ALGORITHM WATCH

Annual Report 2018

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Closing the year

2018 was a roller-coaster ride for AlgorithmWatch. Thanks to funding from the Bertelsmann Stiftung and Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, we were able to begin building our team at the turn of 2017/2018. Up until then, AlgorithmWatch was an almost exclusively volunteer initiative.

The professionalizing our organization has brought many opportunities, and many challenges. Building a brand-new team in a brand-new field is fun – and difficult. So we're happy to say that with the team of six staff members plus a permanent external accountant, we found a solid base for both high-quality work and further development. You learn more about our growing team on page 16.

Concerning our work, I would like to highlight four outcomes:

- In February, we launched OpenSCHUFA, a project aimed at shedding light on the opaque scoring system of Germany's main credit-scoring company, Schufa. In collaboration with the Open Knowledge Foundation Germany, we asked people to donate money and data to this cause. The campaign was hugely successful in raising awareness about the practice, regulation, and oversight of credit scoring. Nevertheless, we could have done a better job at reaching audiences outside of our own bubble.

- In June, we were awarded the prestigious Theodor Heuss Medal for our contribution to a differentiated consideration of automated decision-making (ADM) processes.

- In autumn 2018, we established the Algorithmic Accountability Network, a cross-border collaborative research network spanning 12 EU countries, as part of the research for our Automating Society report.

- In November, we organized our first-ever team retreat.

Of specific importance to us – as a non-profit organization – was the fact that we were able to broaden our funding base, adding Open Society Foundations to our list of partners. So with 2019 already in full swing, we're looking forward with optimism: With quite a number of important publications lined up, like the Atlas of Automation and the Automating Society report, we'll be able to test the research results of our first full year of work. And with our outstanding and highly motivated team, we're well-prepared for further strategic and organizational development.

So in case you're interested to find out more about our work and next steps – and I certainly hope you are – be sure to follow us on our website, newsletter, Twitter or Facebook feeds.

With kind regards

Matthias Spielkamp
Executive Director

Highlights 2018

Spring

- For the OpenSCHUFA project we collected more than 43,000 Euros in a crowdfunding campaign alone - with no perks offered to contributors – and collected more than 4.000 individual credit scores as data donations in order to shed light on the credit scoring system in Germany.

Summer

- In June, AlgorithmWatch was awarded the Theodor Heuss Medal for our contribution to a differentiated consideration of automated decision-making (ADM) processes; this year's awards were dedicated to the topic "Coded Freedom – Latitude of Responsibility". Former winners include Finance-Watch, Oxfam Germany and the Free Software Foundation.

Autumn & Winter

- In early 2018, we established the Algorithmic Accountability Network, a cross-border collaborative research network spanning 12 EU countries. The initiative was successful in bridging different languages and the lack of "Europeanized" discussions, as these tend to be confined to the member state level. The network presented its report on "Automating Society in the EU" at the European Parliament in the beginning of 2019.

Winter

- In November we had our first annual team retreat. The retreat was a great opportunity to reflect back on our first year together, to discuss new project ideas, and to make plans for the future. With two new colleagues joining AlgorithmWatch in autumn, it was also an important opportunity for team-building, and a beneficial break away from everyday work.

What we aim to improve & what we have in the pipeline for 2019

In 2018 we started a strategic and organizational development process, including, e.g. the development of a Theory of Change. In 2019 we have continued this process and are focusing on improving AlgorithmWatch's governance reporting. We are in the process of establishing a dynamic and more comprehensive accountability framework, and we also look forward to establishing a Code of Conduct for our team, for future partnerships and as a foundation for our work.

Our Mission Statement

AlgorithmWatch is a non-profit, evidence-based research and advocacy organization. Our main objective is to ensure that algorithmic decision-making (ADM) systems are used to benefit individuals and societies and not used to infringe on them and upon their fundamental rights. We therefore scrutinize ADM processes that have significant consequences for individual and collective rights, explain the effects of these processes to a general public and relevant stakeholders and identify potential ethical and legal conflicts. In order to maximize the benefits of ADM processes for society, we develop ideas for better governance – with a mix of technologies, regulation, and oversight institutions.

HOW DO WE WORK?

Watch

- AlgorithmWatch analyses the effects of algorithmic decision-making processes on human behavior and points out ethical conflicts.

Explain

- AlgorithmWatch explains the characteristics and effects of complex algorithmic decision-making processes to a general public.

Network

- AlgorithmWatch is a platform linking experts from different cultures and disciplines focused on the study of algorithmic decision-making processes and their social impact.

Engage

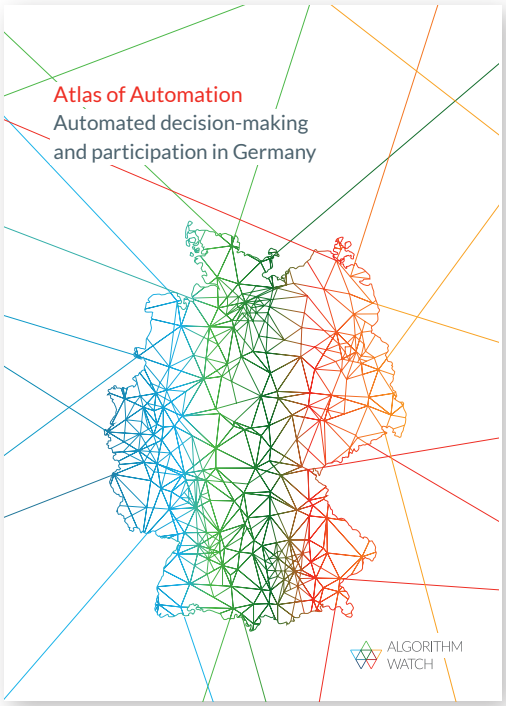
- In order to maximize the benefits of algorithmic decision-making processes for society, AlgorithmWatch assists in developing ideas and strategies to achieve intelligibility of these processes – with a mix of technologies, regulation, and suitable oversight institutions.

To that end, we developed a unique approach for scrutinizing ADM systems: the data donation method, where citizens provide their data to AlgorithmWatch to enable us to externally audit ADM systems.
In addition to crowd-sourced external audits of ADM systems, we further developed and used a variety of methods in our 2018 projects (see below):

- journalistic investigations of ADM systems.
- legal analysis of ADM use.
- ethical analysis of ADM systems.
- development of policy recommendations and regulatory proposals.
- campaigns and advocacy.

Our work

#project 1 – Atlas of Automation



problem statement

Automation has long been an integral part of our lives and has a significant effect on the way we live – often without being aware of it. In the past ten years we have experienced an increase in software-based automation like never before. Systems of automated decision-making (ADM) improve our quality of life and are an important engine of social progress. But they also determine to what extent social participation and inclusion is fostered or hampered. In order to prevent misuse of ADM systems, they should be made intelligible and effectively overseen.

At the same time, in today's automated decision-making (ADM), neural networks (that are often referred to as "Artificial Intelligence") are rarely employed. Instead we find more or less complex software applications that calculate, weigh and sort data according to sets of rules. We speak of decision-making systems because the respective software only selects from pre-set decision options. However, these decisions are determined by people who take part in the design and the programming, as well as the employment of ADM software.

objective

With the "Atlas of Automation", AlgorithmWatch aims to map the state-of-the-art of automated decision-making (ADM) systems used in Germany that have an impact on participation and inclusion. We want to show how everyone's daily life is already immersed in automated decisions. We do not necessarily perceive them as such – but they have consequences. The Atlas is a compilation of topics that are relevant for addressing the question of how these systems affect access to public goods and services as well as the exercise of civil liberties, especially for people who can be considered disadvantaged or marginalized. The Atlas refers not only to the potential for discrimination that results from the automation of processes and decisions, but also to opportunities and advantages that are made possible or conceivable through the use of automated decisions.

what happened in 2018

The "Atlas of Automation" was one of our first projects in 2018. During that project we were

interested in the way ADM limits (or enhances) access to public goods and services, and the ability to exercise individual rights. In this context, people can experience discrimination in many ways: based on age, sex, or their social or geographical origin. So, requiring a lot of research, conceptualizing work and re-assessment of this big challenge, the decision on the final glance of the Atlas' was laid in the last months of the year:

To cover the individual as well as collective and intersectional impacts, we decided to look into specific key areas – exemplary for other societal sectors – in more detail. The results are presented in form of a written compilation of insights into the selected topics which highlight how these systems affect access to public goods and services as well as the exercise of civil liberties, especially for people who can be considered disadvantaged or marginalized.

In the **"Labor"** chapter, we examine automated recruitment procedures, ADM in personnel management and the administration of unemployment. In the **"Health and Medicine"** chapter, we focus on diagnostic systems and health apps. When our attention comes to the Internet we include aspects such as upload-filters and platform regulation. The chapter **"Security & Surveillance"** highlights issues such as facial and speech recognition which are used on asylum seekers and in "predictive policing". In the **"Education, Stock Trading, Cities & Traffic"** chapter we delve into topics such as education and traffic. Further chapters give an overview of the legal regulation of ADM and of relevant actors.

The Atlas also provides an overview of the **actors** who have a decisive influence on the discourse around ADM: Authorities, research institutions, interest groups and non-governmental organizations. In addition, it summarizes existing **regulatory approaches** and consumer protection aspects of ADM systems with an impact on participation and social inclusion.

It was important for us that the Atlas not only refers to the potential for discrimination that results from the automation of processes and decisions, but also to opportunities and advantages that are made possible or conceivable through the use of automated decisions. However, in order to use these opportunities, conditions have to be met. An important component of the project was therefore to draw conclusions and identify policy **recommendations** that spur discussion and inspire decision-makers in public authorities, companies and civil society organizations into action.

summary of outcomes

- a definition of ADM and its technological and social components
- an analysis of their impact on society in relevant sectors
- a data base of the examined systems, stakeholders, regulations as well as ethical guidelines and code of conducts
- policy recommendations

The 'Atlas of Automation' is available online at **www.atlas-of-automation.net.** Another output is the freely accessible online database containing around 150 actors, regulations, software systems and technologies (available in German only). The database can be searched for products, type/ methods, actors and regulations. Search results can be filtered by topic and keyword.

The database now also includes Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conducts composed in our **AI Ethics Guidelines Global Inventory** project.

#project 2 – Automated Human Resources Management and Labor Rights

problem statement

Companies use ADM systems to identify employees to retain, to support, or to promote. Which key member of staff is likely to leave soon due to low job satisfaction and should be offered a raise? Who has high potential and should be put on a fast-track career path? Who doesn't pull their weight and should be warned in their next performance review that their performance puts their job at risk? ADM systems used in human resources typically collect data from employees that allows employers to quantify and assess their performance against a set of criteria. For some, these systems present a chance to improve both employer and employee satisfaction; for others, it is a step towards a dystopian society of surveillance and control.

objective

In this 2-year-project funded by the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung AlgorithmWatch explores the use of automated decision-making or decision–support (ADM) systems in human resources (HR) management and its implications on labor rights. We investigate the functionalities of the ADM systems in use. What types of ADM systems are on offer, what information is provided to employers and employees about their functionalities, about the extent to which staff members are informed that their data is collected to measure their performance, and what rights they have or should have to influence or object to the use of the system in question? We aim to find initial answers to these questions and to foster public debate.

what happened in 2018

During the first year of the project, we gathered information about the available systems and their use in companies to robustly evaluate their impact on employee autonomy and workers' rights. Together with partners from academia, we also conducted legal analyses to assess the implications of ADM systems from a labor rights as well as a data protection perspective.

summary of interim outcomes 2018 (to be published in 2019)

- a questionnaire on ADM systems to be used by developers, operators and labor representatives alike
- initial assessment of technologies and systems used
- legal analysis from a labor rights and data protection perspective

what's next?

In the second stage of the project, we will be publishing a study highlighting some of the ethical implications of ADM use in HR. In addition to the ethics study, we will also be building a HR *puzzle* – a simulation tool - to illustrate how such systems might work in practice.

The consolidated analysis will be published online in a project dossier and the simulation tool will allow us to identify potential gaps in regulation arising from both - their use on the one hand and their results and implications on the other. Lastly, we aim to identify ways in which works councils ("Betriebsräte") and the wider public should be informed about these systems.

#project 3 – OpenSchufa

problem statement

Germany's leading credit bureau, SCHUFA, has immense power over people's lives. A low SCHUFA score means landlords will refuse to rent you an apartment, banks will reject your credit card application, and Internet service providers will say 'no' to a new contract. But what if your SCHUFA score is low because there are mistakes in your credit history? Or if the score is calculated by a mathematical model that is biased? The scoring procedure of the private company SCHUFA is highly non-transparent and inaccessible to the public.

objective

OpenSchufa examined the scoring process of Germany's largest credit agency Schufa Holding AG based on a large-scale crowdsourcing campaign. The project aimed at shedding light on the comprehensive data collection and automated evaluation of the financial behavior of almost all adult residents in Germany: In our opinion, there is too little transparency and democratic control over SCHUFA's credit scoring practices, and our objective was to change that.

what happened in 2018 – summary of outcomes ...

In cooperation with the Open Knowledge Foundation Germany, we conducted a large-scale research project into the fairness and traceability of the credit scoring system of the largest German provider, SCHUFA Holding AG. The project was financed through crowdfunding and the data collection was made possible through crowdsourced data donation collection tool.

Comedian Nico Semsrott's OpenSchufa campaign video was viewed more than 200,000 times on Facebook and helped convince more than 1,800 people to donate money to the cause. Together, they donated more than 43,000 euros – without the prizes and rewards that are common in crowdfunding campaigns. All we could offer was the promise to find out as much as possible about SCHUFA's credit rating mechanisms.

We built a functioning data donation platform and were able to motivate more than 4,000 people to provide us with their SCHUFA information – very sensitive information that people usually keep to themselves. The campaign led to more than 100,000 data subject requests to credit scoring companies, more than of them 30,000 to SCHUFA.

Spiegel Online and Bayerischer Rundfunk reported on the initiative and analyzed the data sets of 2.000 donators independently of OpenSCHUFA in autumn 2018. The results substantiated our

suspicion that the SCHUFA's procedure to determine the creditworthiness of 67 million Germans is flawed and discriminatory, even though we are unable to come up with the kind of evidence that would hold up in court.

Beyond the data analysis, we were able to prove that SCHUFA violated the GDPR's data access provisions. We have been able to show that the supervisory authority in charge, the Hessian State Data Protection Commissioner, is overly lenient with SCHUFA – in our opinion he is either unwilling or unable to adequately control SCHUFA.

Overall, thanks to crowdfunding and crowdsourcing (data donation), we have succeeded in communicating the non-transparent conduct of the private company SCHUFA to the general public through the campaign itself and various media reports. As a result, the Federal Minister of Justice and Consumer Protection, Katharina Barley, has called for greater transparency in scoring and creditworthiness assessments.

… & what we didn't accomplish

We haven't managed to get out of our own "bubble". We were not able to get the attention of demographic groups that are probably most affected by poor SCHUFA scores. This meant that the data basis for analyzing the procedure is more biased (towards a young, male, urban population) than we would have liked it to be.

We were aware that with an online-based campaign, it would be difficult to reach certain audiences. Nevertheless, we had hoped to be able to address more of those individuals who are disproportionally impacted through cooperation with debt advice services, comparable aid organizations and local media. Unfortunately, this failed because on the one hand we didn't have enough resources to invest in it, on the other hand because of the low interest of local media.

In addition, SCHUFA changed their information practices, which had a substantial impact on the study results: As a rule, SCHUFA is legally obliged to provide a credit report free of charge to citizens. When the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force at the end of May 2018, SCHUFA reduced the information given in these reports, which now contain much less details on the collected and processed data than before. We believe that this new information practice is in violation of the GDPR. To determine and to change this, however, would take a lot more time and resources.

We were therefore unable to collect enough meaningful data to systematically understand the SCHUFA procedure as well as we would have liked.

It is true that we made SCHUFA sweat. However, we have not yet succeeded in building up sufficient pressure to make the SCHUFA process more comprehensible to the public. We simply did not have the resources to follow up on it forcefully – to push Minister Barley to explain what concrete steps she will take to bring about the change she had publicly demanded, to persuade the political parties to take a stand and demand change; to work with alliances to win over consumer protection organizations and other stakeholders to join the campaign.

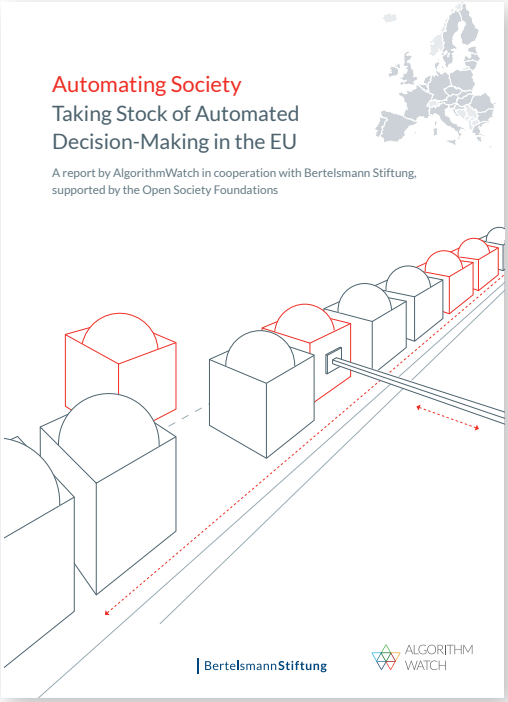
what's next?

After having dealt intensively with credit scoring and profiling for a year, we were able to draw up some specific conclusions and demands, which are outlined in detail on the campaign's website. Concretely, we demand that:

- The Hessian Data Protection Commissioner must (be able to) fulfill his supervisory duties.
- The GDPR and Federal Data Protection Act (BDSG) must be changed to effectively address risks of credit scoring.

We are currently exploring ways to follow up on these demands and further build upon the success of the project.

#project 4 – Automating Society in the EU



problem statement

Systems for automated decision-making or decision support (ADM) are on the rise in EU countries: Profiling job applicants based on their personal emails in Finland, allocating treatment for patients in the public health system in Italy, sorting the unemployed in Poland, plans for automatically identifying children vulnerable to neglect in Denmark, systems detecting welfare fraud in the Netherlands, credit scoring systems in many EU countries – the range of applications has broadened to almost all aspects of daily life.

This begs a lot of questions: Do we need new laws? Do we need new oversight institutions? Who do we fund to develop answers to the challenges ahead? Where should we invest? How do we enable citizens – patients, employees, consumers – to deal with this?

objectives

The project report 'Automating Society in the EU' is the first comprehensive study on the state of automated decision-making in Europe. It is an explorative study of automated decision-making both on the EU level and in selected Member States. When we set out to produce the report, we had four main goals in mind (in short here):

1. To show that algorithmically driven, automated decision-making (ADM) systems are already in use all over the EU: The discussion around the use of these systems, their benefits and risks, has been dominated by examples from the US. We wanted to make clear that similar and other ADM systems are in use in the EU as well, in order to better inform the discussion about how to govern their use.

2. To give an overview of the state of the political discussion not just on the EU level, but also in the member countries.

3. To serve as the nucleus for a network of researchers focusing on the impact of automated decision-making on individuals and society.

4. To distil recommendations from the results of our findings: for policy makers from the EU parliament and Member States' legislators, the EU Commission, national governments, researchers, civil society organizations (advocacy organizations, foundations, labor unions etc.), and the private sector (companies and business associations).

what happened in 2018 – successes ...

This is the first time a comprehensive study has been done on the state of automated decision-making in Europe: We succeeded in representing all geographical/cultural areas: southern (Spain, Italy), northern (Denmark, Finland, Sweden), eastern (Poland, Slovenia), and western/central (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, the UK and Europe.

Moreover, the project laid the groundwork for the strategic development of a European policy and advocacy agenda for better governance of ADM systems.

... & surprises

We found examples of ADM (all kinds: discussions, regulatory approaches, divers oversight mechanisms, cases etc.) in almost all countries covered than we had expected: One of the results of the research for the Automating Society report, was the realization that there are stories about the use of ADM systems that merit follow-up. We had anticipated this outcome, but now have evidence (60 cases of uses of ADM systems in 12 countries) to support our initial hunches.

summary of outcomes

- a network of researchers and journalists from various countries and with interdisciplinary backgrounds
- a comprehensive analysis of the status quo of ADM systems in 12 EU countries answering the following questions
  - / How is society discussing automated decision-making?
  - / What regulatory proposals exist?
  - / What oversight institutions and mechanisms are in place?
  - / What ADM systems are already in use?
- presentation of the report at the European Parliament in Brussels at the invitation of MEPs Liisa Jaakonsaari (S&D), Julia Reda (Greens/EFA) and Michał Boni (EPP) and discussion with experts
  - / Watch the presentation and discussion of the report in European Parliament on 29 January 2019 here.
- presentation and discussion of the report at the Privacy Camp and at the CPDP Conference in Brussels early 2019

what's next?

There is a shared sentiment that many organizations, legislators, academics and companies are still trying to determine how to address the challenges posed by increased autonomy of systems and increased use of such systems, respectively. Although there is a growing corpus of guidelines and policy proposals, they remain vague.

With research like the Automating Society report, OpenSCHUFA and other projects AlgorithmWatch has gathered evidence that justifies the development of more concrete governance proposals, concerning both legislation and oversight as well as best practices in companies or the public sector. One example is our demand to mandate the public sector to provide transparency about the use of ADM systems (where, how, what for, bought from whom?) that we came up with as a result of the research for the report and we are looking forward to continue advocating for.

We also aim to consolidate and strengthen the European Algorithmic Accountability Reporting Network , which connects European journalists and experts interested in the field and we will assist in developing their skills and expertise on ADM. Through this network, we hope to improve reporting on these issues and strengthen the journalistic watchdog function.

#stories

SyRI

At the beginning of July, we reported on the SyRI system, which is used for detecting potential welfare scams in the Netherlands. The government kept quiet about how this system works. Civil rights activists were taking the matter to court and AlgorithmWatch had a closer look...

Read the full story here: https://algorithmwatch.org/en/high-risk-citizens/

Facebook regulation

In an article on Facebook's so-called "Blueprint for Governance and Enforcement," we analyzed the company's proposals to use Artificial Intelligence and new governance mechanisms to better ensure that fewer unwanted contributions appear on the platform while at the same time preserving the right to freedom of information.

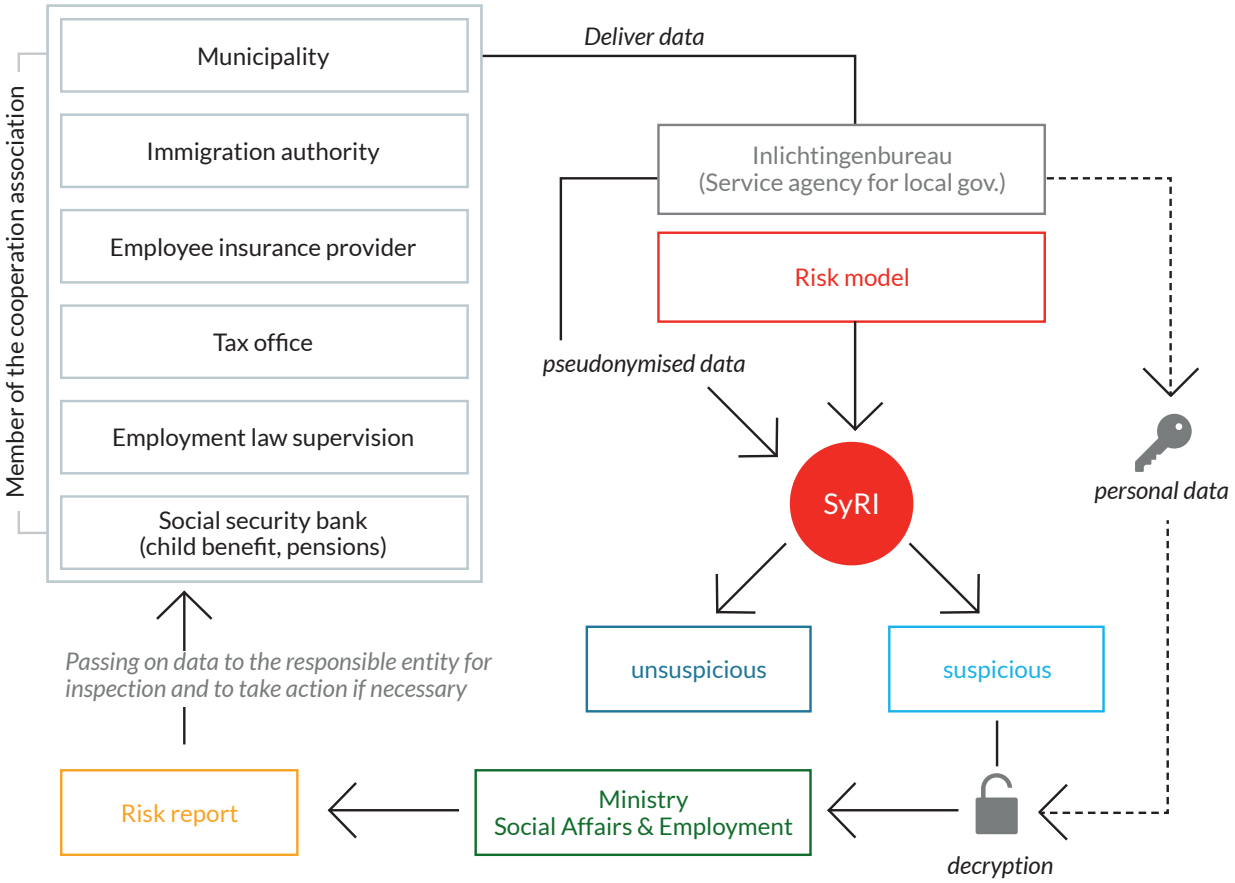
Read the full story here: https://algorithmwatch.org/en/why-facebooks-independent-governance-and-oversight-board-isnot-gonna-fly-but-some-of-his-other-ideas-are-at-least-worth-discussing/

Ruling on credit scoring in Finland

As a result of our research on the report "Automating Society - Taking Stock of Automated Decision Making in the EU", we have published a short report on the verdict of a Finnish "tribunal" which, after three years of judicial investigation, had ruled that a man had been subjected to a discriminatory scoring procedure. Little had been reported about the case outside Finland.

Read the full story here: https://algorithmwatch.org/en/finnish-credit-score-ruling-raises-questions-about-discriminationand-how-to-avoid-it/

"How does SyRI work?"



Collaboration, Networking & Outreach

In its coalition and network-building approach, AlgorithmWatch engages with a multitude of stakeholders and continued building a great network during the last year. We worked with fantastic partners and experts.

partnerships and collaborations

The second data donation project of AlgorithmWatch – OpenSCHUFA (see projects) – took place in cooperation with the **Open Knowledge Foundation Germany.** Our media partner for this project was Spiegel Online. We presented the campaign – among others – during a session at re:publica 2018.

In cooperation with the organization **Journalismfund.eu** we organized the Algorithmic Accountability Reporting track at the European Investigative Journalism Conference / DataHarvest. This cooperation led to the submission of a proposal to the Open society Foundations (OSF) together with Journalismfund.eu, which was then successful (see above, "Automating Society" project). This also serves the further networking of European journalists on the topic of automated decision-making.

Another exciting collaboration was the support for the program committee of the Workshop Algorithms & Society, organized by the **Law, Science, Technology & Society Research Group** *and* **Privacy Salon,** a non-profit organization founded in 2014 in Brussels. Privacy Salon co-organizes the annual Computers, Privacy and Data Protection (CPDP) conference (where we also presented our Automating Society report), as well as numerous public side events focusing on legal and societal issues posed by current and future technologies.

EU High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence (AI HLG)

The **European Commission** appointed 52 representatives from civil society, science and industry – 30 men and 22 women – to an Artificial Intelligence (AI) expert group. AlgorithmWatch's co-founder Lorena Jaume-Palasí was selected to represent AW in an open selection process with 500 applications and was member of the Group until fall of 2018.

The **High Level Expert Group (AI HLG)** advises the Commission on ethical, legal and social issues and makes recommendations for the policy development process and the legislative evaluation process. The expert group develops ethical guidelines on the topics of fairness, safety, transparency, future of work and democracy. In addition, the group directs the European Alliance for Artificial Intelligence and stimulates dialogue with other institutions and initiatives interested in AI.

networking

We set up a **mailing list** to exchange information about the nascent and growing field of **Algorithmic Accountability Reporting.** For a detailed description of what we mean by this, please read Nicholas Diakopoulos' article The Algorithms Beat. This list is meant as a discussion forum for journalists and academic researchers and is maintained by AlgorithmWatch's Matthias Spielkamp and Wiebke Loosen of Hans Bredow Institute.

Learn more about how to use the list and subscribe at https://mailman.rrz.uni-hamburg.de/mailman/listinfo/aareporting.wiso

In November 2018 we conducted our first **AW Meetup on Algorithmic Accountability Reporting;** opening this hopefully continuing series with a presentation by Ray Serrato on *How YouTube's algorithm amplified the right during Chemnitz.*

media and public relations

From the outset, AlgorithmWatch has attracted a high level of attention, as our media review shows. Our outreach strategy rests on following pillars:

- Our **website:** It is the core outlet for all our products: journalistic stories, research reports, project outcomes and other news. We recently re-launched it in order to make our diverse content better accessible to users. Projects with complex outputs have their own websites, like the Automating Society Report or the Atlas of Automation with its database.

- **Social media:**
  - / AlgorithmWatch's Twitter followers have more than tripled since November 2017 to more than 7000 by the end of December 2018.
  - / We are also active on Facebook with almost 3500 followers by end of 2018.
  - / In 2019 and beyond we will strive to widen AlgorithmWatch's reach to non-expert audiences.

- Our **newsletter:** It is bi-lingual and had more than 1,300 subscribers by the end of the year. At the moment, we are working on promoting the newsletter in order to increase subscriptions.

- Our **network** and professional contacts

- Talks and panel **participations**

events and participations

In 2018, AlgorithmWatch, represented especially by its founding members, but also increasingly by the other team members in their specific areas of expertise, has been invited to events at national, European and international level. These included various formats, such as invitations to hearings, discussion groups and panel discussions in the German Bundestag, in EU institutions and lectures and workshops at academic institutions and with civil society initiatives. AlgorithmWatch was also asked to give lectures and hold workshops at international conferences and symposia.

Governance

organizational profile

AlgorithmWatch is a charitable non-profit limited liability company under German law. The Berlin tax authorities conferred the status of charitable non-profit in 2017 ("Gemeinnützigkeit").
In 2018 AlgorithmWatch had two governance structures: The executive management and the shareholders meeting.

executive management

The organization is led by executive director Matthias Spielkamp.

shareholders meeting

The company's shareholders are the two co-founders Lorenz Matzat and Matthias Spielkamp with equal partnership shares. The shareholders meeting signs off on the annual financial report, has the right to appoint and dismiss the executive director, commands the company's capital and needs to be convened to decide about exceptional affairs.

Our team in 2018:

/ **Andreas Eisenhauer**
finance and accounting
/ **Dorothea Ritter**
executive assistant (January – February 2018)
/ **Gero Nagel**
researcher (February 2018)
/ **Ilja Braun**
reporter (February – April 2018)
/ **Kristina Penner**
executive assistant (March – September 2018)
executive advisor (from October 2018)
/ **Lorena Jaume-Palasí**
co-founder, project lead (until October 2018)
/ **Lorenz Matzat**
co-Founder, project lead
/ **Louisa Well**
guest researcher (June – September 2018)
/ **Maike Majewski**
office assistant (from November 2018)
/ **Marc Thuemmler**
communication and outreach / public relations
/ **Matthias Spielkamp**
co-founder, executive director, project lead
/ **Sebastian Gießler**
researcher (from October 2018)
/ **Sven Koenig**
software developer
/ **Veronika Thiel**
senior researcher (from November 2018)

Memberships and affiliated organizations

- There is no membership in any other organization.
- We have no legal links with any organizations and do not hold any shares in other organizations.
- AlgorithmWatch is member of the non-formal network Forum Media and Development (FOME), consisting of institutions and individuals active in the field of media development cooperation.

Looking ahead

In 2019 we will establish a supervisory board. The supervisory board will have two main duties: to exonerate the executive management and to sign off on the annual work plan.

Policies

We are continually reviewing and establishing new policies that help navigate our work internally to ensure they truly reflect the work we are doing.

We strive to be transparent, responsive to stakeholders and focused on delivering impact. AlgorithmWatch seeks to meet best-practice standards on public accountability and transparency, including in good governance, ethical fundraising, responsible advocacy and multi-stakeholder participation.

Organizational ethics / transparency

We fulfill the requirements of the German initiative for a Transparent Civil Society ("Initiative Transparente Zivilgesellschaft").

- Please find all information according to our commitment on our website here: https://algorithmwatch.org/en/transparency/
- More information about the initiative can be found here: https://www.transparency.de/mitmachen/initiative-transparente-zivilgesellschaft/ (in German only)

Data protection

We ensured GDPR compliance in a process lasting several months in 2018, supported by outside counsel, including all team members.

Please find all information on our privacy policy here:
https://algorithmwatch.org/en/privacy/

Finances

AW AlgorithmWatch gGmbH, Berlin Income Statement 01.01. – 31.12.2018

Revenues, Grants	419.448,72 €
Revenues, Donations	47.976,68 €
Revenues, other	1.627,37 €
Personnel expenses	
Wages and salaries	237.187,39 €
Social security, post-employment and other employee benefit costs	47.105,77 €
Depreciation of intangible and tangible fixed assets	9.229,17 €
Other operating expenses	170.600,44 €
Annual net income before taxes	4.930,00 €

Financial compliance

Our organization's accounts report 2018 was audited by Martina Schmidt:

Certified Public Accountant, Dipl.-Kffr. (FH)
Martina Schmidt
Barbarossa Street 39
10779 Berlin

The auditor's statement can be downloaded from our website at https://algorithmwatch.org/en/transparency/

contact

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