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BACKGROUND GUIDE ALEMUN 2026

TOPIC: “Evaluating the Impact of AI Use by Major Economic Powers on Full Employment and the Aggravation of International Social Inequality”

CHAIRS: Pedro Henrique Flores and Valentina Skaf

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1. GREETING WORD

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to AleMun 2026!

We are Pedro Henrique Flores and Valentina Skaf, and we are honored to be your chairs for the ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) committee at this year's AleMUN. We are very excited to meet each of you and hear your unique perspectives as we work together to tackle pressing global challenges.

This year's topic, "Evaluating the Impact of AI Use by Major Economic Powers on Full Employment and the Aggravation of International Social Inequality" highlights how artificial intelligence is transforming the world of work. We are living through a moment when AI is making headlines every day, reshaping industries, eliminating jobs, and creating new opportunities at an unprecedented speed. Therefore, it is crucial for international organizations and delegations to come together to ensure that no country is left behind.

As delegates, you will be challenged to balance technological innovation with social responsibility, considering both the opportunities and risks that artificial intelligence presents to the international community. We encourage you to approach this debate with creativity!
ECOSOC serves as a vital forum for dialogue, bringing together countries from around the world to address economic and social issues. Our collective goal is to inspire sustainable solutions and promote inclusive growth. Your contributions will play a key role in shaping the discussions and moving us toward a better future.

We hope you find this background guide a useful starting point for your research and preparation. We are looking forward to an engaging and productive debate. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out using the contact information provided. We are here to help!

Best regards,

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2. ECOSOC

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), established by the UN Charter in 1945. ECOSOC oversees the economic, social, and related activities of fourteen UN specialized agencies, functional commissions, and five regional commissions. It serves as the principal forum for discussing international economic and social issues and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and at the broader UN system.
In summary, ECOSOC is active in a wide array of socioeconomic matters. Extreme poverty, inequality between and within countries, poor governance, natural disasters, environmental degradation, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, climate change, and financial instability are among the major challenges addressed by the Council.

2.2 STRUCTURE OF ECOSOC

ECOSOC consists of 54 member states elected by the General Assembly (GA) to serve three year terms. Each year, 18 members are elected according to geographical representation. Unlike the Security Council, ECOSOC has no permanent members, and countries may be immediately re-elected after the end of their term. ECOSOC convenes in annual sessions from July to July and is financed through the UN's General Assembly-approved budget.

2.3 ECOSOC'S MISSION

The primary areas of concern for ECOSOC are encouraging living standards and full employment; fostering economic and social development; developing solutions to international economic, social, and health issues; promoting international cooperation in the fields of culture and education; and promoting universal human rights and fundamental liberties.

3. TOPIC BACKGROUND

3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

Artificial Intelligence has been growing exponentially in recent years. The daily use of learning algorithms has brought both positive and negative impacts to the micro and macroeconomy. Currently, major economic powers such as the United States, China, and countries of the European Union are investing billions of dollars in the development of AI-based technologies in order to expand their global influence, and technological innovation capacity.

There is a speculation that the next major technological conflict – or, in less formal terms, a new “Cold War” – may revolve around the control and leadership of artificial intelligence development. In this context, the race for technological superiority has acted as a “fuel” for the replacement of human labor to machines. Accelerating and intensifying the challenges related to employment and social inequality.

According to the World Economic Forum’s Future of Jobs Report, automation and AI are projected to end millions of jobs globally while simultaneously creating new ones – however, the distribution of these new opportunities remains highly uneven. Low-skill, routine-based occupations are extremely affected, while high-skill, technology related roles tend to concentrate in nations that already lead AI development. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has warned that, without deliberate policy intervention, the net effect of AI adoption on employment may be deeply regressive, especially in developing economies.

3.2 CHALLENGES AND INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

The rapid spread of AI across economies has created a set of challenges that no single country can address alone. These issues require coordinated responses at the international level.

One of the most significant concerns is the growing gap between wealthier and poorer nations in terms of access to AI technology. Countries in the Global South (poorer countries) often have a lack of infrastructure, trained professionals and financial resources needed to develop or even adopt AI systems. As a result, the benefits of AI – higher productivity, economic growth, better public services – tend to concentrate in countries that are already in the Global North, while others fall behind. ECOSOC has recognized this dynamic as a serious threat to the goals set in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

When companies adopt AI systems to automate tasks, workers lose jobs. What makes this different from past technological shifts is that AI can replace not just manual or repetitive work, but also tasks that require thinking, writing and decision making – characteristics that in the past were seen as valuable to employers. This means a much wider range of jobs is at risk.

Artificial Intelligence Systems are built using historical data, which often reflects existing inequalities and prejudices. When these systems are used in areas like job hiring, bank loans, or some type of government service, they can reproduce a discriminatory behavior – for example, against women, racial minorities, or any type of religious believers. This is a growing concern because many countries still have no laws specifically to regulate these types of situations.

In addition to the disparities existent between the nations, artificial intelligence also can intensify inequalities within the countries themselves. Highly educated individuals and residents of urban centers tend to possess more access to digital technologies, to have more opportunities for technical training, and better paid job opportunities. In contrast, low-income workers and populations located in rural or less developed regions often face greater difficulties adapting to these transformations, becoming more vulnerable to unemployment and social exclusion.

The development of advanced AI is largely controlled by a small number of companies – mostly based in the USA and China. These companies own a big technological power, the data, and the cutting-edge of today's technology. This creates a type of technological dependency, where most countries – even large ones – rely on foreign corporations for critical digital infrastructure.

3.3 PREVIOUS INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS

Despite growing awareness, international responses to the challenges posed by AI have been limited and mostly non-binding.

The most notable step came in March 2024, when the UN General Assembly adopted the Resolution 78/265, its first resolution specifically on AI governance. It encourages member states to develop national AI regulations – promoting international cooperation, and that no developing countries are left behind – but with no legal obligation.

The OECD published its AI Principles in 2019, setting some guidelines on transparency and human rights in AI development and use. The G20 sanctioned similar principals in the same year.

On the labor side, the ILO (International Labour Organisation) has advocated for workers protections and creating programs to train unskilled personnel. Even though this type of implementation remains at each government’s discretion.

The most active law from the European Union (EU AI Act, 1º August 2024/ Act 1689), classifies AI by risk and level. Imposing strict rules to high risk systems. Though it is a regional law, it applies to any operating company in Europe, giving a wider influence to the world market. Although most current international AI initiatives are "soft law" or voluntary frameworks, which is one of the central global governance problems.

4. IMPORTANT FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE DEBATE

4.1 TOPICS TO FOCUS ON DURING THE DEBATE

To what extent is AI responsible for job displacement globally, and how can we distinguish between jobs that are lost to automation and those that are simply transformed?

Is the economic growth generated by AI being distributed fairly across societies, or is it concentrating wealth among a small group of companies and individuals?

How does the unequal access to AI technology between developed and developing nations affect global inequality? Is this gap growing or shrinking?

What is the relationship between AI and full employment? Can both coexist, or does the expansion of AI inevitably reduce the overall demand for human labor?

Should AI development be regulated at the international level, and if so, who should set the rules and how should they be enforced?

How do global supply chains connect AI-driven automation in wealthy countries to job losses in poorer ones? Who bears the responsibility for this?

Can international development cooperation and technology transfer programs effectively help countries that are being left behind by the AI economy?

What role should institutions like ECOSOC play in ensuring that the benefits of AI reach all countries and not just the most technologically advanced ones?

4.2 GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

What steps has your country taken to prepare its workforce for the changes brought by AI and automation, such as retraining programs or investments in education?

How has your country been affected by the AI strategies of major powers, and has this created opportunities or new dependencies?

What is your country's position on technology transfer? Does it support sharing AI tools and knowledge with developing nations, or does it prioritize protecting its own technological advantage?

How does your country balance the economic benefits of AI adoption with the risk of increasing inequality among its own population?

Has your country engaged with international frameworks on AI governance, such as the OECD AI Principles or UN initiatives and does it believe these are effective?

What industries in your country are most at risk from automation, and what policies has your government put in place to support workers in those sectors?

Does your country see AI as a tool that can help reduce global inequality, for example in healthcare or education, or primarily as a source of economic competition?

What kind of international agreement on AI and employment would your country be willing to support, and what would it need to include to reflect your national priorities?

How does your country's level of technological development affect its ability to benefit from AI, and what challenges does this create in relation to more advanced economies?

5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUNTRIES

5.1 PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

China is one of the world's biggest investors in artificial intelligence, with a national plan to become a global AI leader by 2030. The government is adopting AI across manufacturing, services, autonomous vehicles, robots, and by doing so, reshaping its labor market rapidly. This change is, according to China, more of a transformation than a replacement. To make the transition easier, Beijing launched its "AI Plus" initiative in 2025, aiming to create new jobs while modernizing existing ones. Despite this program and other government actions, China faces youth unemployment, a shortage of AI-skilled workers and a shrinking working-age population. The government's core bet is on human capital investment and reskilling, but the pace of technological advance may outrun the workforce's ability to adapt.

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5.2 REPUBLIC OF INDIA

For two decades, 10–15 million Indians in IT and outsourcing built a middle class that drove domestic consumption, with the rise of AI that model is being dismantled by replacing cheap labor with automated systems. Entry-level IT roles have already shrunk by 20–25%, affecting the jobs that lifted millions into the formal economy. Without government action, India's tech workforce could shrink from 7.5–8 million to just 6 million by 2031 , bringing negative consequences across housing, education, and services in the country. The government is pushing back with its IndiaAI Mission, with a plan to train over 1.25 million AI professionals by 2027. But with manufacturing still underdeveloped and the economy offering mostly low-paid work, India risks becoming an example of how AI productivity gains in rich countries can export unemployment to the developing world.

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5.3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States is home to the world's most powerful AI companies and leads global AI development. However, studies suggest that AI could eliminate a large share of jobs over the next decade and has been linked to nearly 55,000 layoffs in the US in 2025 alone, affecting workers in mid-level and service jobs, while benefiting high-income earners and large corporations like Meta, Microsoft and Amazon. The government's response (Trump's January 2025 executive order) consists of framing AI purely as a competitiveness and national security issue. The following AI Action Plan shows just this, focusing on accelerating innovation and exporting American AI globally, with no meaningful worker protection framework. Internationally, many countries depend on American AI platforms and systems without having much say in how they work. The U.S. also controls the export of key technologies like advanced computer chips, which limits what other countries can develop on their own.

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5.4 REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Korea is only the second country in the world, after the EU, to pass comprehensive AI legislation, with the AI Basic Act coming into force in 2026 covering transparency, explainability, and safety principles. Yet Korea has a deeper structural problem: 70% of young Koreans hold university degrees, but only 14% of jobs are in large firms, and workers at small companies earn barely half the wages of those at large ones leaving AI to land on an already unequal labor market. For a rapidly aging society, AI's risks are particularly large for older workers, who will face challenges adapting to technological change and are more vulnerable to income loss and displacement. South Korea takes part in international AI discussions through groups like the OECD and G20, and also exports AI products and services to developing countries, especially in Asia and Africa. It supports the idea of responsible and ethical AI development at the global level.

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5.5 FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Germany is Europe's largest economy and has a strong tradition of industrial manufacturing. Its national AI strategy focuses on keeping the country competitive while also protecting workers through a system that involves trade unions, employers, and the government working together. Even so, automation is beginning to threaten jobs in traditional industries like car manufacturing and skilled trades. Germany is also an important funder of international development programs and played a major role in shaping the European Union's AI Act, which is one of the first major AI laws in the world. This regulation has implications beyond Europe, setting a potential standard for how AI should be governed globally.

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5.6 UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The UAE was one of the first countries in the world to create a national AI strategy and even appointed a Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence. It has invested heavily in AI research and technology companies. However, most of the country's workforce is made up of low-wage migrant workers in jobs like construction and hospitality, which are highly at risk of automation. The economic gains from AI mostly benefit a small group of citizens and highly skilled foreign professionals. The UAE exports AI systems and digital infrastructure to countries in Africa and Asia, and tries to act as a neutral meeting point between the U.S. and China on AI issues. Critics have raised concerns about the use of surveillance technology and the lack of democratic oversight in how AI is governed.

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5.7 KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is investing heavily in AI as part of its Vision 2030 plan to reduce its dependence on oil. Large projects like NEOM, a futuristic city planned to run entirely on technology, show how central AI is to the country's future. At the same time, policies that try to get more Saudi citizens into private sector jobs are being implemented alongside AI tools that reduce the need for workers overall. Migrant workers, who make up most of the labor force, are especially vulnerable and have limited protections. Saudi Arabia has used its financial resources to invest in AI companies around the world and to build partnerships with both American and Chinese technology firms.

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https://kaplanmena.com/how-saudi-arabias-2026-ai-strategy-is-shaping-workforce-transformation/

5.8 PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is one of the countries most at risk from AI-driven automation. It has around four million garment workers, mostly women, who could lose their jobs as machines take over tasks like sewing, quality checks, and managing supply chains. A recent study found that technological upgrades in the garment sector have already reduced overall employment by over 30%. Only 44.5% of the population uses the internet, the AI startup ecosystem is embryonic, and the country ranks 104th out of 132 in global innovation, with a 0.2% share of high-tech exports. A draft National AI Policy exists but remains unfinished, and there is no dedicated AI governance body, no AI procurement framework, and no binding regulations of any kind. As one of the world's poorest nations and one of the ones that suffers the most AI inequality, Bangladesh is a strong voice in international forums for fairer AI policies. https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/bangladesh-building-digital-economy-floor-giving-way-1431946?amp&
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5.9 FRENCH REPUBLIC

France is one of the leading nations in AI development, with significant government investment in research and technology. The French government has actively supported AI through its national AI strategy, launched in 2018, which was an investment of billions of euros to research and education. However, like other developed nations, France has been a strong advocate for AI regulation. Playing a key role in shaping the EU AI Act. Internationally, France positions itself as a defender of "human-centered AI", pushing an ideal on protection to the worker and limit to the concentration of AI power in the hands of a few large corporations.

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5.10 UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The United Kingdom has been a global hub for innovation, and in the artificial intelligence business, it was not different. The UK is home to major research institutions, universities and technology companies. After Brexit, the United Kingdom chose not to adopt the EU AI Act, instead they developed its own regulamentation to the subject. It is less strict than the EU Act, but the government believes that innovation comes as a priority instead of strict oversight. This has attracted investment but also raised concerns about weaker worker protections. The UK government has acknowledged that AI will significantly disrupt the labor market, particularly in sectors like finance, law, and administration, where many mid-level jobs could be automated. Internationally, the UK has sought to lead global conversations on AI-safety, hosting the first AI Safety Summit in 2023.

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5.11 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Russia views AI as a strategic priority, particularly for military and security and cyber-security applications, and invests heavily in developing its own AI capabilities independent of Western technology. Even though Russia faces significant challenges in the tech sector, because of strong sanctions since the invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Limiting access to advanced technology and foreign investment. The Russian Government also acknowledge that automation will affect a large portion of its workforce. However their policy regarding AI is still limited. Russia is generally skeptical about the Western rules and laws about AI development and use of the technology. They argue that each major power should have the right to develop AI on its own terms, without outside interference.

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5.12 REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

Singapore is one of the most technological nations in the world, ranking among the top countries in digital infrastructure and technological preparation. The government has made AI a central pillar of its economic strategy. They invest heavily in education, personnel specialization programs and attracting global tech companies. Because Singapore has a small population and a highly skilled workforce, it has been more successful than most countries in the transition to a more AI driven economy. Internationally, Singapore plays an active role in negotiations and is a leading country as an example of how to smoothly introduce AI in the economy. They signed AI cooperation agreements with multiple countries. It generally supports common rules to the international market, defending, with emphasis, the importance that these rules do not make new technological innovations more difficult to happen.

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5.13 FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Nigeria is the biggest economy in Africa and possesses a young, and rapidly growing population, which makes the impact of AI on employment especially significant. While the country has a vibrant technology startups variety – specially in Lagos – most of the nigerian workers are working in the agricultural or informal economy. Sectors that are less threatened by AI technology, but also less benefited by it. Nigeria lacks the digital infrastructure and capacity to develop its own AI system, making them dependent on foreign platforms. This raises concerns about data control and economic dependency. At the international stage, Nigeria has advocated for the technology and fights for an equal access to AI tools, arguing that the current global AI development, ignores the needs and realities of African nations.

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5.14 REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa economy is the most industrialized economy in Africa, but also possesses one of the highest unemployment rates in the world – currently above 30%. This makes AI-driven automation a serious concern, since millions of low and mid-skills workers could lose their jobs, and have only a few or even no alternative option. AI development is mostly concentrated in the bigger cities and only to a minority of the population. At international level, South Africa supports strategies that are inclusive for all, and with attention to workers protection. While they try to balance the economical potential form AI with the risks of deepening an already severe social inequality.

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5.15 REPUBLIC OF TÜRKIYE

Türkiye has been investing on AI as part of its ambition to become a technological power, launching a national AI strategy in 2021 focused on defense, agriculture, and public administration. However its economy still strongly relies on tourism and manufacturing. The rising incorporation of AI and automotation can negatively affect workers from mid and low qualification inserted in these sectors, generating great concern because of the high unemployment rates, and the magnification of social inequality within the country, especially among low-income populations with limited access to digital training and technological education. Türkiye also occupies a complex geopolitical position, maintaining ties with both Western nations and Russia. Their international position is mostly skeptical about favouring already dominant AI developed nations in favour of their own interest. Even so, they support multilateral treaties.

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5.16 UNITED MEXICAN STATES

Mexico is one of the largest Latin American economies, and it is deeply exposed to AI-driven automation, largely because of its economic and political ties with the United States – especially because of the USMCA (United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement). Many mexican workers are working in the industry of manufacturing and assembly, which are increasingly getting more and more automated by American companies. Creating a direct tension between economic growth and job security. Mexico has taken early steps towards national AI development, but its progress has been slow. Internationally, it advocates for strategies that defend the workers and promote technology transfer, arguing that AI governance must reflect the needs of the developing nations, not just the major powers.

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