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Press

MIT New “Ethical Artificial Intelligence and ICT” 1 billion dollar College is the object of Public Hearing in Portugal's Parliament with e-Planning Consortium

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently announced it is creating a new College, backed by a planned investment of \$1 billion (1) to better prepare students to develop, and consider the implications of, artificial intelligence. Its ambitious transdisciplinary approach—with a vision of “educating students in every discipline to responsibly use and develop AI and computing technologies to help make a better world” will be the focus of an exceptional hearing in the Portuguese Parliament, promoted by the e-Planning Consortium (2).

“ICT and AI are too important to be left solely to the hands of (IT) engineers” said Pedro Ferraz de Abreu, an IT engineer himself, MIT alumni with a PhD from MIT-DUSP and a Master from MIT Media Lab. “MIT has chosen to integrate the social and technological, creating new courses that draw on a rich variety of knowhow, including social sciences. This integrative approach is also the basis of the e-Planning Consortium's approach and the joint doctoral programme.” Pedro Ferraz de Abreu was the first coordinator of the e-Planning doctoral programme in Portugal, and kept his ties with his *Alma Mater*.

The e-Planning Consortium, a collaborative platform, aims to research, test and transfer knowledge of the social needs for and impacts on society of ICTs (including AI), drawing on engineering, social sciences and humanities. The 3-University joint transdisciplinary e-Planning doctoral programme is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.(3)

“The fact that this hearing is hosted by the Parliamentary Committee that deals with, among other matters, Culture, Communication and Youth is very significant “ said Vasco Costa (CITIDEP) “this is an issue that is as much about citizenship, culture and ethics as it is about surveillance, robotics and jobs. We are hoping to bring this thinking both into academia and the political debate.”

A delegation of the the e-Planning team and CITIDEP (Research centre for ICT and participatory democracy, (4)), will be at the hearing on tuesday 26th February 2019 at 15:30 in the Committee of Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport at the Portuguese Parliament, Lisbon, **to present some strategic proposals for “Culture and Communication” that are urgently needed to tackle the opportunities and threats of AI today .**

Sources:

- (1) <http://news.mit.edu/2018/mit-reshapes-itself-stephen-schwarzman-college-of-computing-1015>
- (2) <http://www.e-planning.org/>
- (3) http://www.e-planning.org/jointphd_e.html
- (4) <http://www.citidep.net/>