

“EU leading the way on the AI regulation”

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Last week, lawmakers in Europe made a significant move towards regulating artificial intelligence (AI) by signing the world's first set of comprehensive rules for the technology. The European Parliament vote is one of the final steps before the rules become law, which could serve as a model for other regions working on similar regulations.

The development of these regulations has been a years-long effort by Brussels to establish guidelines for AI, which has become increasingly urgent as the technology continues to advance rapidly. The benefits of AI, such as the development of chatbots like ChatGPT, have become more apparent, but so too have the potential dangers it poses.

The new regulations aim to establish guardrails for AI, including requirements for transparency and accountability in AI systems, as well as provisions for privacy and data protection. The rules also seek to address the potential for bias and discrimination in AI systems, which has become a growing concern as the technology is increasingly used in decision-making processes.

The European Union's move to regulate AI is expected to have a significant impact on the global development of the technology, as other countries and regions may look to adopt similar regulations. The EU has positioned itself as a leader in the development of ethical and responsible AI, and the new regulations are expected to set a high bar for other countries to follow.



The EU's Artificial Intelligence Act, which was first proposed in 2021, is designed to regulate any product or service that uses an artificial intelligence system. The act will classify AI systems according to four levels of risk, ranging from minimal to unacceptable. Riskier applications, such as those used for hiring or technology targeted at children, will face tougher requirements, including being more transparent and using accurate data.

The rules will be enforced by the EU's 27 member states, with regulators having the power to force companies to withdraw their apps from the market if they don't comply with the regulations. In extreme cases, violations could result in fines of up to 40 million euros or 7% of a company's annual global revenue, which could amount to billions of dollars in the case of tech giants like Google and Microsoft.

One of the main goals of the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act is to guard against any AI threats to health and safety and protect fundamental rights and values. This means that some AI uses are strictly prohibited, such as "social scoring" systems that judge people based on their behaviour. The act also prohibits AI that exploits vulnerable people, including children, or uses subliminal manipulation that can result in harm, such as an interactive talking toy that encourages dangerous behaviour.

Overall, the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act represents a significant step forward in regulating the use of AI and establishing ethical and responsible guidelines for its development and implementation. Its impact is likely to be felt not just in Europe but also around the world, as other countries and regions look to adopt similar regulations.

Predictive policing tools, which analyse data to predict individuals who may engage in criminal activities, are also no longer in use. The original proposal put forth by the European Commission, the executive branch of the EU, was strengthened by extending the prohibition on real-time remote facial recognition and biometric identification in public spaces. These technologies scan people passing by and utilize artificial intelligence to match their faces or physical characteristics with a database.

An amendment causing controversy, which aimed to allow exceptions for law enforcement purposes such as locating missing children or preventing terrorist threats, did not receive approval.

AI systems utilized in areas like employment and education, which can significantly impact an individual's life, are subjected to stringent requirements. These include ensuring transparency for users and taking measures to evaluate and minimize algorithmic bias risks.

The commission states that the majority of AI systems, such as video games or spam filters, are considered to have low or no risk associated with them.

Regarding ChatGPT and similar chatbot technologies, the original proposal initially had minimal mention of them, only requiring them to be clearly identified as machines.



However, provisions were later included to address general-purpose AI like ChatGPT, given its widespread use. As a result, such technologies are now subject to some of the same requirements as high-risk systems.

One significant addition is the mandate to extensively document any copyrighted material used in training AI systems to produce text, images, video, or music that resembles human creations.

The new rules proposed by the EU would require content creators to be informed if their blog posts, digital books, scientific articles, or songs were used to train AI algorithms like ChatGPT. This would allow them to determine if their work was copied and take appropriate action.

The EU is poised to become a frontrunner in regulating artificial intelligence (AI), although its role in driving AI innovation remains uncertain. Industry experts emphasize the need for the EU's new AI rules to effectively address defined risks while allowing developers sufficient flexibility to create beneficial AI applications.

Other countries, including Britain, are striving to catch up and establish their own AI rules. Britain, after leaving the EU in 2020, aims to position itself as a leader in AI by hosting a global summit on AI safety.

The full implementation of the EU's rules may take several years. The next phase involves negotiations among member countries, the European Parliament, and the European Commission, which may result in further modifications to the proposed regulations.

Final approval is expected by the end of this year, followed by a grace period of approximately two years for companies and organizations to adapt to the new rules.

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