GRUPPO24ORE

Press Release

Il Sole 24 Ore first Italian publishing group to adopt a self-regulatory code on artificial intelligence

The code sets ethical principles and best practices for the responsible use of AI in the Group's publishing and professional activities.

24 ORE Group is also exploring various applications of generative AI to enhance its processes, products, and services for customers.

Milan, 4 June 2024 - 24 ORE Group, Italy's leader in business, financial, professional and cultural information, is the first Italian publishing group to adopt **a self-regulatory code for the ethical application of artificial intelligence** (AI) in its publishing and professional activities.

The code, developed with input from internal and external experts and shared with the Group's editorial staffs, is inspired by the principles and recommendations of leading international and national organizations, including the AI Act approved by the European Union and the report from the Italian government's AI Commission for Information. It aims to ensure that AI use aligns with the values of honesty, fairness, and transparency that have guided the Group throughout its nearly 160-year history.

24 ORE Group's self-regulatory code, unveiled at the recent *Festival dell'Economia* in Trento and praised by Alberto Barachini, Undersecretary to the Prime Minister's Office with responsibility for information and publishing, applies to all of the Group's publishing and professional activities. Its aim is to protect the quality of information, uphold the integrity of the journalistic profession and all Group professionals, and ensure respect for the rights of third parties. The code also includes a system for periodically monitoring and verifying the effectiveness and appropriateness of the measures adopted.

"We are proud that our multimedia group, with its self-regulatory code and its experiments in generative AI, is reaffirmed as a benchmark for quality information, innovation, and social responsibility in Italy", emphasizes **Mirja Cartia d'Asero**, CEO of 24 ORE Group. She adds: *"These initiatives highlight the Group's commitment to advancing a deeper understanding of AI and its ethical and social implications, as well as to enhancing the role and expertise of our journalists and experts, who play an essential and irreplaceable role in selecting, verifying, interpreting, and contextualizing information."*

The code is based on **six fundamental principles**:

- **Regulatory compliance**: the Group is committed to verifying that all decisions regarding the application of AI models within the Group are made through the proper and informed use of AI tools, maximizing their benefits while avoiding risky behavior, violations of company policies or regulations. Respect for privacy, effective management of personal data, and protection of copyright and intellectual property - whether belonging to the Group or to third parties - should always be safeguarded in the use of AI.

- **Data provenance and reliability**: the Group is committed to ensuring that data used in AI systems are relevant, accurate, complete, up-to-date, and always under the Group's responsibility. All data should come from reliable and verified sources, with transparency regarding their provenance. Additionally, data should be reviewed periodically to ensure their timeliness, integrity, and relevance.

- **Human in the loop**: the Group ensures the central role of human judgment and professionalism in the AI development and adoption process and, therefore, ensures that AI-based decisions and actions are always subject to human control and supervision. This approach ensures that professionals and operators using the tool can always maintain their evaluative and decision-making autonomy. In the field of journalism, AI will be used solely as a support to the work of journalists and not as a substitute for it, ensuring quality, impartiality and pluralism of information.

- **Inclusivity and Diversity**: the Group promotes the use of AI to foster inclusivity and diversity, avoiding all forms of discrimination. This is achieved through ongoing reviews of algorithms and datasets, ensuring they represent sociocultural diversity to prevent stereotyping and misinformation, and to promote solutions that are ethically grounded and socially responsible.

- **Responsibility and Accountability**: the Group is committed to ensuring that every user, regardless of their role in the corporate structure, takes responsibility for the use of AI. Individual responsibility, competence, and accountability are essential for the effective integration and use of AI in production and decision-making processes. Given that AI-generated results may be imperfect, users must verify the correctness and accuracy of these results before applying them.

- **Digital education and communication transparency**: the Group is committed to spreading the culture and knowledge of AI among its employees and associates through training pathways that are accessible to all levels of the company, with the aim of enhancing both technical skills and understanding of the ethical and social implications of using AI. Concurrently, it promotes clear and transparent communication on the use of AI, enabling all professionals and operators to be able to use it in compliance with the law and the rights of third parties, and also ensures transparency in identifying products processed through the use of AI systems.

With its self-regulatory code, 24 ORE Group is committed to harnessing technological innovations, while preventing harmful uses that conflict with its ethical values, and ensuring that technological advancement aligns with the Group's ethical and professional commitment.

24 ORE Group recognizes that AI offers significant opportunities to enhance existing processes, products, and services, develop new generations of products and services, automate repetitive tasks, and improve customer service.

Bearing this in mind, the Group has long been **experimenting with various applications of generative AI** across different fields, starting with journalism. This includes **tools that assist** with searching, analyzing, summarizing news, and correlating related content to enhance user engagement, all under human control and supervision and exclusively within the context of internal data. Additionally, the Group is implementing digital platforms with **recommendation systems** that allow users to personalize their experience by offering content and services tailored to their interests and needs.

On the product front, 24 ORE Group has already begun integrating generative AI into its **professional databases**, notably enhancing its flagship service, **L'Esperto Risponde**. This service provides qualified and up-to-date answers to tax, legal, administrative, and technical questions, significantly boosting its performance. The new release of **L'Esperto Risponde**, powered by AI and scheduled for release in autumn, will include an AI-based virtual assistant capable of understanding natural language. This assistant, always guided by experts, will provide timely and accurate answers using only its exclusive database, offering new levels of service and functionality.

Media contacts:

Ginevra Cozzi – Communication Manager 24 ORE Group – ginevra.cozzi@ilsole24ore.com