

Towards Accountability in the use of Artificial Intelligence for Public Administrations

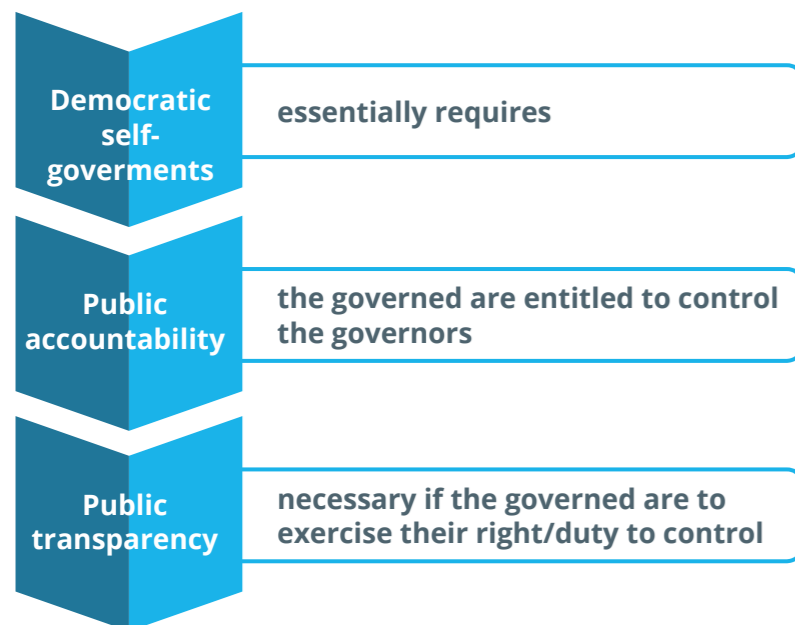
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The phenomena of **distributed responsibility, induced acceptance, and acceptance through ignorance** constitute instances of **imperfect delegation** when tasks are delegated to computationally-driven systems. **Imperfect delegation challenges human accountability.** Both direct public accountability via public transparency and indirect public accountability via transparency to auditors in public organizations can be instrumentally ethically valuable and required as a matter of deontology from the principle of democratic self-government. Analysis of the regulatory content of **16 guideline documents about the use of AI in the public sector**, mapping their requirements to those of our philosophical account of accountability, leads to the conclusion that while some guidelines refer processes that amount to auditing, the **debate would benefit from more clarity about the nature of the entitlement of auditors and the goals of auditing**, also in order to develop ethically meaningful standards with respect to which different forms of auditing can be evaluated and compared.

Relationship between accountability and public transparency

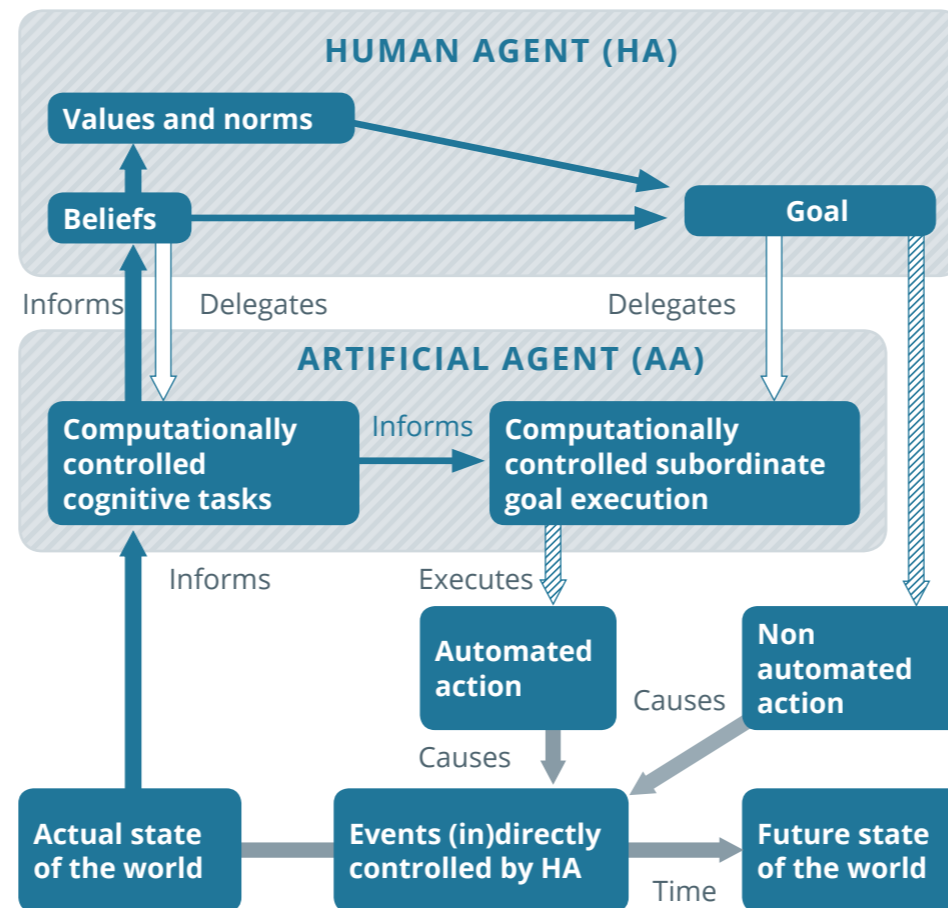
The relationship between accountability and public transparency, according to non-instrumental democratic theory.



Poster presented at the Fourth AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society, May 2021

Idealized automation process of both cognitive and executive functions

Full arrows denote information flow. White arrows denote delegation. Grey arrows denote causation. Oblique striped arrows denote execution (controlled causation).

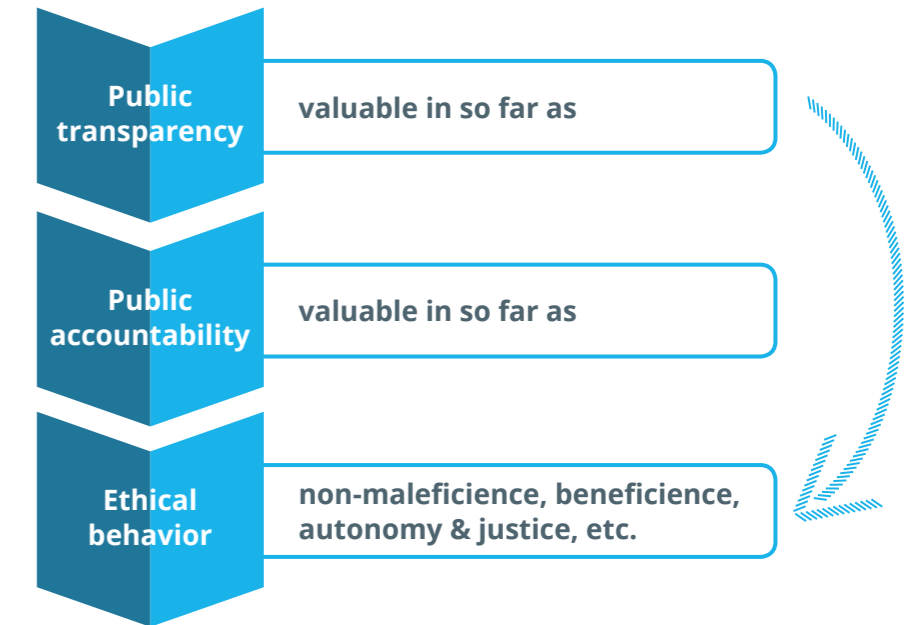


Varieties of moral groundings for public transparency

Role of transparency	Goals	Ethical value/principle involved (argument type)
Transparency as disinfectant	Accountability, avoiding unethical behavior	All four principles
Transparency for crowd-sourcing	Collecting expert and lay people opinion	Beneficence
Transparency for informed choice	Enabling informed individual choice	Autonomy (instrumental)
Transparency for informed public debate	Enabling informed democratic deliberation	Self-government (deontological)

Relation between public transparency, accountability, and other ethical principles

Assuming that accountability is valuable instrumentally. Public transparency can enable ethical behavior either directly or indirectly (through accountability).



Transparency + auditing = accountability

Internal transparency combined with auditing entitlements generate accountability, which is instrumentally valuable in so far as it incentivizes ethical behavior.

