Trustworthy AI: EU recommendations send strong political signal

Brussels, 26 June 2019 – ETNO, the Association representing Europe's leading telecom operators, welcomed today the "Policy and Investment Recommendations for Trustworthy AI", developed by the European Commission's High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence.

The Recommendations set the right ambition and they send an important political signal that Europe will lead on the development of human-centric, trustworthy AI. European companies are working to propose AI services based on the respect of fundamental rights, responsible use of data and consumers' privacy.

Connectivity and 5G are centre-stage

The recommendations highlight the vital role of high-speed connectivity and 5G as necessary to interconnect objects and infrastructures, and they call for a strongly positive policy and investment environment. One that boosts and fosters 5G rollout.

Telecom companies are ready to play their part to meet the ambition of the guidelines, especially in building the infrastructure of cutting-edge AI capabilities in Europe. What is more, telcos are embracing service-related innovation and doing much more than just providing infrastructure. Among others, Europe's leading telcos are providing trusted data spaces for customers, investing in partnerships with universities and research centres, implementing ethical frameworks to their own use of AI and using AI to better plan and run networks.

Today's recommendations are also the result of the continued and extensive work by leading ETNO members in Commission's High-Level Expert Group, including Telenor and Orange

AI governance: a risk-based approach is key

When it comes to AI governance and to the corresponding regulatory framework, we welcome the principles established in the recommendations: governance should be risk-based and proportional. This will allow both a rigorous protection of users and the necessary flexibility to allow European innovation.

Similarly, we support a comprehensive mapping of existing rules, so that potential gaps can be identified, based on the inherent risk of an AI system according to its use.

Ieva Martikenaite, Chair of the ETNO AI Taskforce and VP Innovation at Telenor, said: "*Building European leadership in AI requires massive investment and a strong focus on innovation. Trustworthy AI can be a competitive advantage, and key to empowering societies. We should now start the journey towards endorsing the Recommendations. ETNO will continue contributing through its Taskforce and will publish a paper by the end of 2019*".