

ChatGPT - "come hell or high water"?

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1 Does the development of artificial intelligence (AI) need to be paused?

The expression "come hell or high water" is a classic legal clause in contracts that regulates whether the content of the contract is to be implemented even if the parties encounter challenges, for example from concession authorities or competition authorities. The historical origins of the expression are said to be from when the farmers of North America moved westwards to settle, despite of blazing sun and desert, and flooding in rivers that had to be crossed. In simple terms, the phrase "come hell or high water" is often associated with a situation to be carried out under any circumstances.

ChatGPT is a computer program that uses artificial intelligence to perform advanced tasks, such as answering complex questions and writing texts on complicated topics. The question that is discussed daily is whether the development and use of artificial intelligence should be considered an advantage for the society, or whether the development should be paused until one understands its consequences and has passed laws and regulations that specify the framework for the use of artificial intelligence.

2 The balance between development and control

On one hand, there is no doubt that ChatGPT will streamline the development and production of goods and services, in the same way that Microsoft Excel and Word, e-mail, Messenger and Altinn.no, have streamlined tasks for economists, auditors and lawyers, among others. The use of artificial intelligence can therefore be regarded as a natural next level in the digitalisation of our work tasks.

On the other hand, it is highlighted that a problem with artificial intelligence is how fast the development is going. This means that employee training, additional education, and retraining will lag behind, and perhaps lead to lower wages and may also lead to increased unemployment.

It can also be highlighted that artificial intelligence require collection and analysis of large amounts of personal data. This can increase the risk of privacy breaches and may also lead to misuse of sensitive information, in the form of identity theft and cyber-attacks. Datasets may contain bias, which can entail maintaining existing societal inequalities, such as hiring and processing loan applications. This can reinforce biases in society and exacerbate social inequalities.

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There is also reason to warn about the use of artificial intelligence in critical infrastructure; - both soft infrastructure such as government apparatus, banks, and insurance companies; - and hard infrastructure such as waterworks, power grids, telecommunications networks, airports, road networks, gas pipelines and ports. When critical infrastructure is to function even in the event of "unthinkable" events, it is an open question how to train such artificial intelligence.

The balance between the development and control of artificial intelligence should lie with political institutions and economic institutions as described in Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson's ground-breaking book "*Why Nations Fail*" from 2012. One example of political institutions taking responsibility is the EU's ongoing regulation of artificial intelligence in "The Artificial Intelligence Act".

3 The Industrial Revolution

Fear of the consequences of technological progress is not new. The interplay between private creativity, development and property rights, versus public regulation and ownership, has been the subject of discussion and debate several times throughout history.

An example is from the Industrial Revolution where Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848 wrote in their book "*The Communist Manifesto*", freely translated: "The bourgeoisie (owners of capital) has, during its barely a hundred years of rule, created more massive and more colossal productive forces than all previous generations combined. Submission of the forces of nature to man; machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam machinery, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing entire continents for cultivation, channelling rivers, ... What previous century had ... a hunch that such productive forces would come sneaking in at night while the workers slept?"

Although it is important to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of new technology, history has shown that the development of society is not served by the fact that it is the state that owns the "colossal productive forces", but rather that such forces are owned by private actors within the framework of the law.

Artificial intelligence may also lead to a concentration of power because research and development is mainly led by large technology companies and organizations with considerable resources. It is important that the development of artificial intelligence is not guided by "*The Man of System*", which Adam Smith advised against as early as 1759 in his first book "*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*", where there is one person or one organization that steers human beings like chess pieces in a chess game. It is therefore important to not slow down the development of artificial intelligence, but to allow as many companies and organizations as possible to help lift the digitalization of the society to a new level.

4 Come hell or high water

In total, I believe that ChatGPT and digitization through the use of artificial intelligence will benefit us all provided that we have good political institutions and economic institutions, which are aware of their responsibility.

The settlers who moved westward, who defied the unknown and dealt with dangers they encountered on their way, forms the foundation of a society that today is at the front of research in many sectors. The Industrial Revolution, which met a lot of resistance, brought society colossal productive forces. Likewise, I believe that even if ChatGPT and the use of artificial intelligence give us an experience of something unknown, and which we understand will give us colossal productive forces, this must not pause the development, but artificial intelligence must be developed and managed within the society's rules and regulations, "come hell or high water".



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