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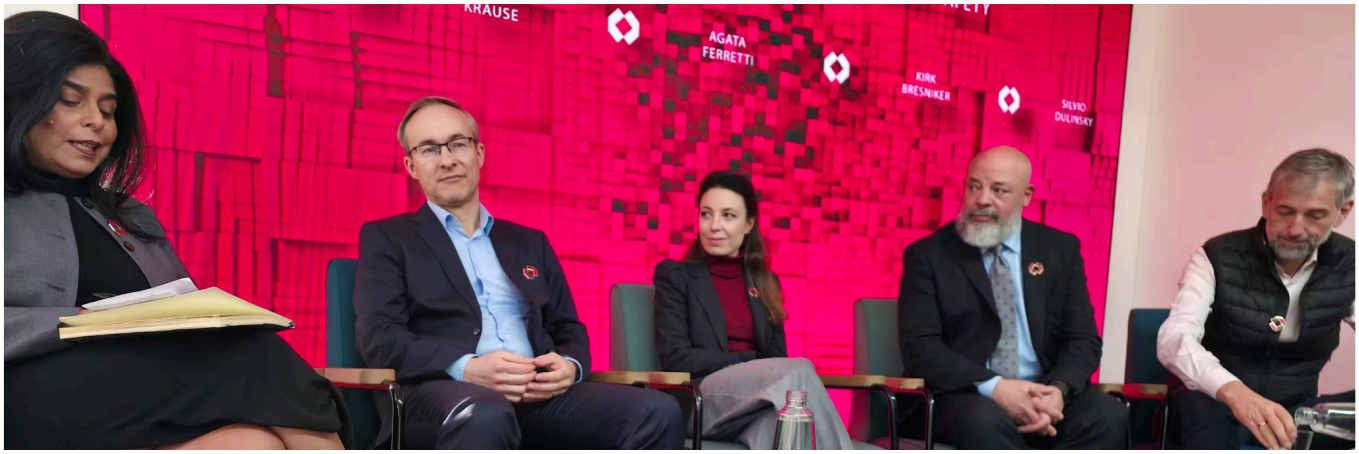
WEF

# AI House Davos: The AI confidence crisis is becoming a recurring issue

The topic of trust is omnipresent at AI events surrounding the WEF. From a consumer perspective, this is a good sign. However, the industry is far from providing convincing answers.

by
Gaudenz Valentin Looser




Rapid progress in exchange for security, privacy, and control? The relationship between the AI industry and society is the topic of numerous panels at the WEF. Gaudenz Looser

## This is what it's about

- The AI confidence crisis is a central theme at the AI events at the WEF
- Experts are looking for ways to anchor trust in AI systems both technically and socially.
- There is no simple, isolated solution to control the creative power of AI.
- Various approaches such as open source and technical standards are proposed.

Do you think artificial intelligence (AI) is developing too fast for our society?

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes, the development is far too fast; we are losing control. | 60 % |
| Yes, we need more time to clarify the ethical and social issues. | 0 % |
| No, this development is necessary and should not be slowed down. | 20 % |
| No, we simply need to adapt faster. | 20 % |
| I can't judge that. | 0 % |

6 votes

Under the title "AI We Can Trust," five experts discussed the topic in the " AI House The ETH Zurich's AI event series at the WEF addressed the increasingly pressing question of how to create global security systems for artificial intelligence while rapid technological development outpaces any regulation. The central challenge at present is to establish a technical and societal foundation for trust in AI systems, while the geopolitical situation calls into question almost everything our societies have relied on for the past 50 years. The panel agreed that there is no single solution to controlling the unleashed creative power of AI. Instead, a combination of different approaches is necessary: from academic research to industrial proof of concept and international standards

## Ethics in AI: An industry without rules?

Aysha Piotti: It's unclear who has the authority over the truth. Gaudenz Looser

Aysha Piotti , ethics advisor at the AI recruiting firm Eightfold and head of ETH Zurich's annual AI Policy Summit, moderator of the panel, posed the central thesis that humanity currently lacks globally agreed-upon limits for AI development. There is no global ethical consensus, no red lines where everyone agrees on "what we shouldn't be doing right now." Abusive AI applications like

deepfakes erode public trust, as it is often unclear who has the authority to decide on the veracity of any content

> "There is currently no global consensus on what we should not do with AI right now."
>
> Aysha Piotti, Head of AI Policy Summit, ETH

It is not without a certain irony that Piotti, in her earlier career, worked for the tobacco company Philip Morris for 16 years. Among other things, she worked as a lobbyist at a time when PM was embroiled in numerous scandals involving highly questionable business strategies.

Andreas Krause: The complexity of AI makes security guarantees extremely challenging. Gaudenz Looser

## The Professor: Open-source for greater understanding and trust?

Andreas Krause , ETH Professor of Computer Science, advocated for more research and transparency instead of blind calls for safety guarantees. Due to their complexity, providing formal safety assurances for AI systems is extremely challenging, unlike in classical engineering disciplines

such as nuclear power plants. However, he emphasizes, "Just because it's difficult doesn't mean we shouldn't try." He advocates for methods such as "red teaming," in which attacks on the system are simulated, and highlights that transparency through open-source models is essential for building a fundamental understanding and thus trust in the technology

Kirk Bresniker: "The end customer defines usability." Gaudenz Looser

## The engineer: Trust is good, control is better

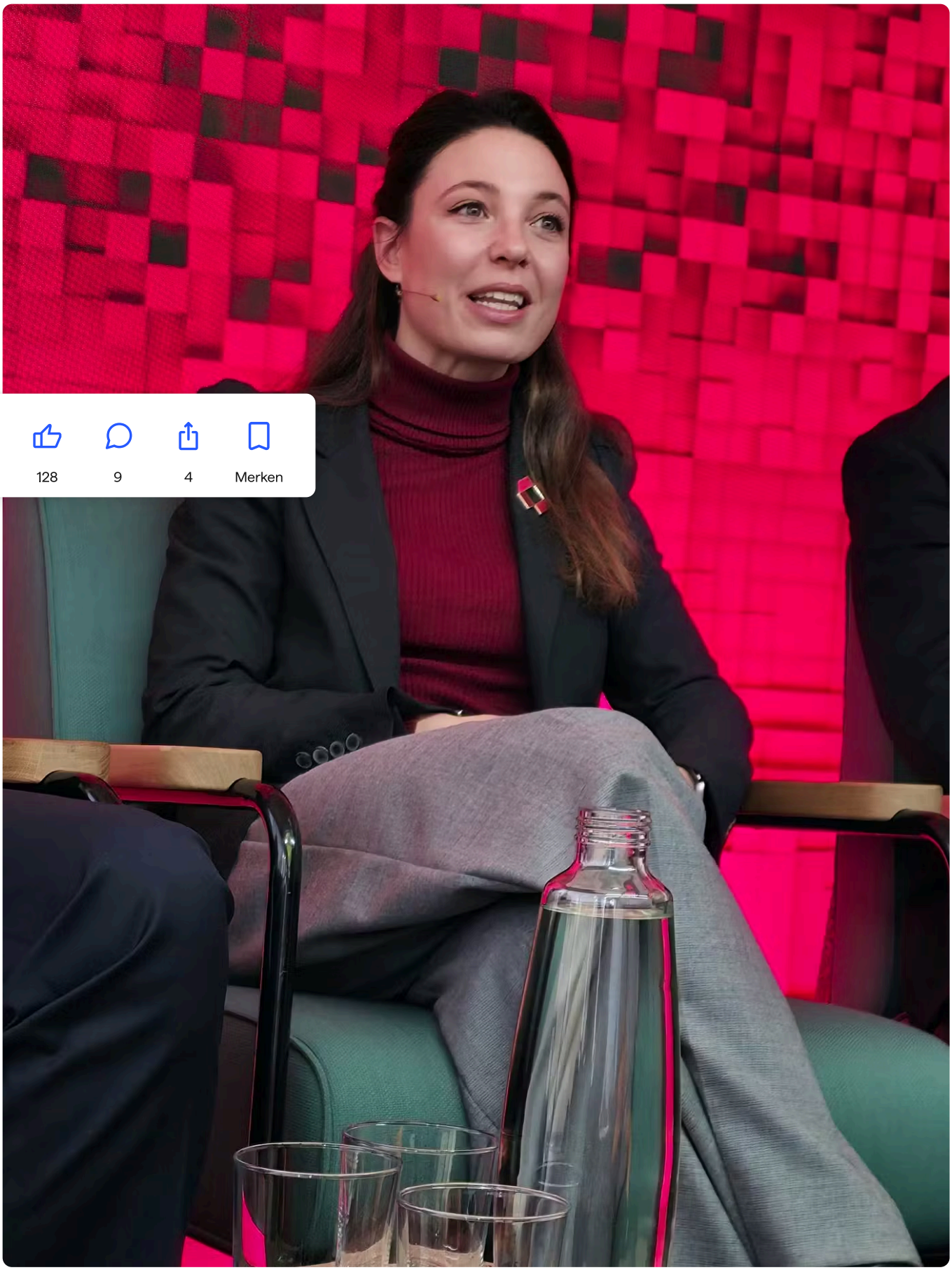
Kirk Bresniker , a senior engineer at Hewlett Packard, took a skeptical engineering view, warning against basing AI security on the vague concept of trust, since "even the most trustworthy individual can be coerced." Instead, he called for end-to-end technical evidence from sensor to screen, as attackers increasingly targeted supply chains. He pragmatically defined quality as "usability as defined by the end user" and described the necessary interaction between regulators, industry, and the public as an iterative solution-finding process

Silvio Dulinsky: Even if AI can't yet be controlled, then at least it can be standardized. Gaudenz Looser

## The standards guru: Technical standards as a minimum of binding force?

Silvio Dulinsky, Deputy Secretary General of the global standards umbrella organization ISO positioned his industry as a much-needed bulwark: Technical standards are essential to bridging the gap between fast technology and slow legislation. He explained that while laws should require

principles such as "explainability," the technical definition must be left to standards. However, standards are only legitimate if they are developed not only by industry but also with the involvement of civil society and developing countries




Agata Ferretti: Greater security through open-source AI. Gaudenz Looser

## The NGO representative: More eyes see more – if you let them.

Agata Ferretti is employed by IBM but works for the AI Alliance. This is an international industry and research alliance for open artificial intelligence. Ferretti contradicted the common assumption that proprietary "black box" systems are automatically better protected, since they too can be hacked. Rather, security arises from the fact that with open source models, "more eyes" look at the code and a diverse community of researchers and companies work together on solutions, instead of isolating resources in closed silos

### Your opinion matters

This topic is important to me.

I feel well-informed

The article is fair and balanced.

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## 9 Comments

Comments closed

Zurich ex-pat 16 days ago

It's like everywhere else. AI can help, can solve problems, but there will always be people who misuse AI for their own interests. The problem is that such misuse can cause an enormous amount of damage

EXACTLY | 7/8 Readers

Now your stupid mustache is finally gone 16 days ago

Most people know nothing about AI; they already struggle with Excel. I'd like to test these people.

EXACTLY | 1 Reader

Lima.28 16 days ago

AI is a machine. Therefore, you cannot trust a machine. Especially when AI is used to control humanity

EXACTLY | 14/19 Readers