

OPPORTUNITY #10

WHAT IF ROBOTS NEEDED RIGHTS?

RIGHTS FOR BOTS

A framework that outlines the rights for robots as a proxy for human rights

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

The number of new industrial, professional and consumer service robots reached approximately 22 million in 2020.⁹⁰

The global robotics market was valued at around \$25 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach up to \$260 billion by 2030.⁹¹ In the manufacturing industry, there are 113 robots for every 10,000 employees worldwide.⁹² The market for professional service robots (transportation, cleaning, medical, hospitality, agriculture) with sales of \$6.7 billion worldwide was up 12% in 2020 from 2019. At the same time, sales of new consumer service robots (domestic cleaning, lawn mowing, vacuums) grew 16% in 2020 to \$4.4 billion worldwide.⁹³ Some 47% of the service robot suppliers are from Europe, 27% from North America and 25% from Asia.^{94,95}

THE OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW

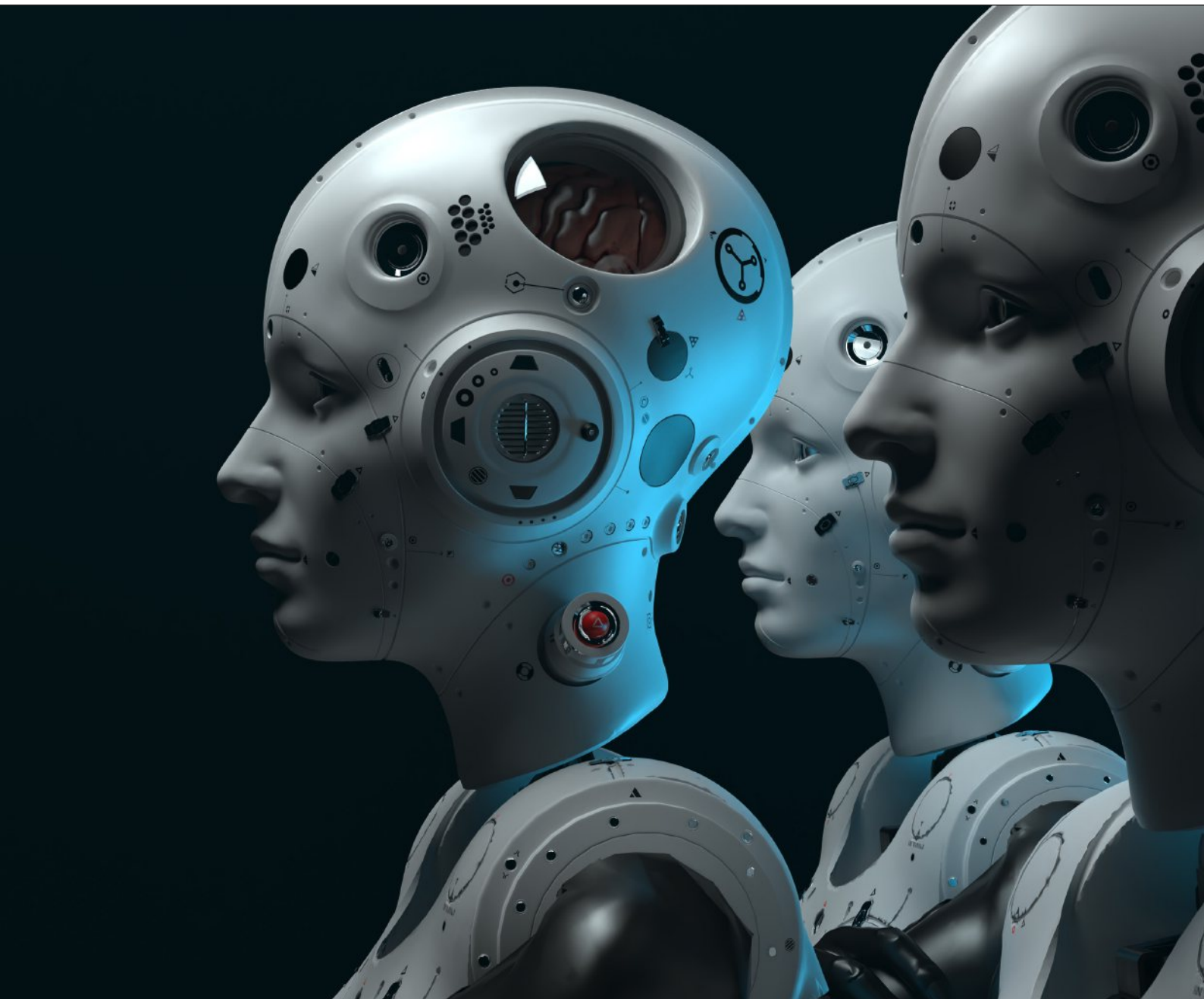
Highly autonomous machines with near-human levels of general intelligence – as well as super-human capabilities in specific areas – have the potential to become ubiquitous, not only in factories but in homes as well.

As people rely more on robots for their comfort and productivity, they may start to perceive them differently, feeling uncomfortable about disposing of them as they become obsolete, leading to widespread calls for ‘robot rights’. But an increase in violence towards robots may be another predictor of future violent behaviour⁹⁶ and such violence could become an implicit form of dehumanisation,⁹⁷ particularly in domestic robots, leading to reduced empathy and increased distrust and anger towards others.

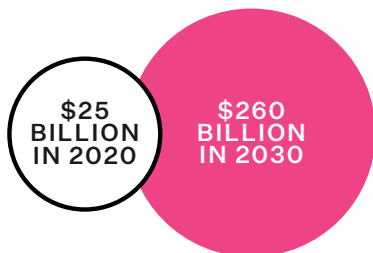
By bringing together a combination of programmers, robot producers and suppliers existing procedures can be reviewed⁹⁸ and a new framework for robot rights implemented and certified at the production level.

SECTORS

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The global robotics market is expected to grow **100 times**



BENEFITS

By recognising their contribution to society, the rights-for-robots movement sparks thinking about what our treatment of machines says about our wider values. Robot rights may become a signal for more tolerant societies and a proxy for human rights.

RISKS

Risk of robots' rights making people feel inferior or that their rights have been diminished⁹⁹ as robots take over more tasks and grow in influence.