Utrecht University

(Draft programme as of 22 September 2021)

'Facial Recognition Technology: Challenges for International Collaboration & Governance'

Workshop

Wednesday 17 November 2021, 10.15-15.45 (CET)
Paushuize (Kromme Nieuwegracht 49, Utrecht) & online

THEME

The workshop will address ethical and regulatory challenges associated with *international collaboration* on the research and development of facial recognition and related Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. The workshop will be guided by the following broad and inter-disciplinary questions:

1. How can we understand political and cultural contexts that shape the debate about, and regulation of, facial recognition and related AI technologies?
2. What ethical and regulatory challenges do research institutions encounter in pursuing international academic collaboration on facial recognition and related AI technologies?
3. What roles do inter-governmental institutions play in formulating normative standards on international collaboration concerning facial recognition technology?

BACKGROUND

Facial recognition technology has been one of the most widely debated and contested technologies in recent years. Various NGOs, researchers, as well as public institutions have called for the prohibition of the use of facial recognition technology by law enforcement authorities. In June 2020, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, called for 'a moratorium on the use of facial recognition technology' in the context of peaceful protests until appropriate human rights safeguards are in place.

The EU, among othes, have responded to some of the public concerns. For instance, the EU's proposed Act for AI of April 2021 has given particular attention to the risks arising from facial recognition technologies. Under the proposal, third party assessment would be required for AI systems intended to be used for the 'real-time' and 'post' remote biometric identification of natural persons. On another front, facial recognition technology has also been given particular importance when the EU adopted, in May 2021, the new dual-use regulation that aimed at strengthening cross-border transfer of digital surveillance technologies.

Some of these celebrated regulatory responses add **a new layer of complexity**, however, with regard to **international collaboration to foster technological development**. On the one hand, 'openness' in research and innovation remains to be 'a cornerstone' in the

EU's 'cooperation with the rest of the word', as noted by the European Commission's Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age. On the other hand, according to the Commission, such 'openness' in international cooperation should be based upon 'rules and values', as well as 'reciprocity and a level-playin field'. What remains uncertain, however, is the precise content of these 'rules and values' and, moreover, how the idea of reciprocity works with rule/value-based cooperation.

Against this background, this workshop will discuss ethical and regulatory challenges associated with international cooperation in the development of AI, by using facial recognition as a focal point of discussion. International collaboration in the field of AI would have to address the varied acceptability or permissibility of technology across multiple communities. Governments differ in terms of how they problematize the development and use of facial recognition technology. Such variance across states, jurisdictions, and communities creates critical challenges for international technological collaboration, especially without any effective international normative frameworks.

PROGRAM

09.45-	Coffee and tea
10.15-10.30	Opening & introductory remarks **José van Dijck** (Utrecht University) & **Machiko Kanetake** (Utrecht University)

1. International collaboration on FR technology & political and cultural contexts

10.30-12.00	Chair & discussant: **Albert Salah** (Utrecht University) **Lynda Hardman** (Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica (CWI) and Utrecht University) **Genia Kostka** (Freie Universität Berlin)
12.00-13.00	Lunch

2. The EU's ethical and regulatory approaches concerning international collaboration on FR technology

13.00-14.00	Chair & discussant: **Marijk van der Wende** (Utrecht University) **Mark Bromley** (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI) **Claire Stalenhoef** & **Machiko Kanetake** (Utrecht University)

14.00   Break

3. Global policies on FR technology and related international collaboration

14.30   Chair & discussant: **Lucky Belder** (Utrecht University)

                     Ioannis Kouvakas (Privacy International)

                     Ansgar Koene (EY; University of Nottingham)

15:30   Closing observations from the organizers

THE WORKSHOP FORMAT

The workshop is scheduled to take place at Paushuize in Utrecht (Kromme Nieuwegracht 49) within the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. The workshop will be live-streamed online, which will be made accessible to those who have registered for the workshop in advance.

Given the sensitivity of the topic, the event takes place under Chatham House Rules.

ORGANIZERS

The event is supported by Utrecht University and Gerda Henkel Stiftung and organized by Lucky Belder, Karin van Es, Arthur Gwagwa, and Machiko Kanetake, as part of the following UU research groups:

- Research platform on *Disrupting Technological Innovation? Towards an Ethical and Legal Framework* within the Utrecht Centre for Global Challenges

- Special Interest Group on *Principles by Design: Towards Good Data Practice* within Governing the Digital Society

- Digital building block, the Utrecht Centre for Regulation and Enforcement in Europe

For questions, please contact Machiko Kanetake (m.kanetake@uu.nl).