

PRESS RELEASE 03/2024

## Web event: Power and images – AI and political opinion formation

Berlin, 3 June 2024

**What role will artificial intelligence play in the 2024 super election year? On 5 June, the German Ethics Council will discuss the power of AI-generated media in shaping political opinion with experts and the audience in a public online event.**

**Press Contact**  
Katrin Arnholz  
Phone: +49/30/20370-246  
Email: presse@ethikrat.org

**Office**  
Jägerstraße 22/23  
D-10117 Berlin  
Phone: +49/30/20370-242  
Fax: +49/30/20370-252  
Email: kontakt@ethikrat.org  
Website: www.ethikrat.org

Who has not seen them: images of Donald Trump’s alleged arrest, the Pope in a down jacket or Russian President Vladimir Putin kneeling before the Chinese head of state – these AI-generated images circulated on social media, deceptively real and not immediately recognisable as fakes. Since the publication of ChatGPT in 2022, news of targeted election manipulation and disinformation campaigns have been on the rise. With image- and voice-generating applications such as Midjourney, Voice Engine and others, almost anyone can create so-called deepfakes. So what dangers – but perhaps also what opportunities – does AI offer for democratic decision-making? And how do we as a society prepare for elections in the age of AI?

With this web event, the German Ethics Council is following up on its Opinion “Humans and Machines – Challenges of Artificial Intelligence” published in March 2023. Among other things, the Opinion addresses the question of how AI influences human self-image and cooperation in public communication and opinion-forming. “On the one hand, we can be deliberately misled and deceived by fake news. On the other hand, we may also lose trust in truthful news,” emphasises Ethics Council member Judith Simon, who led the work on the AI Opinion. “Especially in the super election year 2024 – with the European elections, three state elections, the presidential election in the USA and parliamentary elections in many other countries – it is crucial to better understand and ethically analyse the use and political impact of AI-generated visual material.”

In addition to Judith Simon from the German Ethics Council, computer scientist Björn Ommer, philosopher Lisa Herzog and communication scientist Juliane A. Lischka will also shed light on the phenomenon from different perspectives. Alongside the opportunities and risks of generative AI in political decision-making, the focus will also be on the effects on journalism, the role of trust and loss of trust in public communication and questions of justice in democratic participation. The audience is invited to join in the discussion.

**Web event**  
**Power and Images: AI and Political Opinion Formation**  
**Wednesday, 5 June 2024, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm**  
**Online: [www.ethikrat.org/live](http://www.ethikrat.org/live)**

Registration is not required. After the event, a video recording and a transcript will be made available on the event page at the link below. The event itself will be accompanied in sign language and subtitled live.

Further information on the topic, the programme and the experts can be found at [www.ethikrat.org/weitere-veranstaltungen/macht-und-bilder](http://www.ethikrat.org/weitere-veranstaltungen/macht-und-bilder).