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Information technology — Artificial intelligence (AI) — Transparency taxonomy of AI systems

Technologies de l'information — Intelligence artificielle (IA) — Taxonomie pour la transparence des systèmes d'IA

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Foreword

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Introduction

The objectives of this document include:

— improving trustworthiness, accountability and communication among different AI stakeholders, including partners in a supply chain, customers, users, society and regulators, by establishing a consistent terminology around transparency of AI systems;

— providing AI stakeholders with information about different elements of transparency with their relevance and possible limitations to different use cases and target audience;

— serving as a basis for developing technology-specific, industry-specific or region-specific standards for transparency of AI systems.

Transparency for AI systems is the property of a system that stakeholders receive relevant information about the system. This can include information on items such as system features, limitations, data, system design and design choices (see ISO/IEC 22989:2022, 5.15.8).

Transparency enables relevant stakeholders to have access to information, so they can better understand how an AI system is developed, deployed and can be used. For example, this allows an AI customer (such as an AI user) of an AI system to determine if it is appropriate for their situation and supports an AI auditor in assessing if the system complies with conformity requirements.

A standardized transparency taxonomy of AI systems helps people with different backgrounds to better understand each other by using the same terminology. This in turn supports an improved understanding of AI systems, and provides a foundation for developing interoperable and coherent transparency related standards.

This document is structured as follows:

— Clause 5 provides an overview of this document and describes the concept of transparency of AI systems;

— Clause 6 discusses how transparency needs can vary depending on the AI system context and on the stakeholders involved;

— Clause 7 discusses transparency items that describe the context of the AI system;

— Clause 8 pertains to describing transparency disclosures at the AI system level;

— Clause 9 focuses on documenting the internal functioning of the system;

— Clause 10 offers guidance on the documentation of datasets as stand-alone items.

AI systems often affect society and the environment (see Clause 7). However, it is also true that society and the environment can affect the performance of an AI system. This can include various aspects, such as:

— environmental conditions that affect the functioning and longevity of an AI system;

— introduction or reinforcement of unwanted bias;

— organizational practices that can cause poor outcomes;

— effects such as concept drift (concept drift occurs when there is a change in the functional relationship between the model's input and output) and data drift (data drift is change in the statistical properties and characteristics of the input data);

— formation of unwanted feedback loops (e.g. negative reinforcement of discriminatory patterns), which can be especially problematic in the case of continuous learning.

While these are important items for consideration, a detailed analysis is not provided in this document. Some of these aspects are further detailed in ISO/IEC 23894, ISO/IEC 27701, and ISO/IEC 29134.

Information technology — Artificial intelligence (AI) — Transparency taxonomy of AI systems

1 Scope

This document specifies a taxonomy of information elements to assist AI stakeholders with identifying and addressing the needs for transparency of AI systems. The document describes the semantics of the information elements and their relevance to the various objectives of different stakeholders.

This document is applicable to any kind of organization and application involving an AI system.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 22989:2022, *Information technology — Artificial intelligence — Artificial intelligence concepts and terminology*