an independent and impartial framework to study the contribution of players in the digital economy to value creation and to consider the conditions for opening up social networks to innovation by third parties and greater freedom of choice for users.

A contribution in the perspective of the European elections

Over the past few years, the European Union has been working to establish a regulatory framework for digital markets and services, punctuated by the political agreement on the AI act. It is necessary to establish the conditions for the deployment of digital services that help address the societal and economic risks posed by social networks. The issue is pressing considering the emergence of new economic players in generative artificial intelligence. That is why Joëlle Toledano, economist, and Anne Alombert, philosopher, recommend:

- **establishing a framework for studying and sharing the keys to understanding the contribution of digital economy players to value creation in an independent and impartial manner, at the risk of seeing existing power relationships replayed ;**
- **considering the conditions for opening up social networks to third-party innovations, in line with the European Parliament's resolution on addictive interfaces of online services.**

For Joëlle Toledano and Anne Alombert :

The question of the distribution of value is not new, but has been revived by generative AI. Understanding the mechanisms by which value is distributed in the information space is a prerequisite for establishing balanced power relationships between players. This objective, independent and shared understanding of the distribution of value will also be a precondition for opening up social networks to outside innovation and giving users a greater capacity for choice and action.

Study the distribution of value

The business models of the dominant platforms today are closed spaces where no outside innovation is possible, capturing a significant share of the value of the content that feeds them. The deployment of generative artificial intelligence amplifies fears about the quality of our access to information, and makes it difficult to establish the value of the information exploited in artificial intelligence services, particularly large language models.

How can it be ensured that a few players do not appropriate the value of content produced by a very large range of individuals and organisations? Understanding the economic value of the information used by AI generators and other intermediaries is an essential prerequisite.

To address these concerns, **Joëlle Toledano and Anne Alombert encourage us to create a trusted platform to make data available in quantity and variety, without pre-empting the future.** This platform must be able to fit in with current research and regulatory flows, but also to work under real-life conditions. It will need to bring together the various stakeholders, including institutions dedicated to research or a trusted intermediary.

Open and configure social networks

This analysis will make it possible to set out the conditions for opening up social networks, in order to ensure a more democratic flow of information while releasing the potential for innovation that has contributed to the richness of the Internet. The aim is also to enable users to configure their experiences as they wish and to regain control of their digital information environments.

In this paper, they detail the means of achieving this from the angle of both institutional and technical governance, by going beyond the current framework of thought, which is essentially focused on the protection of copyright and the implementation of moderation measures by very large digital platforms.

Overview :

I. Understanding the economic models of digital platforms through a trusted platform

- **The evaluation of economic value created by the information used by generative artificial intelligence (and other intermediaries in the digital economy)**
- **The need for a trusted platform to make data available**

II. Rethinking the architecture of the digital information space by opening up social networks

- **The problem of the closure of social networks and algorithmic recommendation**
- **The need to open social networks to third-party actors**
- **What concrete means to enable the opening of social networks?**
- **Thinking about openness in the new context of the evolving relationship between social networks and conversational agents.**

Press contact :

Agathe Bougon - agathe.bougon@cnumerique.fr - +33 6 14 87 41 66

About the French Digital Council

The Conseil National du Numérique (French Digital Council) is an independent consultative commission dedicated to questioning the relationship between human beings and digital technology in all its complexity. It aims to share useful information for individuals and the public debate, as well as for public decision-making in France and Europe. It is composed of an interdisciplinary college of members appointed by the French Prime Minister and members of Parliament appointed by the Presidents of the Senate and the National Assembly. The National Digital Council reports to the Minister for Digital Affairs. It was established by the decree of 8 December 2017, amended by the decree of 13 February 2021.