Opening Statement on Behalf of EDMO Ireland at Dublin City University

Cathaoirleach,

I am speaking on behalf of EDMO Ireland, which is an EU-funded project to address disinformation through research, fact-checking, media literacy, and policy analysis. We work closely with Media Literacy Ireland and share its view that AI literacy is essential. Based on our work on disinformation and platform co-regulation, EDMO Ireland has specific concerns about AI's implications for truth and democracy.

Here, it is important to distinguish between AI research, AI tools, and AI as a new frontier for major tech companies. Our concerns lie with how this last category is re-shaping information environments, not with the legitimate use of AI in research and applications.

Regarding truth, generative AI is fundamentally unreliable. It does not aim at factual accuracy. Instead, it offers outputs that are statistically plausible based on its training data. This limitation is well known. Nevertheless, tech companies overhype AI systems and embed them into everyday life. We are offered convenient, but unreliable, tools to generate, summarise, and evaluate content. And evidence suggests a dependency on these unreliable tools undermines our capacity to reason[1].

In summary, the problem is not only that generative AI is flooding the world with scams and low-quality slop, which it is[2]. Nor is it simply that technology platforms' ability to detect and label AI-generated material is wholly inadequate, which it also is[3]. The deeper issue is that flawed and opaque AI systems are undermining human reasoning, eroding a cornerstone of democratic citizenship and public debate.

In the 1990s, the policy approach to emerging technology companies was defined by weak regulation to support innovation. We are still dealing with the consequences. Today, those companies are global giants, many hyping a new technological revolution. Faced with regulatory choices, it is striking that we appear to be making the same mistake again.

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[1] Ferdman, A. (2025). AI deskilling is a structural problem. *AI & Society*. Lee, H.-P. et al. (2024). *The impact of generative AI on critical thinking: Self-reported reductions in cognitive effort and confidence effects from a survey of knowledge workers*. In *Proceedings of the 2024 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. Association for Computing Machinery.

[2] Adami, M. (2024, November 26). AI-generated slop is quietly conquering the internet. Is it a threat to journalism or a problem that will fix itself? Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

[3] Mozilla (2024, February 26). Mozilla research: Watermarking and content labeling struggle to effectively distinguish AI-generated content. Mozilla Foundation