

INSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION

TOWARDS A RELIABLE AND ETHICAL TECHNOLOGICAL MODEL AT THE BARCELONA CITY COUNCIL

The 21st century society is undergoing profound change with the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which is particularly notable for the convergence of various technologies. Nowadays, billions of people are connected through their mobiles with huge processing power, mass storage and access to knowledge. A context that is altering the way we live, work and relate.

These capabilities will multiply over the forthcoming years with current emerging technologies. But unlike previous revolutions, the fourth is growing at an unprecedented exponential rate.

This growth has been strengthened by the COVID crisis, which is acting as an accelerator, both in the digitalisation of economic and social activities, as well as in the generation of new technological risks, which can lead to inequalities and discriminations. The emerging technologies are strategic and offer many benefits to citizens, enterprises and society as a whole. They can provide many benefits and opportunities, but they can also be harmful and generate new social and political risks.

Therefore, at the current time of technological disruption, a policy that guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms and that accelerates the generation of new digital rights is urgent and indispensable. We want to turn disruption into opportunity. And to achieve this we need to increase the level of personal and collective responsibility, to increase our decision-making capacity to maintain control over emerging technologies, and regulate from the democratic institutions algorithmic models to ensure their social utility in accordance with ethical criteria.

Barcelona wants to bring the advantages of technology closer to society, understanding that they are another instrument for its progress and development. Progress focused on basic pillars such as health, education, innovation, inclusion, sustainability and digital governance, and with the aim of turning the city into a global benchmark for technological humanism.

For this reason, the undersigned Municipal Groups promote the following Institutional Declaration:

1. To position Barcelona City Council in favour of technological humanism as an approach for providing a response to the new technological challenges and to promote digitalisation as a tool for social progress, based on ethical principles and founded on personal rights and freedoms. This positioning involves designing public policies with the commitment towards using technology to improve the well-being of the citizens, working to achieve technological equity by placing the emphasis on connectivity and digital skills acquisition. This commitment will be done respecting the acquired freedoms, generating new digital rights, in cooperation with the European institutions.

2. To be committed to facilitating scientific advancement and preserving the city's technological leadership by ensuring that emerging technologies are at the service of the citizenship. The City Council will promote the regulation and investment needed to tackle the risks associated with certain uses of artificial intelligence, such as mitigating the biases of the algorithms and data they use, and it will ensure the human supervision in automated decision-making when it affects people.

3. To ensure that the data which feeds and generates intelligent systems is open and public as far as possible, in order to ensure a mutual administration-citizen benefit. Therefore, the council will enable mechanisms so that the citizenship can make better use of transparency, accountability and control to the administration over the deployment of autonomous and intelligent systems.

4. To assume the commitment that any technology that is applied must be based on three basic principles, which should act in a simultaneous way:

- It must be **lawful**, guaranteeing the compliance of all applicable laws and regulations;
- It must be **ethical**, ensuring the fulfilment of ethical principles and values by design;
- It must be **robust**, both from a technical and social point of view.

5. To approve in the coming months a Strategy of algorithms and data, which will explain all the principles and values guiding the use of technologies in the public services of Barcelona City Council, as well as the rights of citizens that must be guaranteed.

Barcelona, June 2020