EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

FORUM OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE EEA EFTA STATES

Ref. 19-2180

NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE FORUM OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE EEA EFTA STATES

Hurdal

27-28 June 2019

OPINION ON THE ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR TRUSTWORTHY

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Rapporteur: Þórdís Lóa Þórhallsdóttir

The EEA EFTA Forum of Local and Regional Authorities:

A. Having regard to the European Commission Communication from April 2018 on a European approach to Artificial Intelligence;

B. Noting the Opinion of the Committee of the Regions from February 2019 on Artificial Intelligence for Europe;

C. Noting the Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee from May 2019 on the Coordinated Plan on Artificial Intelligence;

D. Having regard to the European Commission Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence from April 2019;

E. Having regard to the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 goals in general, and in particular goals 8 and 9, regarding decent work and economic growth, and innovation and infrastructure;

F. Noting the reinforced subsidiarity principle set out in the Lisbon Treaty and its explicit reference to the local and regional dimension and self-government;

G. Noting the role of the Forum as a body in the EFTA structure;

H. Acknowledging the impact of EU legislation on local and regional authorities in the EEA EFTA States through the EEA Agreement;

I. Recognising that initiatives from the EU in relation to Artificial Intelligence are likely to impact the way the EEA EFTA States will be addressing the issue;

1. Takes note of the European Commission communication from April 2018 on a European approach to Artificial Intelligence.

2. Welcomes the European Commission Communication, and fully supports a common European approach in order to boost investment, prepare for socio-economic changes, and increase legal certainty in relation to artificial intelligence;

3. Believes that the only way to influence the development of services provided by multinational companies such as Google, Facebook and Amazon is to stand together as a European market;

4. Supports the view of the Committee of the Regions that local and regional authorities should contribute to setting the conditions for artificial intelligence, and that these measures should be coordinated at national and European level in order to empower Europeans to become both producers and consumers of artificial intelligence innovations;

5. Underlines that local and regional levels of governance have to deal with a twofold dilemma; on the one hand to make sure AI can support industrial development and on the other, make ensure that AI does not compromise the date protection of the inhabitants, for example in the health sector;

6. Emphasises that the EU's and the EEA's various policy measures and programmes must be better harmonised in order to advance artificial intelligence and calls for a clear vision on this matter;

7. Welcomes the European Commission Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence and fully agrees that this needs to be considered on broad terms, including the impact on fundamental rights such as privacy, dignity, consumer protection and non-discrimination;

8. Calls on the EEA EFTA States to strengthen their work on artificial intelligence. Whilst artificial intelligence clearly generates new opportunities, it also poses challenges and risks, for example in the areas of safety and liability, security, bias and discrimination;

9. Calls on the EEA EFTA States to take the framework of sustainable development as a guiding approach for future AI developments;

10. Asks the EFTA Secretariat to forward the opinion to the Standing Committee of the EFTA States.