



## Emerging technologies: what areas for EU-India cooperation?

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The purpose of this paper is to outline and compare current Indian and European strategies and approaches towards the development and regulation of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This is intended to highlight points of convergence that could be entry points for dialogue between civil society and/or regulatory authorities in the two jurisdictions. As matters stand today, norms underlying the development of AI are still being developed, especially at the international or multilateral level. Such norms will invariably embed the underlying values of different states and jurisdictions. While neither India nor Europe are currently the leaders in AI innovation – China and the US dominate patents in this field – they are two of the largest potential markets for such technologies. Questions of whether control of AI and related fields lies with states, producers or consumers are currently in flux.

Broadly speaking, the two leading countries, China and the US have divergent approaches. The Chinese approach is state-focussed, while the US prioritises large technology companies. The EU has prioritised consumers, while India's position is not as easily identifiable. Meanwhile, China is pushing its own norms with regard to AI governance in international bodies such as UNESCO. Given the lack of the US presence in this particular organisation, it could be an arena in which the EU and India can cooperate to prevent Chinese dominance of the AI agenda. For example, India dislikes safe harbouring but that means little incentive to report data breaches, meaning India is more insecure and vulnerable. So international standards matter.

India has various major initiatives – smart Cities, 5G, Smart Manufacturing and so forth – which benefit from AI. That the EU and India have a shared commitment to liberal democratic values suggests potential for some level of convergence separate to corporate-backed or statist norms that might be developed elsewhere.

The EU's approach towards AI is relatively well documented with a number of official communications setting out its position. India's positions are less clear-cut. However, in 2018 the Indian government's think-tank, 'NITI Aayog', released a paper outlining India's official strategy for the advancement of AI, with a significant boost in the funding for AI

In terms of methodology, the paper takes as its baseline reference the European Political Strategy Centre's (EPSC) *Strategic Note* for a proposed EU strategy towards AI as indicative of the EU position

towards the issue. This Strategic Note splits the EU strategy in four areas: ‘support’; ‘educate’; ‘enforce’ and ‘steer’, and the same structure will be used to explore the Indian position. These positions are populated on the basis not just of official strategy papers and secondary sources, but also of interviews conducted with subject experts in both jurisdictions. The paper concludes with an examination of the geopolitical balance that makes co-operation, or at the least convergence, in the field of AI regulation a particularly powerful instrument at this moment in time.

## Policy recommendations

A number of potential actions present themselves as a result of the exploration of the respective Indian and European positions.

- An EU-India joint working group on AI could be established to work out which of the various other ideas/focal points offer greatest traction for EU-India engagement;
- To start with, relevant topics to be explored could be centred around the sectors mentioned in the Niti Aayog Discussion Paper on AI: Health, Education & Skilling, Agriculture, Retail, Manufacturing, Smart Cities, Smart Energy etc.;
- A national Centre of Excellence on AI could be established in India; likewise, the EU would benefit from setting out a EU Centre of Excellence on AI. This would lay the basis for further EU-India cooperation and exchanges in the field of AI;
- India could develop ‘ethics guidelines’ around AI as has been done in Europe. Data privacy, especially consent management, is an especially important aspect. The EU could share its experiences in this regard;
- India could also consider setting up an association of AI players active in India; likewise, the EU would profit from the establishment of a pan-European association of AI players active in Europe. The creation of these two associations would provide the two partners with more opportunities for cooperation and exchanges on AI;
- Indian research initiatives such as Indian Urban Data Exchange (IUDX) and Indian Urban Observatory (IUA) combining Smart Cities data could be promoted and supported as they will provide very valuable data for AI work in India. This could then be of use to European counterparts; Programmes such as ‘Digital India’ have a direct link with Europe’s ‘Digital Single Market’ initiative. A joint research program could therefore be established between India and Europe for a research project around AI under the umbrella of the EU’s Horizon 2020 and India’s Horizon Industry.

