

Call for Abstracts

Artificial Intelligence and Communication in Europe – Literacy, Creativity, and Human Labour

Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research

Special Issue co-edited by Cristina Ponte (Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Portugal), Philippe J. Maarek (UPEC, France), and Leen d’Haenens (KU Leuven, Belgium).

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Europe is experiencing a rapid AI-driven transformation of communication. Generative AI (e.g., large language and image models) and predictive AI (e.g., recommendation algorithms) are now embedded in media, culture, and everyday life. For example, recent reviews note that AI tools like ChatGPT support every stage of news production, reshaping editorial workflows, while also generating new ethical and human labour concerns. Journalists have reported AI-powered surveillance systems that collect unprecedented volumes of data on citizens. AI-driven targeted messaging has enabled political actors to personalize communication at an unprecedented scale, while at the same time, AI has been extensively used for disinformation, deepfakes, and algorithmic amplification of misleading content. The latter use of AI has particularly contributed to a new kind of Cold War against Western democracies. In response, European policymakers and educators emphasize digital and AI literacy for all citizens. This Special Issue invites diverse scholarship examining how AI technologies affect communication processes, media practices, and social and political life across Europe. We especially seek people-centered and comparative perspectives on AI’s role in communication, drawing on interdisciplinary methods.

Thematic scope

This issue welcomes contributions that explore the social, cultural, and political dimensions of AI in European communication contexts. Topics of interest include but are not limited to: AI and digital literacy; AI’s role in sustainability and green communication; AI-driven innovation in creative industries; AI’s part in internal political communication as well as between European countries. We invite studies of how generative AI tools (e.g., for text, audio or image creation) and predictive systems (e.g., recommender algorithms, automated content moderation) transform media and artistic practices. Critical analyses of AI-induced deskilling and reskilling of creative and communicative labor are encouraged. Contributions may examine systemic and personal risks: e.g., algorithmic bias, privacy violations, misinformation, surveillance, impacts on mental health as well as AI’s implications for work. In particular, we welcome research on AI’s effects on employment in the creative and media industries, the gig or platform economy, and emerging human-machine interfaces such as brain-computer interaction. European policy and regulatory contexts (e.g., the EU’s AI Act, media regulation) and the metaphors embedded in public discourses on AI are also highly relevant. We encourage

theoretical and empirical submissions (quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods) and especially those offering European or comparative perspectives (acknowledging that much existing scholarship is concentrated in a few countries).

This Special Issue is open to innovative approaches from communication, media studies, philosophy, sociology, political science, cultural studies, design research and related fields. In the spirit of recent *Communications* calls, we welcome both established and early-career researchers.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- **AI and literacy/education:** Digital, media, and AI literacy among European youth and educators; curriculum development for AI; participatory media projects on AI.
- **AI and sustainability:** AI in environmental communication; green technology literacy; AI for climate change awareness and action; “green” AI and media sustainability.
- **AI in creativity:** Use of AI in artistic and cultural production (film, music, design, visual arts, literature); AI-assisted creativity; questions of authorship, aesthetics, and authenticity.
- **Automation and deskilling:** How AI automates creative or communicative tasks; effects on professional roles in journalism, design, advertising, film, etc.; new skills and competencies required.
- **Risks and harms:** Algorithmic bias and discrimination; data privacy and consent; manipulation; misinformation, deepfakes and their potential for abuse in the political communication process; surveillance capitalism; personal autonomy; mental health and social well-being’s troubles in AI-mediated communication.
- **Ethics:** Principles of transparency, fairness, inclusivity, accountability, reliability, responsibility, and explainability; generative morality; integrative ethics.
- **Human labour and work:** Impacts of AI on labour in creative/media industries, the platform economy, and knowledge work; precarity and exploitation on AI-driven platforms; unionizing and collective action in AI-era workplaces.
- **Human-machine interaction:** Interfaces and devices that mediate communication (including brain–computer interfaces, virtual/augmented reality, chatbots and agents) and their implications for identity and social interaction, including uses of AI as new warfare tools.
- **Media and journalism:** Deployment of generative and predictive AI in newsrooms, fact-checking, and content curation; effects on journalistic norms, audience engagement, and the public’s right to information.
- **Policy, regulation, and discourse:** European AI governance, media regulation, and ethics frameworks; public debates and communication around AI; cross-national comparisons of AI policies.
- **Methodological and theoretical innovation:** Interdisciplinary, critical or historical studies of AI; novel research methods (e.g., design research, human-centered AI studies, computational methods) applied to communication questions.

Contributions are expected to foreground European experiences or comparative analyses that include Europe. We welcome submissions from diverse disciplinary and methodological backgrounds: for example, cultural analysis, political economy, design research, ethnography, surveys, experiments, computational approaches, as long as they address the human and communicative dimensions of AI. As with previous Communications Special Issues, *we are interested in conceptual frameworks as well as empirical insights*.

Submission procedure and timeline

Authors should submit a 600-700 word abstract outlining the central issue or research question, the theoretical or methodological approach, and anticipated conclusions or contributions. Abstracts (in English) should be emailed to the guest editors at comm.special.issue@gmail.com by **March 31, 2026**. We encourage clear and inclusive language that will appeal to a wide academic readership. Prospective authors may contact the editors in advance to discuss their proposals. Decisions on abstracts will be communicated by **April 30, 2026**. Invitations to submit full papers will be issued shortly thereafter. Invited manuscripts (full papers) will be due by **August 31, 2026** and should be prepared according to the journal's author guidelines. All submissions will undergo peer review under *Communications'* standard double-blind process. The invitation to submit a full article does not guarantee acceptance. We anticipate that the Special Issue will be published in autumn 2027.

For inquiries or further information, please contact one of the guest editors: Prof. Cristina Ponte (cristina.ponte@fcsh.unl.pt), Prof. Philippe J. Maarek (p.j.maarek@gmail.com), or Prof. Leen d'Haenens (leen.dhaenens@kuleuven.be). We look forward to your submissions and to advancing the conversation on AI and communication in Europe.

Timeline: Abstract deadline March 31, 2026; notification by April 30, 2026; full paper submission by August 31, 2026.