Press Report - Utopie Europa Debate

"These are real life problems we are facing today. And these will affect your generation much more than mine! So <u>you</u> need to solve them", called Prof. Slusallek **in front of 80 students and professors, coming from all over Europe,** on the invitation of the University of Passau for an "Utopie Europa" debate on 2nd March.

Prof. Philipp Slusallek **is a key and prominent European expert** on Artificial Intelligence and Ethics: he is the scientific Director of the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI) and Member of the High- Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence for the EU institutions.
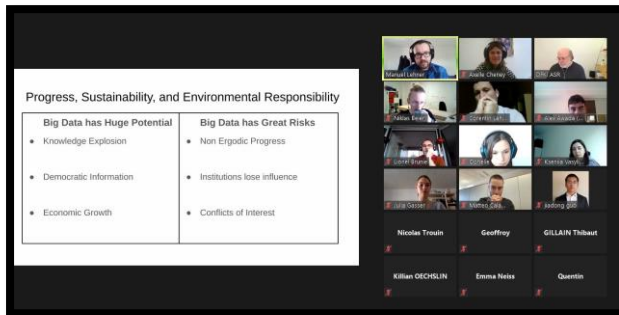

The audience of the exchange was multinational and multidisciplinary: not only future ingenieurs and computer scientists from the University of Passau (Germany) and INSA Lyon (France), as well as from Politehnica Bucharest (Romania) and Universitat Milano (Italy), but also lawyers and ethicists from the University of Passau, host of the event. This variety of background was a challenge the European expert managed to meet very well, with both technical insights for those familiar to Artificial Intelligence and a deep philosophical reflection for participants further away from computer science.

Prof. Slusallek pointed out the difficulties when philosophers and AI specialists come together. He insisted on the necessary openness from both parties and the added-value from new viewpoints, in order to progress ahead. He admitted: "*we need to remember two important aspects when we look at the future: on the one hand, many elements still are to be discovered in Artificial Intelligence. On the other hand, we have to better control AI, so as to be able to give guarantees regarding its results.*

"*For us, it was important to enable as much exchanges as possible between the students and Prof. Slusallek*" explain the organisers in the University of Passau (Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics, Chair of distributed information system). "*We wanted this event to be the students' event, and to ensure a real exchange, for the benefits of all students joining.*" Indeed, after a very rich 30-minute presentation from Prof. Slusallek, **a team mixing students from Passau University and INSA Lyon** presented their own findings on the technical and societal developments in Artificial Intelligence and big data. They then raised concrete challenges: "How to balance the

protection of privacy with the benefits of gathering medical data to ensure successful AI solutions in healthcare?", "or "How we can make data more tangible for the European citizens?" Finally, students came up with concrete proposals on how AI and big Data could further develop. Prof. Slusallek enthusiastically reacted and gave them his feedback. As a result, the debate was rich and interaction "at eye level": it encouraged students to ask their own questions to the prominent European expert, who took part very dynamically in this interactive exchange. He prasied the students and acknowledged: "it is great to see you have been working on these challenges: a lot of good ideas were presented today!"

The event was organised by the University of Passau, in the frame of this year's Utopie Europa initiative. Launched by the Institut français, the French-German University, in cooperation with the European Parliament Liaison Office and the European Commission Representation in Germany, the aim of "Utopie Europa" is to encourage students from German Universities to think about the future Europe they want to live in: students are expected to collectively discuss challenges faced by the EU and design solutions to be put forward in Brussels. Nine projects have been selected this year in Germany; the University of Passau is the only selected University in Bavaria.

As a next step, **two students from the University of Passau will present a proposal and compete with other German teams digitally in Berlin on the 22nd March.** We wish them good luck and hope that their ideas will be successfully received!

More information: https://utopieeuropa.institutfrancais.de/