

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: INVALUABLE HELP OR A GREAT THREAT?**

***Oleksandr Rudniev***

*Educational and Scientific Institute of Information Technologies,  
State University of Information and Communication Technologies*

Through the last years, the phrase "artificial intelligence", which in the recent past could have been found only in science fiction novels and movies, has smoothly still rapidly become a completely ordinary occurrence in the surrounding information field and got into a majority of spheres, becoming a very handy and hardly replaceable tool of many uses. In fact, the fast advancement and intrusion of artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies into so many aspects of our life, industry, markets, personal life exponentially causes widespread transformations in such a large amount of conventional, well-established and deeply-rooted things that it calls forth amazement and dread at the same time. The improvements AI provides are vast almost everywhere it gets implemented – in e-commerce and marketing it's a powerful tool for analyzing of customers' behavior and preferences, highly used in recommendation engines and much more; in education it greatly spreads the versatility of adaptive learning platforms, adjusting educational content to the student's personal strong and weak sides. AI becomes a part of the lifestyle, integrating into various lifestyle apps, from Siri, Alexa, schedulers and health trackers to smart home devices, widely used in navigation systems implementing advanced algorithms working with real-time traffic data, weather conditions etc. AI and ML are heavily used in autonomous vehicles, computer vision, face recognition technologies,

natural language processing, robotics, chatbots, generative AI and even in Finance, Human Resources, Agriculture and Astronomy. Indeed, the 2024 Index annual report of the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence states it arrives at an important moment when AI's influence on society has never been more pronounced (The AI Index Report, 2024). Amongst other collected and displayed data, the report highlights top takeaways, some of which claim that AI already beats humans on some tasks (like reading comprehension, image, handwriting and speech recognition, language understanding and predictive reasoning), scientific progress accelerates even further thanks to artificial intelligence, investing in generative AI is skyrocketing, a bunch of other evidence of exponential growth and numerous pros of the aspiring technology, yet the bell of disturbance also rings: one of the takeaways is about people around the globe growing more cognizant of AI's potential impact, and get more nervous about it. In point of fact, thinking about possible threats that the creation and wide spread of AI may bring to us, the first things that come to mind – thankfully to the Sci-Fi writers and filmmakers of the past and ongoing century – that the technology can become too smart and self-conscious making it hard to control, breaking out of its boundaries and rising up against humanity in a deadly war for existence. Surprisingly and unfunny enough, people really are concerned and worried of the possible threat from artificial intelligence technologies existentially-wise. According to the “TIME” article, a report commissioned by the U.S. government published in March 2024 says that they must move “quickly and decisively” to avert substantial national security risks stemming from artificial intelligence (AI) which could, in the worst case, cause an “extinction-level threat to the human species,” “Current frontier AI development poses urgent and growing risks to national security,” the report continues, “The rise of advanced AI and AGI (artificial general intelligence) has the potential to destabilize global security in ways reminiscent of the introduction of nuclear weapons” (Perrigo, 2024). Moreover, a year before this, a group of industry leaders warned that the artificial intelligence technology they were building might one day pose an existential threat to humanity. The statement of the Center for AI Safety reads as follows: “Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI

should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war” (Statement on AI Risk, 2023). Though there exist more calming views on this matter, in its August 2024 press release, the University of BATH says that AI poses no existential threat to humanity – new study finds. It is also stated that large language models like ChatGPT cannot learn independently or acquire new skills, meaning LLMs have a superficial ability to follow instructions and excel at proficiency in language, however, they have no potential to master new skills without explicit instruction (AI poses no existential threat to humanity – new study finds, 2024). Alongside existential risk from AI, referring to the idea that substantial progress in artificial general intelligence (AGI) could lead to an irreversible global catastrophe or entire extinction of humanity, there already exist more apprehensible risks and downsides of what the technology brings. According to Mike Thomas, a former Built In senior features writer, these occurrences include the lack of AI transparency and explainability, job losses due to AI automation, social manipulation and surveillance through AI technologies and algorithms, lack of data privacy using AI tools, biases due to AI, socioeconomic inequality as a result of AI, weakening ethics and goodwill because of AI, autonomous weapons powered by AI (which can be a good side, btw, depending on scenario of use), financial crises brought about by AI algorithms, loss of human influence, uncontrollable self-aware AI, increased criminal activity with the use of artificial intelligence technology, broader economic and political instability (Thomas, 2024). Speaking of job losses, the United Nations and International Labor Organization raised the problem in their recent report, with the speaking title “Mind the AI Divide: Shaping a Global Perspective on the Future of Work,” proving the urgent topicality of the subject (Mind the AI Divide, 2024). That said, we come to the conclusion that despite being a really world-changing and life improving technology, the artificial intelligence brings many threats as it evolves and incorporates into our life, so must be developed with caution, thoroughly studied and taught to developers; constant risk and threat assessment is necessary in order to mitigate unwanted outcomes, including establishing of regulatory mechanisms from regulatory bodies whole over the world, as it really can influence drastically the entire

humanity.

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