

The Bulgarian center for Not-for-Profit Law (BCNL) – Advocating for Human Rights Complaint AI

BCNL was established in 2001 as a public benefit foundation. Our mission is to improve the legislation and the environment in Bulgaria, so that people can freely associate and be civically active. Our top priority is the well-being of civil society organizations, which are the engine of any prosperous civil society and human rights protection. In 2021 As part of its robust human rights protection activities BCNL launched its [Digital Democracy Program](#) focused on digital rights including AI and its human rights impact. BCNL's **first informational material** on AI - [Artificial intelligence - challenges to respect for human rights](#); was published on 19th of February 2021.

In June 2021 BCNL participated in the public consultations on Bulgaria's Fourth National Action Plan within the **Open Government Partnership (OGP)** proposing a measure "Implementation of different forms of effective public dialogue for developing common standards in the use of artificial intelligence in the process digitalization in order to guarantee equal access and respect for human rights." The measure was included in the adopted in July 2022 Fourth National Action Plan with BCNL as leading partner from the NGO sector. In May 2023 this measure was one of the selected measures to be presented during an OGP conference held by the Council of Ministers. The conference also included a discussion panel on "[AI – regulations and challenges](#)," with the participation of a BCNL representative. In December 2023 a [kick – off meeting of a working group human rights protection standards on AI implantation](#) was held in the Ministry of Digital Governance as part of the implementation of the OGP measure.

In 2023 BCNL participated in the global [Mozilla Festival](#) with the session "[Trustworthy AI Needs Trustworthy Data – Tackling the Linguistic Discrimination in Training Data](#)."¹ The panel of the session included prominent Bulgarian human rights lawyers, [representatives of the Bulgarian tech community](#) working on AI and representative of the [Slovenian digital rights NGO Citizen D](#).

BCNL was also active in the advocacy campaign for an EU AI Act which will fully protect human rights. To this end BCNL issued informational materials,² signed the [Joint statement of the EU civil society – EU Trilogues: The AI Act must protect people's rights](#); and [promoted the Joint statement](#) in Bulgaria. The EU AI Act and other AI human rights issues were in the focus of public discussions organized by BCNL.³

In 2023 BCNL ran two successful campaigns promoting human rights compliance of AI. The campaigns included dedicated websites - [niepazim.com](#) and [chovek.ai](#); as well as social media posts. During the active campaign [Niepazim.com](#) was visited by 1700 people 200 of which were from abroad – the US, Germany, the UK etc. The [chovek.ai](#) was visited by 4300 people. The social media campaign gathered over 300 000 impressions from 147 000 people. The campaigns enjoyed public wide public attention which led to 10 interviews in various media outlets.

As a result of its continuous work on human rights compliance of AI since 2021 BCNL has established itself as an expert on the topic in Bulgaria. BCNL is often invited in or quoted by various media outlets to share

¹ Recording of the session available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgbVjpt7Qw8>

² "[Аз, роботът](#)" - ЕК слага юзди на изкуствения интелект ; [Какво ни очаква с навлизането на изкуствения интелект в живота ни – структурна промяна или просто поредната вълна на технологична иновация?](#)

³ [Изкуственият интелект – кой кого използва... ние него или той нас?](#); [Small Talk: Креативно ползване на AI](#)

its expert opinion on legal and human rights aspects of AI such as: the [Bulgarian National Radio](#);⁴ [Bulgarian National TV](#); [Darik Radio](#); [Sega Newspaper](#); [Gospodari.com](#); [Bulgaria on Air](#); [Nova TV](#) and others.

In 2024 BCNL continues its active advocacy work on AI and human rights. In February a BCNL representative will be a speaker during the international conference [Innovation Goes on](#) in Sofia. Together with Permanent Representation of the European Parliament in Bulgaria BCNL is organizing a conference with the participation of MEPs on AI and elections in March in Sofia.

BCNL realizes the many challenges which the newly emerging technologies pose on human rights and will continue its advocacy work to ensure human rights compliance AI technologies and their accessibility for all groups in the society.

⁴ As well as: <https://bnr.bg/sofia/post/101902234/izkustveniat-intelekt-zaplaha-ili-pomosht>