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COMITATO PROMOTORE

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Milan and the Future of Global Artificial Intelligence Governance

Why Milan Should Be Considered to Host a United Nations Hub for the Ethical Governance of AI



AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ITALY

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Preface

> Artificial intelligence has rapidly become one of the principal drivers of transformation in the global economy, international security, and the competitiveness of democratic systems. Its widespread adoption is reshaping not only markets and production models, but also geopolitical balances, international relations, and the relationship between technological innovation and the public interest. In this context, AI governance can no longer be addressed solely through national initiatives or sector-specific regulation. Instead, it requires a multilateral framework capable of reconciling innovation, accountability, security, and international cooperation.

In recent years, the United Nations system has taken significant steps in this direction. The establishment of the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, the publication of the report Governing AI for Humanity, the launch of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, and the creation of an Independent International Scientific Panel all testify to the emergence of a new multilateral agenda in which the governance of artificial intelligence is progressively acquiring a permanent institutional dimension.

The central question, therefore, is no longer whether the international community will require a stable institutional framework for governing artificial intelligence, but rather what form that framework should take, what functions it should perform, and where it should be located. It is within this context that Italy now has a strategic opportunity: to propose Milan as the host city for a future United Nations platform or institution dedicated to the ethical governance of artificial intelligence.

This proposal is not driven by territorial competition or symbolic ambition. Rather, it is based on the conviction that Milan possesses a unique combination of assets rarely found elsewhere in Europe: one of the continent's largest concentrations of innovative companies, universities, and research centers; an industrial ecosystem deeply integrated into international markets; a longstanding transatlantic orientation; and a rich ethical and cultural heritage that can strengthen the legitimacy of a human-centered approach to AI governance.

The objective of this policy paper is to transform this vision into a credible institutional proposal. The paper examines the evolution of the international debate on AI governance, traces the path initiated by the United Nations, and identifies the reasons why Milan is well positioned to host a future multilateral institution dedicated to artificial intelligence. At the same time, it proposes an operational roadmap for Italian institutions, outlining how this candidacy can be advanced through a methodical approach, diplomatic credibility, and a strategic vision aligned with the ongoing multilateral process.

The ambition of this paper extends beyond advocating for the role of a single city. If the global governance of artificial intelligence represents one of the defining institutional challenges of the twenty-first century, Italy has the opportunity to play a constructive leadership role by offering not only ideas and expertise, but also a place where international cooperation can find a stable, authoritative, and enduring home in the service of the global common good.

The Managing Director *Simone Crolla*

POLICY PAPER

Executive Summary

> Artificial intelligence governance is entering a new phase of its evolution. After years of predominantly regulatory debate, the international community is gradually moving toward the establishment of a permanent institutional infrastructure capable of supporting the development of AI through multilateral cooperation, independent scientific assessment, and coordination among governments, the private sector, and the research community.

Over the past two years, the United Nations has taken significant steps in this direction. Through its report Governing AI for Humanity, the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence outlined the key building blocks of a future global AI governance architecture, proposing the creation of permanent bodies dedicated to scientific advice, political dialogue, the development of international standards, capacity building, and institutional coordination. At the same time, the launch of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance and the establishment of the Independent International Scientific Panel confirm that the institutionalization of AI governance is already underway.

Against this backdrop, this policy paper argues that Italy has a unique opportunity to assume a leadership role by proposing Milan as the host city for a future United Nations platform or institution dedicated to the ethical governance of artificial intelligence. The proposal does not presume the imminent establishment of a new specialized UN agency, nor does it seek to anticipate decisions that rightly belong to the international community. Rather, it aligns with the process already initiated within the United Nations by offering Milan as a potential home for the permanent functions that are progressively emerging through the multilateral process.

Milan's candidacy rests on a combination of assets that is difficult to replicate elsewhere in Europe: an internationally significant economic and scientific ecosystem; a high concentration of universities, research centers, and technology companies; a strong transatlantic orientation; an ethical and cultural heritage capable of integrating technological innovation with the protection of fundamental rights and social responsibility; and an institutional environment well suited to hosting a future United Nations presence.

This paper demonstrates that the demand for a more stable international governance framework is no longer a theoretical proposition but an increasingly recognized necessity among the world's leading multilateral organizations. The objective extends beyond improving regulatory coordination. It is to establish institutions capable of providing independent assessments of systemic AI risks, fostering convergence around international standards, supporting countries with more limited technological capacities, and strengthening public trust in the development and deployment of artificial intelligence.

In light of these developments, the paper proposes a roadmap built around four operational priorities: establishing a national institutional coalition to support Milan's candidacy; preparing an internationally oriented technical dossier defining the prospective mandate of the future institution and Milan's added value as its host; initiating diplomatic engagement with the United Nations and key international partners; and developing a strategic communication and public diplomacy campaign that presents

Milan not as a national bid, but as Italy's contribution to strengthening the global governance of artificial intelligence.

The paper is grounded in a straightforward premise: if the international community is in the process of building the institutional architecture for AI governance, Italy now has the opportunity to contribute not only to shaping the rules, but also to creating the institutions that will be responsible for implementing them. From this perspective, Milan can position itself as a platform serving international cooperation—one that combines scientific excellence, diplomatic credibility, and a steadfast commitment to placing people at the center of the technologies that will define the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER 01

The Context: A Strategic Opportunity at the Intersection of Global Governance and Transatlantic Relations

> The year 2026 marks a particularly significant moment in relations between Italy and the United States. The celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence and the 165th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries coincide with a period of profound transformation in the international order, during which the transatlantic partnership is being called upon to address a new generation of strategic challenges. Among these, none is likely to have a more enduring impact than artificial intelligence.

AI is no longer simply an emerging technology or a high-growth market. It has become a foundational technology that is reshaping economic competitiveness, national security, industrial productivity, democratic resilience, and the geopolitical balance of the twenty-first century. The ability of states to develop, deploy, and govern artificial intelligence systems will increasingly determine their economic and political influence, as well as their capacity to preserve strategic autonomy.

For this reason, the debate surrounding artificial intelligence has gradually moved beyond its purely technological or regulatory dimensions to become a central issue of international policy. The key question is no longer merely how to regulate individual AI applications, but how to build a governance framework capable of reconciling innovation, security, the protection of fundamental rights, and multilateral cooperation in an environment characterized by intensifying technological competition and growing regulatory fragmentation.

It is within this context that the United Nations has launched its ongoing governance initiative. Through the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, the report Governing AI for Humanity, the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, and the newly established Independent International Scientific Panel, the UN system has begun to outline a possible international architecture designed to strengthen coordination among governments, the scientific community, the private sector, and multilateral organizations. At the same time, the European Union, the G7, and numerous national governments are developing regulatory frameworks and cooperative initiatives that reflect an increasingly broad consensus on the need to reinforce the global governance of artificial intelligence.

For Italy, this evolution represents a strategic window of opportunity. The country can contribute not only to the debate over international rules but also to the creation of the institutions that will be responsible for implementing them. From this perspective, Milan's candidacy carries a significance that extends well beyond the local or regional level. It represents a foreign policy and multilateral diplomacy initiative consistent with Italy's longstanding commitment to the United Nations system and with the country's potential to serve as a natural bridge between Europe, the United States, and the Mediterranean region.

Accordingly, the proposal advanced in this policy paper is not simply to promote Milan as the host city for a future international institution. Its ambition is broader: to position Italy among the countries actively contributing to the design of the future architecture of global AI governance. As the international community seeks to build institutions capable of guiding one of the most transformative technological revolutions of modern history, Italy possesses the expertise, diplomatic credibility, and institutional capital needed to make a meaningful contribution to this global endeavor.

CHAPTER 02

A World Evolving Faster Than Its Institutions

> Artificial intelligence is reshaping the global economy at an unprecedented pace. The rapid diffusion of generative AI models, accelerating investment in computing infrastructure, the growing integration of AI into production processes and decision-making, and intensifying international competition for control over strategic technologies are profoundly transforming the geopolitical and economic environment in which governments, businesses, and international organizations operate.

This acceleration has created an increasingly evident gap between the speed of technological innovation and the ability of institutions to develop appropriate governance mechanisms. While the capabilities of AI systems evolve in cycles measured in months, the development of shared rules, international standards, and cooperative frameworks requires considerably more time. The result is a widening governance gap: a situation in which technological progress outpaces the capacity of institutions to guide and oversee its development.

The implications of this gap extend far beyond the regulatory sphere. Artificial intelligence now affects critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, healthcare systems, scientific research, financial markets, national defense, industrial production, and the information ecosystem. At the same time, the emergence of increasingly powerful AI models raises unprecedented questions concerning safety, transparency, accountability, the protection of fundamental rights, energy consumption, and the concentration of technological power. None of these challenges can be effectively addressed through national policies alone.

The intensifying technological competition between the United States and China further complicates the picture. Artificial intelligence has become one of the principal arenas of global strategic competition, alongside semiconductors, digital infrastructure, data access, and advanced computing capabilities. In this environment, the European Union faces the delicate task of strengthening its strategic autonomy while preserving open markets, international cooperation, and the democratic values that underpin its political and economic model.

The private sector is likewise experiencing the consequences of this transformation. Leading technology companies now operate on a truly global scale, while the most advanced AI models are developed and deployed within ecosystems that transcend national borders. At the same time, demand is growing for more predictable regulatory frameworks, interoperable standards, and shared procedures for AI risk assessment—essential conditions for fostering investment, enabling innovation, and ensuring that technological progress remains responsible and trustworthy.

For these reasons, the international debate is gradually shifting from the regulation of individual AI applications toward the construction of a stable system of global AI governance. The objective is neither to slow innovation nor to create additional layers of international bureaucracy. Rather, it is to establish institutions capable of promoting cooperation, generating independent scientific

knowledge, reducing regulatory fragmentation, and strengthening mutual trust among governments, businesses, and citizens.

It is precisely this shift in perspective that makes international AI governance a strategic priority. The more artificial intelligence becomes a truly global technology, the less realistic it is to assume that its development can be effectively governed through national measures or fragmented initiatives alone. The challenge is no longer simply to define new rules, but to build the international institutions capable of implementing them, coordinating their application, and ensuring that they evolve in step with technological progress over time.

CHAPTER 03

The Global Debate Is Taking Shape

> In recent years, the international debate on artificial intelligence has undergone a profound transformation. While the initial phase was characterized by the development of ethical principles, voluntary guidelines, and national regulatory initiatives, the international community is now progressively shifting its attention toward a more ambitious objective: building a stable governance architecture capable of supporting the development of artificial intelligence on a global scale.

This evolution reflects an increasingly widespread recognition that AI is inherently a transnational technology. It is developed by global scientific and industrial ecosystems, deployed through digital infrastructures that transcend national borders, and destined to generate economic, social, and geopolitical effects that no country can address in isolation. Consequently, the governance of artificial intelligence cannot be reduced to a patchwork of national regulations but requires permanent mechanisms for international cooperation.

Within this process, the United Nations has assumed an increasingly central role. The establishment of the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence in 2023 marked the first concerted effort to develop a genuinely multilateral vision for the future of AI governance, bringing together experts from governments, the scientific community, the private sector, and civil society.

3.1 The High-Level Advisory Body's Recommendations: Designing a Future Global Architecture

The report *Governing AI for Humanity*, published in September 2024, represents the first systematic effort to outline a genuine multilateral architecture for the governance of artificial intelligence. Its significance lies not only in its assessment of the opportunities and risks associated with AI, but above all in its identification of permanent institutions and mechanisms designed to make international cooperation more stable, inclusive, and effective.

The report's most significant innovation is its departure from a purely regulatory conception of governance. The United Nations recognizes that the complexity of artificial intelligence requires more than national legislation or voluntary agreements among market participants. It calls instead for permanent institutional infrastructures capable of generating independent scientific knowledge, coordinating public policy, fostering convergence around international standards, and ensuring meaningful participation by countries with more limited technological capabilities.

Taken together, the recommendations of the High-Level Advisory Body outline the pillars of this emerging governance architecture. The report proposes the establishment of an International Scientific Panel on AI to provide independent scientific assessments; a Global Policy Dialogue as a permanent forum for governments, international organizations, industry, the scientific community, and civil society; an AI Standards Exchange to promote convergence among technical and regulatory standards; a Global AI Capacity Development Network and a Global AI Fund to strengthen institutional capacities in developing countries; a Global AI Data Framework aimed at promoting transparency,

interoperability, and accountability in data governance; and, finally, a United Nations AI Office responsible for coordinating and supporting the broader international AI governance ecosystem.

Viewed as a whole, these proposals describe a multi-layered system in which scientific expertise, diplomatic coordination, standards development, capacity building, and operational support are integrated into a permanent framework for international cooperation. While the report does not currently recommend establishing a new specialized United Nations agency, it clearly identifies the core functions that a future international infrastructure for AI governance will need to perform.

It is precisely this evolution that lends credibility to the proposal advanced in this policy paper. Milan's candidacy is neither an independent initiative nor an exercise in place branding. Rather, it is situated within a process already underway at the United Nations, offering a potential location for the permanent functions that the multilateral system is progressively defining.

3.2 From Policy Dialogue to Institution Building

The work of the High-Level Advisory Body has not remained an isolated initiative. The United Nations has since launched the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, establishing a permanent consultation process among governments and international stakeholders, while the creation of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI further strengthens the scientific and technical foundations of the emerging multilateral governance framework.

At the same time, the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence continues to serve as the principal global reference point for human rights, inclusion, transparency, and accountability. Meanwhile, the G7, the OECD, and numerous national governments are increasingly converging around coordinated approaches to AI safety, risk assessment, and the development of international standards.

None of these developments, in itself, signals the imminent creation of a new United Nations agency. They do, however, point to an increasingly evident trend: the governance of artificial intelligence is evolving from a collection of fragmented initiatives into an increasingly structured system of international cooperation.

It is within this broader trajectory that the proposal advanced in this paper acquires its significance. If the multilateral system is engaged in building a new institutional architecture for AI governance, it is both legitimate and timely to consider not only the functions that this architecture will perform, but also the locations best suited to host it. From this perspective, Milan's candidacy should be understood as a contribution to the ongoing institutionalization of global AI governance—not as an attempt to pre-empt or predetermine its eventual outcome.

CHAPTER 04

The Potential Mandate of a United Nations Platform or Institution for Ethical AI Governance

> The evolution of the international debate demonstrates that the central challenge is no longer confined to defining new rules for artificial intelligence. Increasingly, the task is to build institutions capable of supporting their implementation, fostering international cooperation, and providing continuity to a governance process that will necessarily evolve over the coming decades.

From this perspective, it is essential to adopt an approach that remains fully consistent with the institutional framework of the United Nations. At present, there is no decision to establish a new specialized UN agency dedicated to artificial intelligence, nor would it be appropriate to present the Italian proposal as though such a decision had already been made. A credible candidacy should instead be positioned as part of the ongoing multilateral process, proposing Milan as a potential host for a future United Nations platform, office, or institution, should the international community determine that a permanent structure is required.

The recommendations of the High-Level Advisory Body nevertheless point clearly in this direction. Although they do not advocate the creation of a new agency in the traditional sense, they identify a set of functions that will be difficult to perform effectively without a stable institutional capacity endowed with international legitimacy and authority. It is precisely the emergence of these functions that makes it both timely and appropriate to consider where a future multilateral infrastructure for AI governance might be located.

Such an institution should first and foremost serve as the leading international reference point for the independent assessment of frontier AI systems and the systemic risks associated with their development. This would include evaluating implications for cybersecurity, biosecurity, the resilience of critical infrastructure, disinformation, economic security, and the dual-use or military applications of advanced AI technologies. A function of this nature would strengthen mutual trust among states while providing policymakers with a shared scientific foundation on which to build coordinated public policies.

Alongside risk assessment, a future platform should facilitate the gradual convergence of international standards. The current regulatory landscape is increasingly fragmented across national and regional jurisdictions, creating legal uncertainty, barriers to investment, and rising compliance costs. A multilateral institution could promote dialogue among regulatory authorities, standards-setting organizations, and the private sector, encouraging interoperability across regulatory approaches while fully respecting national sovereignty.

A third core function would be to provide scientific and technical support to international organizations and national governments. The pace of technological change makes it increasingly difficult for public institutions to maintain independent, up-to-date expertise. A permanent institution

could provide strategic foresight, early-warning capabilities, risk scenarios, and impact assessments, enabling policymakers to make more timely, evidence-based decisions.

Equally important would be the promotion of international cooperation and capacity building. AI governance cannot truly be global if a significant portion of the international community remains excluded from shaping the rules or lacks the institutional capacity to implement them. A United Nations platform should therefore support capacity development in developing countries, facilitate knowledge transfer, promote education and training initiatives, and enable broader and more equitable participation in multilateral decision-making processes.

Finally, a future international institution could serve as a permanent coordinating hub linking the many actors already engaged in AI governance. The initiatives undertaken by the United Nations, UNESCO, the OECD, the G7, the European Union, and leading international standards organizations collectively represent an extraordinary reservoir of expertise and experience. Their effectiveness, however, will increasingly depend on their ability to operate in a coordinated manner, avoiding duplication while fostering a genuinely interoperable global governance ecosystem.

From this perspective, the value of a future United Nations platform would not lie in creating additional layers of international regulation, but rather in making existing governance efforts more coherent and effective. Its purpose would be to provide a permanent institutional venue where scientific knowledge, policy dialogue, technical cooperation, and standards development could converge within a shared vision of global AI governance.

It is on this foundation that Milan's candidacy acquires its full strategic rationale. The city would not be proposed merely as the location of a traditional administrative office, but as the home of a knowledge-intensive international institution capable of connecting scientific research, industrial innovation, multilateral diplomacy, and ethical reflection. In doing so, Milan would aspire to become one of the places where the international community gradually builds the institutions that will shape the governance of artificial intelligence throughout the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER 05

Why Milan: A Candidacy Aligned with the Future of Global AI Governance

> The proposal to nominate Milan as the host city for a future United Nations platform or institution dedicated to the governance of artificial intelligence is not driven by a place-promotion agenda. Rather, it stems from a broader consideration: if the international community is to establish permanent institutions capable of supporting the development of AI, those institutions should be located within ecosystems that combine scientific research, industrial innovation, international cooperation, and institutional credibility.

In this respect, Milan offers a combination of attributes that few other international locations can match. Its candidacy is not based on a single distinguishing feature, but on the convergence of economic, scientific, geopolitical, and cultural strengths that make it particularly well suited to host an institution operating at the intersection of technology, diplomacy, and the public interest.

5.1 A European Economic Powerhouse

Milan is Italy's leading economic center and one of Europe's foremost industrial and financial hubs. Its concentration of multinational corporations, foreign investment, advanced business services, and high-technology industries provides an ideal environment for international organizations that require continuous engagement with the private sector and the broader innovation ecosystem.

A future United Nations platform for AI governance would not serve a purely diplomatic function. It would need to interact daily with technology companies, investors, startups, research institutions, and civil society organizations. Milan already possesses both this ecosystem and the infrastructure necessary to support such an institution over the long term.

5.2 A World-Class Scientific and Technological Ecosystem

The credibility of a future international institution dedicated to artificial intelligence will depend in large measure on the quality of the scientific environment in which it operates.

Milan is home to many of Italy's leading universities and research institutions, including Politecnico di Milano, the University of Milan, Bocconi University, the University of Milano-Bicocca, Human Technopole, and the MIND Innovation District. These institutions are complemented by a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem characterized by a growing concentration of deep-tech companies, industrial research laboratories, and research and development centers established by major international firms.

Together, these assets create an environment in which scientific research, technological innovation, public policy, and regulation interact continuously—an essential condition for evidence-based AI governance.

5.3 A Natural Bridge Between Europe and the United States

Artificial intelligence governance has emerged as one of the principal areas of strategic cooperation between Europe and the United States. Despite differences in their respective regulatory approaches, both sides of the Atlantic share the objective of fostering AI development that is consistent with democratic principles, the protection of fundamental rights, and international security.

Milan occupies a privileged position within this transatlantic relationship. It serves as Italy's primary gateway to the U.S. economic system, hosts a large international community of companies and investors, and has long been one of the country's principal hubs for transatlantic engagement. At the same time, it is fully integrated into the European Single Market and the institutional framework of the European Union.

This dual positioning constitutes a strategic advantage. A future UN platform must be capable of engaging with different regulatory cultures, facilitating international cooperation, and building consensus among actors operating within diverse legal and political systems.

5.4 A Distinctive Ethical and Cultural Advantage

The governance of artificial intelligence is not solely concerned with system safety or regulatory efficiency. It also encompasses fundamental questions of human dignity, the protection of rights, accountability for automated decision-making, and the broader societal impact of emerging technologies.

In this context, Italy possesses a cultural and legal heritage that distinguishes it internationally. The contribution of the Holy See to the ethical reflection on artificial intelligence—culminating in the document Antiqua et Nova—has become one of the most authoritative contributions to the global debate on the relationship between technological innovation and the centrality of the human person.

The geographical proximity between Milan and Rome offers the opportunity to establish an ongoing dialogue among scientific excellence, multilateral cooperation, and ethical reflection, creating a distinctive value proposition that is difficult to replicate elsewhere.

5.5 An Available Institutional Space

Unlike several major European cities already characterized by a dense concentration of international organizations, Milan still offers institutional space that can be developed without overlapping with existing areas of specialization.

This should be viewed as an opportunity rather than a limitation. It enables Italy to advance a new proposal that is consistent with Milan's economic and scientific strengths while complementing the existing centers of international governance, thereby reinforcing the country's overall role within the multilateral system.

5.6 A Timely Window of Opportunity

International candidacies are not built after institutional decisions have already been made; they are developed while institutions are still taking shape.

The launch of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, the implementation of the recommendations of the High-Level Advisory Body, and the gradual consolidation of multilateral AI governance mechanisms all

suggest that the period 2026–2027 represents a strategic window for launching a credible candidacy. Waiting longer would risk allowing competing international ecosystems to establish an advantage that would be difficult to overcome.

For this reason, the proposal advanced in this paper should not be interpreted as premature, but rather as a strategic investment at a moment when the international community is beginning to define the institutional architecture of global AI governance.

5.7 A Catalyst for R&D Investment and the Startup Ecosystem

Hosting a United Nations Hub for the Ethical Governance of Artificial Intelligence in Milan would represent far more than a symbolic recognition for the city; it would act as a powerful catalyst for industrial investment. International experience consistently shows that the presence of a governance institution generates a significant proximity effect: multinational companies tend to concentrate expertise, compliance functions, and research and development activities in cities that host the bodies responsible for defining the principles, standards, and regulatory guidance governing their sectors. This has occurred with Frankfurt for European banking supervision, Amsterdam for the European Medicines Agency, and Geneva for the principal United Nations agencies devoted to health and human rights. In the field of artificial intelligence, this dynamic could be even more pronounced. Locating research and development centers in the same city as the UN Hub responsible for shaping ethical principles and governance standards would reduce the distance between those developing AI technologies and those responsible for guiding their governance. It would facilitate direct dialogue during consultation processes and enable companies to adopt an ethics-by-design approach from the earliest stages of product development.

Milan already possesses strong foundations for attracting this type of investment. The city accounts for the overwhelming majority of Italy's installed data-center capacity and, according to publicly announced investment plans, is expected to host 83 new infrastructure projects promoted by 30 companies, representing potential investments exceeding €25 billion between 2026 and 2028. Industry analyses also identify the Milan metropolitan area as having the potential to attract up to 23 percent of all new European data-center investment in the coming years. The establishment of a United Nations AI Hub would provide the critical institutional anchor capable of transforming this robust infrastructure base into a more advanced trajectory of development, extending growth beyond computing capacity toward higher value-added activities, including research laboratories, innovation centers, highly skilled scientific talent, and strategic decision-making functions within major technology companies.

The arrival of additional research and development centers would also generate positive spillover effects extending well beyond the multinational firms that establish them, strengthening Milan's broader innovation ecosystem. During the first half of 2026 alone, startups in Lombardy attracted €393.5 million in investment—representing 61.2 percent of all venture capital invested in Italy—while business-to-business AI solutions accounted for 24.1 percent of completed investment transactions. In this context, the multiplier effect would operate on two levels. First, multinational R&D centers would help cultivate highly specialized expertise, fostering the creation of spin-offs and new innovative enterprises over time, following a pattern observed in leading global technology ecosystems from Silicon Valley to Cambridge. Second, a stronger local presence of major technology companies would stimulate additional investment through corporate venture capital, strategic technology partnerships, and acquisitions, providing startups with expanded opportunities for financing, experimentation, and market access that complement traditional venture capital funding.

CHAPTER 06

A National Strategy to Strengthen Italy's Role in the Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence

> The proposal to nominate Milan as the host city for a future United Nations platform or institution dedicated to the governance of artificial intelligence should be understood as a foreign policy initiative rather than a place-promotion effort. Its significance extends far beyond the local dimension and directly concerns Italy's international positioning in one of the defining strategic issues of the twenty-first century.

Global competition in artificial intelligence is no longer determined solely by technological development, industrial capacity, or investment. Increasingly, it also depends on the ability of states to contribute to shaping the rules, standards, and institutions that will guide the evolution of AI over the coming decades. In this context, hosting a future international institution would reinforce Italy's role as a constructive actor in building the global governance framework for emerging technologies.

Milan's candidacy should therefore be advanced as a national project, grounded in close cooperation among public institutions, industry, academia, and civil society. Only a coordinated national strategy can provide the credibility required to participate effectively in a complex multilateral process, where building international consensus demands political continuity, technical excellence, and a long-term strategic vision.

From this perspective, the first priority should be the establishment of a national steering committee bringing together the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, the Ministry of University and Research, the Lombardy Regional Government, the City of Milan, universities, research institutions, representatives of the private sector, and civil society organizations. Such a permanent coordination mechanism would enable Italy to develop a unified national position and provide sustained support for the candidacy over time.

At the same time, it will be essential to prepare a comprehensive technical dossier in English, drafted according to the standards typically applied in the selection processes of major international organizations. The dossier should present the prospective mandate of the future institution, possible governance arrangements, organizational models, funding options, the added value of Milan's innovation ecosystem, available infrastructure, the anticipated economic and scientific impact of the initiative, and the ways in which Milan could contribute to advancing the United Nations' objectives in the field of AI governance.

Diplomatic engagement will be equally critical. The candidacy should be progressively integrated into the ongoing dialogue within the United Nations, making full use of the channels established through the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, the follow-up to the work of the High-Level Advisory Body, and the principal multilateral forums where the future of international AI cooperation is being discussed. At the same time, Italy should maintain close and continuous consultations with its European partners, the

United States, and the other countries playing a leading role in shaping the global governance of artificial intelligence.

Alongside these institutional efforts, Italy should develop a comprehensive strategy for public diplomacy and international communication. Milan's candidacy should be presented as Italy's contribution to the development of a global public good rather than as a competitive bid against other cities. The strength of the proposal will ultimately depend on demonstrating that Milan offers the international community a unique ecosystem in which scientific excellence, technological innovation, multilateral cooperation, and ethical reflection converge in support of an AI governance model founded on trust, responsibility, and the common good.

Finally, it will be essential to build a broad international coalition of support involving universities, research centers, international organizations, technology companies, industry associations, and leading think tanks. Successful multilateral candidacies are rarely secured through intergovernmental consensus alone; they also depend on the ability to mobilize a wide community of stakeholders that recognize the strategic value of the initiative and contribute to strengthening its international credibility.

The window of opportunity created by the process initiated within the United Nations will not remain open indefinitely. As the experience of other international organizations demonstrates, host locations are typically selected while institutions are still taking shape—not after the institutional design has already been finalized. For this reason, Italy today has a rare opportunity to contribute from the earliest stages to the construction of the international architecture for AI governance, offering not only expertise and diplomatic leadership, but also a place where that architecture can evolve, mature, and endure over time.

CHAPTER 07

A Strategic Window of Opportunity Italy Should Not Miss

> Major transformations in the international institutional architecture do not occur through a single decisive event. Rather, they emerge through gradual processes in which ideas, institutions, and political consensus evolve in parallel. The global governance of artificial intelligence is now entering precisely such a phase. While the United Nations has not yet decided to establish a new specialized agency, it has already launched a process that will progressively define the permanent mechanisms through which the international community will address the challenges posed by AI.

The establishment of the High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, the publication of the report Governing AI for Humanity, the launch of the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, and the creation of the Independent International Scientific Panel are milestones in a single evolving process: the gradual construction of a more structured system of multilateral governance, grounded in international cooperation, independent scientific expertise, and sustained dialogue among governments, industry, and civil society.

It is during the early stages of such processes that the future geography of international institutions is shaped. Experience from other areas of international cooperation demonstrates that the selection of host locations is not the final step in establishing a new institution; rather, it evolves alongside the consolidation of its mandate, functions, and international legitimacy. For this reason, waiting until the multilateral framework has been fully defined would mean forfeiting the opportunity to contribute actively to its development.

Milan's candidacy should therefore be understood as a long-term strategic proposal, fully aligned with the pace and dynamics of international diplomacy. The objective is not to advocate today for the immediate establishment of a new United Nations agency, but to initiate a process that will ensure Italy is well positioned when the multilateral negotiations enter their decisive phase. The strongest international candidacies are not conceived in response to decisions that have already been made; they are built over time through credibility, sustained international engagement, political continuity, and strategic foresight.

From this perspective, Milan can present itself as a platform serving the international community, offering a unique ecosystem that brings together scientific research, technological innovation, economic diplomacy, and ethical reflection. The value of its candidacy lies not only in the quality of its infrastructure, but also in its ability to provide an environment in which the future institutions of AI governance can operate in close collaboration with academia, industry, and international organizations.

For Italy, this opportunity extends well beyond hosting an international institution. It represents a chance to contribute to shaping the rules, practices, and institutions that will guide one of the most profound technological transformations of the modern era. In a world characterized by intensifying geopolitical competition and rapid technological change, participating in the construction of the global AI governance architecture means reinforcing Italy's role as a credible actor in multilateral

cooperation and as a champion of a model of innovation founded on responsibility, security, and the centrality of the human person.

The window of opportunity is open today, but it will not remain so indefinitely. In the years ahead, the United Nations system will be called upon to translate political dialogue into increasingly durable institutional arrangements. This is the moment for Italy to advance a credible proposal and to methodically build the conditions that will enable Milan to become one of the places where the international governance of artificial intelligence for the twenty-first century takes shape.

CHAPTER 08

Strategic Roadmap: From Vision to Action

> The proposal to nominate Milan as the host city for a future United Nations platform or institution dedicated to the governance of artificial intelligence requires a gradual approach, aligned with the pace of multilateral diplomacy and supported by coordinated institutional action. The objective is not to anticipate decisions that properly belong to the international community, but to progressively build the political, technical, and diplomatic conditions that will enable Italy to present itself as a credible partner when the United Nations process reaches its more mature stages.

To achieve this objective, this policy paper identifies five strategic priorities.

PRIORITY A

Establish a National Governance Structure for the Candidacy

The first step should be the creation of a national steering committee, established by the Italian Government and coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, with the participation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the relevant ministries, the Lombardy Regional Government, the City of Milan, universities, leading research institutions, representatives of industry, and the organizations most actively engaged in the field of artificial intelligence.

This body should ensure the political coordination of the candidacy, define strategic priorities, monitor developments in the international debate, and guarantee continuity of diplomatic engagement regardless of changes in political leadership.

PRIORITY B

Prepare an International Host City Proposal

The credibility of any multilateral candidacy depends on the quality of the technical documentation supporting it.

Italy should prepare a comprehensive Host City Proposal in English, drafted according to the standards commonly applied by major international organizations. The dossier should describe the prospective mandate of the future institution, governance arrangements, organizational models, funding options, the Italian legal and regulatory framework, available infrastructure, Milan's scientific and industrial ecosystem, and the contribution the city could make to the United Nations system.

The document should also demonstrate how Milan could serve as a permanent nexus connecting scientific research, technological innovation, multilateral diplomacy, and ethical reflection on artificial intelligence.

PRIORITY C

Launch a Multi-Level Diplomatic Strategy

The candidacy should be progressively integrated into the principal international cooperation frameworks already engaged in AI governance.

This will require sustained dialogue with the United Nations Secretariat, the processes established through the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, and the bodies responsible for implementing the recommendations of the High-Level Advisory Body. At the same time, Italy should engage closely with the European Union, the G7, the OECD, UNESCO, and other key international partners, building a broad coalition of support around the Italian proposal.

The objective should not be to secure immediate endorsement, but rather to establish over time the perception of Milan as the natural location for a future international institution dedicated to AI governance.

PRIORITY D

Strengthen Milan's International Positioning

Institutional diplomacy should be complemented by an international communications strategy designed to reinforce Milan's reputation as a global ecosystem for responsible innovation.

The publication of this policy paper in English, the preparation of a concise concept note for international decision-makers, the organization of high-level conferences, and active participation in the world's leading AI governance forums should all form essential components of this strategy.

Within this framework, AmCham Italy can play a particularly valuable role by strengthening transatlantic dialogue and engaging companies, universities, research institutions, and international stakeholders committed to advancing global AI governance.

PRIORITY E

Build an International Coalition

No multilateral candidacy succeeds solely through the support of a single government. Its strength ultimately depends on the ability to mobilize an international community of actors that share its vision and recognize its strategic value.

Italy should therefore promote an international coalition bringing together universities, international organizations, think tanks, technology companies, industry associations, and civil society organizations, with the objective of establishing a permanent network dedicated to the global governance of artificial intelligence.

Such a network would not only reinforce Milan's candidacy but would also make a tangible contribution to the development of the international debate, strengthening Italy's role as a promoter of multilateral cooperation grounded in security, responsible innovation, and the centrality of the human person.

POLICY PAPER

Conclusion

> Major international institutions do not emerge from sudden political decisions. They are the product of long-term processes in which strategic vision, diplomatic credibility, and institutional capacity reinforce one another over time. The process initiated by the United Nations on the governance of artificial intelligence offers Italy a rare opportunity to contribute to the construction of a new architecture for international cooperation in one of the most strategically significant fields of the twenty-first century.

Milan possesses the qualities needed to become an integral part of this process. Transforming that potential into a credible international candidacy will require method, institutional continuity, and a shared national strategy. If supported by a coherent diplomatic effort and broad domestic and international consensus, this proposal can become not only an opportunity for Milan itself, but also a meaningful contribution by Italy to shaping the future global governance of artificial intelligence.

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Milan and the Future of Global Artificial Intelligence Governance

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