P30 / AI Governance in the Global North and Global South

Topic : State and Policy Capacity

Chair : Ian Roberge (York University)

Second Chair : Lun Liu (Peking University)

Third Chair : Malcolm Campbell-Verduyn (University of Groningen)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Artificial intelligence has become a key feature of governance at the global, regional, domestic and local levels. AI systems are increasingly embedded in public administration systems and across policy fields, including health care and social welfare, education, finance, security and environmental management. These applications create opportunities to improve public service delivery and enhance capacity. At the same time, they raise concerns about accountability, transparency, bias, surveillance and privacy, exclusion, environmental costs, and the concentration of state, corporate and technological power.

Governments are developing policies and institutional arrangements to steer the design, deployment, and use of AI systems. AI governance is not merely a technical issue. It is also deeply connected to questions of power, development, sovereignty, sustainability, and institutional capacity. Different countries and regions approach AI through distinct political, economic, institutional, and developmental contexts. While the Global North has often shaped dominant debates around AI innovation policy, risk regulation and ethics and market governance, countries in the Global South face additional questions concerning digital dependency, technological capacity, data governance, development priorities, and unequal participation in global rulemaking.

AI governance depends on understanding how global regulatory debates interact with diverse national and regional governance contexts. This panel moves beyond universalistic accounts of AI governance and examines how different governance traditions, state capacities, political economies, and development strategies shape AI governance in practice. Despite the growing body of research on AI governance, the existing debates are primarily shaped by experiences and regulatory models from the Global North. Less attention has been paid to how AI governance is understood, adapted, contested, and institutionalized in the Global South, and to how Global South countries navigate between global standards, domestic priorities, and geopolitical pressures.

We invite contributions that examine AI governance comparatively across and between the Global North and Global South. Submissions should move beyond purely technical discussions of AI and instead examine the institutional, political, economic, and social dimensions of governing AI.

Suggested Topics

We welcome submissions addressing, but not limited to, the following themes:

AI Governance Frameworks in the Global North and Global South

Comparative analysis of AI governance models, strategies, and regulatory frameworks
The diffusion, adaptation, and contestation of global AI governance norms
The role of state capacity, administrative traditions, and policy institutions in shaping AI governance

Comparative studies of AI governance in Asia-Pacific, European, North American, African, and Latin American contexts

AI Governance and Digital Sovereignty

AI governance, digital sovereignty, and national development strategies
Data governance, data localization, and cross-border data flow
Technological dependency, platform power, and infrastructure control
National AI capacity-building, public digital infrastructure, and computational resources

Public Values in AI Governance

Public attitudes toward AI governance and algorithmic decision-making
Cultural, ethical, and social foundations of AI governance
Community-based and participatory approaches to governing AI
AI literacy, public communication, and social acceptance of AI systems
The politics of trust, legitimacy, and accountability in AI governance

Papers that consider global and regional AI governance arrangements and the management of AI and environmental sustainability will also be considered.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Artificial intelligence is increasingly embedded in public management practices and across policy fields, including health care and social welfare, education, finance, security and environmental management. While AI offers opportunities to improve public services and state capacity, it also raises concerns about accountability, transparency, bias, surveillance, privacy, exclusion, environmental impacts, and the concentration of power.

AI governance is a political and developmental challenge that extends beyond technical considerations. This panel examines how AI is governed comparatively across and between the Global North and Global South, highlighting how different political economies, institutional capacities, and development priorities shape governance approaches. While debates in the Global North have focused on innovation, regulation, risk and market governance, countries in the Global South confront additional challenges related to digital dependency, technological capacity, data governance, and participation in global rulemaking.

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