

Use of artificial intelligence by NGOs working in the public interest in the field of development of a digital society

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Abstract: The paper aims to present perceived possibilities and areas of use of artificial intelligence (AI) by NGOs working in the public interest in developing a digital society in Slovenia. These NGOs are most qualified in the use of digital tools such as AI since the development of a digital society is at the core of their work focus. The work will consist of two parts, namely the theoretical and empirical parts. In the theoretical part, the descriptive method of writing will be used, where the existing legislation and different literature on the subject will be presented, to describe and explain the concepts and already-known facts related to the use of AI by NGOs worldwide. In the empirical part, a qualitative data collection method – interview (focus group) will be used. The focus group will consist of 7 NGOs that have the status of an NGO working in the public interest in the field of development of information society. In July 2023 there were more than 27 thousand NGOs registered in Slovenia, and only 32 working in the field of development of a digital society. Out of these 32, only 7 (the focus group) have the status of an NGO working in the public interest in developing a digital society. The aim is to get in-depth information on perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs regarding the use of AI by the NGOs working in the public interest in the field of development of a digital society, especially data related to questions of actual use of AI by these NGOs (which apps do they use etc.), of different possibilities they perceive of how/where AI can be used to promote the development of digital society, the pros and cons of AI use by NGOs, existence of possible ethical dilemmas, etc. Existing literature on different possibilities of AI use by NGOs - shows that the research should focus on areas of AI use such as 1. Data Analysis and Insight, 2. Fundraising and Donor Management, 3. Program Planning and Evaluation, 4. Natural Language Processing, 5. Chatbots and Virtual Assistants, 6. Predictive Analytics for Risk Assessment, 7. Education and Training and 8. Cybersecurity. One of the possible problems is the small sample of NGOs (only 7), yet they are the only ones with the special status. The problem is not so much in the small number of NGOs, the more pressing issue is that some of them mostly do work voluntarily without professionals employed in their NGO. This could make it harder to obtain in-depth answers. This will be mitigated by the fact that most NGOs working in the field of digital society development are included in the NGO Network for an Inclusive Information Society (NVO-VID) – which will be included in the focus group - and which is a meeting point for civil society and strives for a quality life in the information society and the empowerment of people with the help of digital technologies. Since they - as an umbrella network - have an overview of what is happening, we believe we will get sufficiently in-depth answers and data that will show an objective picture. The presented results will show possible uses of AI for NGOs and probably open some questions on the use of AI which will need to be addressed in the future by governments, legislators, and NGOs themselves, etc.