Regulating and Leveraging Artificial Intelligence Under a DA Government

Policy Position

2026

A PARTY OF *National Government.*
RESCUING SOUTH AFRICA.

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AI	Artificial Intelligence
ARSO	African Organisation for Standardisation
AU	African Union
C4IR	Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution
DA	Democratic Alliance
DPPs	Data protection principles
EAD	Ethical Aligned Design
EU	European Union
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PwC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
R&D	Research and Development
UN	United Nations
WEF	World Economic Forum

Summary

The DA acknowledges the ability of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve government service delivery and create economic growth when harnessed responsibly. However, as this is still a rapidly developing technology, **we recognise the dangers it poses** should it remain unregulated. This position paper outlines a high-level overview of how a DA Government would regulate and leverage AI technologies.

The DA recognises the role AI can play in driving economic growth in the private sector and enhancing government efficiency. However, AI also poses risks. AI poses a possible threat to jobs as it can automate tasks usually performed by low- and medium-skilled workers in the manufacturing, retail and customer and financial service industries. Additionally, AI can be used as a tool by criminals to create deepfake videos and automate and enhance cyberattacks.

The South African government recently published its National AI Policy Framework. However, this framework still does not sufficiently promote investor confidence as it overregulates the industry and fails to focus adequately on investment in infrastructure projects to enable an AI-powered future in South Africa.

The DA will, therefore, seek to harness the benefits of AI and mitigate against its risks by:

- **Introducing AI regulation** by establishing a regulatory body and introducing new laws to encourage the ethical use of AI.
- **Creating a National AI Strategic Framework** that creates a conducive environment for the private sector to unleash AI's potential and provides guidelines for the use of AI in government and regulatory sandboxes.
- **Improving Digital Infrastructure** by mitigating AI's carbon footprint with green energy alternatives, facilitating the development of lab-to-market initiatives, implementing an enabling visa regime, and incentivising private sector investment in cloud computing infrastructure.
- **Enhancing the government's performance and efficiency** by progressively implementing AI to cut red tape, support anti-crime initiatives, and promote cross-government, cross-sector, and international collaboration.
- **Promoting AI Skills Development** by implementing AI learning programmes in schools and expanding free internet access to learners in less-connected areas.

Introduction

The DA seeks to build a capable state that recognises its role in creating the conditions for private enterprises to flourish. Artificial Intelligence (AI), coupled with a strong regulatory framework to protect against its abuses, presents a unique opportunity to create a more capable state and stimulate economic growth. This paper outlines the party's current position on AI utilisation and governance. However, this technology is still rapidly developing. The DA will update our position on this technology as future developments occur.

AI can be defined as a computer science that can perform tasks that usually require human intelligence to be executed, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, decision-making, creativity and autonomy.[1] Applications and devices equipped with AI can, amongst other things, comprehend and intelligently respond to human language and physical objects and learn from new experiences to advance their intelligence for future use. In some cases, technological advancement has made it possible for some devices equipped with AI to act independently without the need for human intelligence or intervention (i.e. self-driving cars).[2] **AI also presents a new risk to society** as images and videos are no longer exclusively human-generated due to the increasing ability of AI to generate deepfake images and videos (generative AI).

AI is also growing in its ability to exploit the weaknesses and biases of the human mind. Through repeated discussions and interactions with humans, AI can learn optimal approaches to changing opinions and views on matters such as purchasing decisions and political choices. Concerns have also been raised about using AI to generate deepfake images to manipulate and influence democratic processes.[3]

Therefore, it is important that the benefits that AI can provide to South Africa be accompanied by a responsible regulatory approach to mitigate against its potential harms. This is increasingly recognised internationally, as there is growing recognition of the risks AI poses to society. In 2023, Italy temporarily banned ChatGPT[1] due to a suspected cybersecurity breach, and OpenAI was banned from processing personal information.[4] In addition, tech leaders such as Elon Musk and Steve Wozniak have signed an open letter calling for a pause on AI development more powerful than GPT-4[2] over its potential risks.[5]

1 ChatGPT is a chatbot and virtual assistant developed by OpenAI. Based on large language models, it allows users to shape conversations by adjusting their length, format, style, level of detail, and language.
2 Generative Pre-trained Transformer 4 (GPT-4) is a multimodal large language model and is considered as the most powerful Chatbot ever developed.

Opportunities to Leverage AI

AI has the potential to grow the South African economy, create new jobs, improve government service delivery and combat societal issues such as crime and corruption. These potential benefits of AI are discussed in greater detail below:

Creating New Jobs

According to a PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report,[6] *"by 2030, AI is projected to contribute a staggering $15.7 trillion to global GDP, with $6.6 trillion coming from increased productivity and $9.1 trillion from consumption effects"*. Customer demand for personalised AI products may also increase as the quality of these products improves.

A common concern is that AI could lead to job losses. However, according to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs report,[7] AI will create almost double the jobs that may be lost. It is estimated that 75 million jobs will be displaced by automation, while 133 million new jobs are expected to emerge. The types of jobs likely to be disrupted include positions that can be automated, such as data entry, customer service representative roles, and administrative tasks.[8] However, AI is also likely to support existing jobs, resulting in greater productivity, and create a variety of new jobs, such as AI model and prompt engineers, AI content creators, data curators and trainers, and ethics and governance specialists.[9]

Similar job displacement fears existed during the period of increased personal computer adoption between 1982 and 2002. However, computers enabled workers to focus more on their core and higher-value tasks, **and AI could do the same.** Additionally, employment growth was significantly faster in occupations that utilised computers compared to those that did not.[10] Given South Africa's dire unemployment rate, we must aim to use AI's potential to grow our economy and create jobs while mitigating the risks of job losses.

Assisting the Private Sector to be a Key Economic Growth Driver

AI presents several opportunities for the private sector. These include facilitating fraud detection in the financial sector,[11] inventory and cross-merchandising optimisation in retail,[12] and crop health and yield forecasting in agriculture.[13] In Africa, Mauritius has led the way in identifying key industry sectors which could leverage AI, namely manufacturing, healthcare and biotechnology, fintech, agriculture, the ocean economy and transport. In doing so, they have recognised that the private sector is the key to driving growth, with the role of government being to create a conducive regulatory environment through fiscal incentives such as grants and tax credits for investment in AI.[14] Importantly, the 'Mauritius Artificial Strategy' went beyond merely identifying the opportunities for Mauritius but also considered the ecosystem required for the successful application of AI. This ecosystem encompasses resources, regulations, and incentives that enable the private sector to capitalise on the growth opportunities presented by AI in targeted sectors.

Enhancing Government Efficiency

An OECD Report on AI use in the public sector[15] demonstrates that the technology can free up nearly one-third of public servants' time, helping shift civil servants' efforts from routine tasks to high-value work. This is supported by a Deloitte study[16] of the US Federal and State Governments, which found that documenting and recording information can take up to 10 percent of a working day – a task which AI could fulfil instead.

AI can also assist in cutting red tape. Kenya is cited as an African success story, having jumped from 136 to 56 on the World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index. This was partially achieved through the automation of systems involved in registering businesses, land, online payments and import declarations.[17]

DA-led Ministries and governments are already using artificial intelligence to improve their operations. One example is the DA Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber, who has moved to explore the use of AI and Machine Learning to analyse the completeness and authenticity of documents and detect patterns and anomalies in Home Affairs permitting data.[18]

A further opportunity for the utilisation of AI is the development of virtual assistant services for citizens. A comprehensive DA research exercise in 2022,[19] where national and provincial government departments were called and emailed repeatedly, revealed that 73 percent of phone calls and emails to government departments across South Africa go unanswered. Only in the DA-led Western Cape Province were 100 percent of calls answered. The general poor call answering rates of government departments can be improved through the utilisation of AI-powered virtual assistance. This is already occurring in other countries, such as in Singapore (*Ask Jamie*), the United Arab Emirates (*Rammas*), Estonia (*Bürokratt*), and the Republic of Korea (*GoodPy*). These virtual assistants offer 24/7 access to government services across multiple government agencies via AI-powered chat and voice interfaces.

While these services would still require notice explanations, human alternatives and fallback safeguards,[20] they would still reduce the number of first-line calls coming into government call centres and allow human operators to focus on follow-ups. The implementation of notice and explanation will require that such assistants be identified as automated systems and be accompanied by clear documentation explaining how they arrive at their outcomes. Alternative options to engage with a human operator should also be provided, along with fallback measures in cases where the assistant may produce erroneous results.[21] However, for simple explanations of processes, procedures and requirements for lodging applications, a virtual assistant will be sufficient.

Fighting Crime and Corruption

AI can be beneficial in combating crime by identifying fraudulent procurement and corruption and assisting tax authorities in detecting tax evasion, illicit economic activity, and social grant fraud.[22] Corruption Watch[23] highlights the potential benefits and pitfalls that need to be considered in this approach. These include privacy and surveillance concerns, biased algorithms and potentially opaque decision-making processes. Benefits include improved speed in handling large datasets, a greater ability to predict corruption and fraud, and the ability of AI to perform tasks traditionally prone to corruption or bribery.

AI can also fight cybercrime by providing law enforcement agencies, the defence force, and border authorities with significant advantages through automating systems that detect and combat cybercrimes.[24] Using satellite, drone, and camera imagery further allows these agencies to monitor suspicious activities, recognise patterns, and even predict where and when crimes might occur, thereby enhancing their ability to respond proactively.[25] Fraudulent procurement can also be flagged by advanced algorithms that analyse historical spending patterns and identify procedural irregularities for investigation.[26]

Finally, improved data analysis can enhance transparency and oversight in procurement processes, thereby combating corruption, malfeasance, and maladministration. The ability of AI to process algorithms in far greater volumes of data than an auditor[27] can assist with identifying irregularities involving tax and social grant fraud.

Challenges and Risks Associated with AI

The challenges and risks associated with AI in South Africa must be addressed while simultaneously unlocking its opportunities. Key challenges to be dealt with include crime and corruption, human capital issues, a need for localised AI initiatives and partnerships, a lack of supporting infrastructure and an insufficient regulatory environment.

Crime and Corruption

The opportunities presented by AI in fighting crime and corruption also come with potential pitfalls, as highlighted in the ENACT Report on AI and organised crime in Africa.[31] According to the report, the key risk associated with using AI to combat corruption is the potential it poses to allow governments to entrench existing power structures, thereby facilitating corrupt practices. Misuse of surveillance and access to financial and government data, including personal information, can also threaten the right to privacy. Not only is clear regulation required to manage and monitor these risks, but a degree of transparency in how decisions relating to gathered information are made is also needed.

Criminal organisations can also target AI systems to evade detection by bypassing biometric screening and circumventing security measures in banks, warehouses, airports, ports, and border control or disrupting private companies, government networks, and economic infrastructure.[31] Moreover, attacks on confidential personal databases, platforms, and applications enabled by AI could allow organised criminals to extort or blackmail victims for profit. Additionally, AI-generated deepfake technology could also be used to impersonate account holders and gain unauthorised access to secure systems.[1]

One of the most promising uses of AI is Predictive Policing, which uses AI algorithms to analyse large datasets and predict where crimes are likely to occur.[32] This offers potential benefits but simultaneously raises concerns, such as reinforcing discriminatory policing practices, such as demographic profiling.[28]

While AI technologies could greatly enhance law enforcement capabilities against organised crime, they also risk infringing on citizens' rights to privacy, freedom of assembly, and association.[29] The possibility of AI systems being targeted or failing necessitates a robust support infrastructure. This includes addressing sock puppet activities, where networks of agents track keywords and launch social media-based attacks on individuals and organisations using methods like deepfakes.[30]

Improving Human Capital

The opportunity cost of suppressing AI to save existing jobs may result in uncompetitive industries and subsequent job losses as production moves to countries that have harnessed AI productively. Therefore, it is important to identify high-potential sectors and establish the necessary ecosystems to support the successful application of AI. A key consideration in this regard is human capital. Therefore, it is important to consider a digital nomad visa scheme that would promote access to people with the necessary AI skills in the South African market.

Case Study: Namibia Digital Nomad Visa

Namibia has already experienced the benefits of local skills development as well as a positive contribution to the local economy by implementing a digital nomad visa program. The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board stated that "We have identified that there is an opportunity to attract and gain economic benefit from people who want to work, live and travel in Namibia, without absorbing Namibian jobs."[31] This is a great way to attract foreign investment into the South African economy without necessarily displacing South African jobs. The global economy of Digital Nomads is estimated to be worth around $787 billion a year. These, along with experts working on South African projects, would then transfer their skills to local technicians over time.

At the school level, it is essential to incorporate skills such as pattern recognition, critical thinking, machine learning fundamentals, and algorithmic thinking into STEM subjects, as well as the ethical considerations of AI, including the potential for abuse and the risk of bias, into the school curriculum. This will equip future generations of young South Africans to succeed in an economy where the utilisation of AI becomes increasingly widespread.

Local AI Lab-To-Market Initiatives and Partnerships

A 2018 study of start-ups in East Africa found that 90 percent of funding had gone to start-ups with founders from outside the region.[32] Foreign AI companies have been accused of using African entities as marketing tools to raise capital and eventually cashing out.[33] In the absence of significant AI Research and Development (R&D) in Africa, the applications of AI deployed on the continent tend to originate from outside the continent. Private companies should be incentivised to invest in South African AI research through mechanisms such as preference in procurement. These investments could also potentially fund the development of specific school courses and tertiary studies, which enable students to acquire the necessary skills required for employment in companies which leverage AI.

The AI For Africa Blueprint recommends the design and implementation of AI Centres of Excellence to support innovation. These AI Centres of Excellence, locally referred to as *Research Hubs*, are key stakeholders in establishing a common foundation for knowledge generation, research, and development. To date, four such hubs have been established in South Africa at the Central University of Technology, the University of Johannesburg, the Tshwane University of Technology and the recently launched Defence Artificial Intelligence Research Unit.[34]

Investing in these hubs could produce high-quality research papers that will have the potential to be published at top-tier conferences globally. Additionally, these hubs can be complemented by establishing start-up incubators and accelerators, which can provide training and accelerate AI developments, and establishing national and regional investment programmes and incentives (e.g., financing and funding programmes for R&D, private and public partnerships, tax breaks).

AI-Supporting Infrastructure and Environmental Concerns

According to the Government AI Readiness Index,[35] South Africa exceeds the global average in Technology, Data, and Infrastructure, with the Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC) hosting the continent's fastest supercomputer, Lengau. This computer ranked 121st among the top 500 supercomputers upon its launch in 2016.[36] However, its primary design focus was on general high-performance computing rather than specialised AI applications, and it currently has a fraction of the GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) computing power necessary to support commercial AI projects. This indicates a need to incentivise private sector investment in the development of cloud computing that develops at the rate necessary to support AI ventures.

However, access to cloud computing also needs to be improved. Accessibility includes the progressive realisation of affordable internet connectivity, the cost of access to AI computing infrastructure, and the cost of data and access to cloud and data centre infrastructure, as envisioned in the DA's Information and Communication Technology Policy document. The potential offered by satellite internet providers to address the issue of rural connectivity to broadband infrastructure must also be pursued. The DA supports Minister Malatsi's efforts to deracialise company ownership in the ICT sector. The 30% ownership requirement mandated by the current B-BBEE laws discourages desperately needed international investment in the sector.

Considering that AI technology is accessible to the public via the internet, South Africa can actively develop its digital infrastructure to integrate AI across all three spheres of government activities. However, technology is only one element of an effective national AI computing capacity. A lack of skilled personnel, innovative R&D ecosystems, enabling regulations, and cost and access barriers can render state-of-the-art infrastructure ineffective; therefore, these policy considerations must be considered to ensure the effective harnessing of AI's potential.

There have been growing concerns about the negative impact that AI might have on the environment. One of the main concerns raised is the carbon footprint it generates. According to recent studies, generating 1 AI image amounts to the same energy usage it takes to charge one's phone fully.[37] Another study found that even though it is difficult to find a standardised way to calculate the precise number, it can be estimated that training OpenAI's GPT-3 emitted around 500 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide. This can be compared to around 600 flights between New York City and London.[38] Another concern raised is the vast amount of water needed for the cooling of the hardware that the AI Chatbots operate on, as well as the water needed in the ancillary processes to computer use, such as generating electricity and manufacturing microchips. According to one study, asking an AI Chatbot 50 questions amounts to approximately 2 litres of freshwater use, and the training of GPT-3 consumed about 5.4 million litres.[39] Given that AI is increasingly incorporated into almost every aspect of our online lives, its environmental impact should be mitigated as far as possible.

Regulation and Policy Frameworks

There is a need to regulate potential abuses, such as the violation of personal privacy, dissemination of misinformation, and prevention of traditional scams, where greater scope and scale can be achieved using AI. Outlined below are existing international efforts to develop AI regulatory and policy frameworks.

The European Union (EU) AI Act,[40] United Kingdom AI Safety Summit (November 2023),[41] G7 Statement on the Hiroshima AI Process (October 2023)[42] and US Executive Order on the safe, secure, and trustworthy development and use of artificial intelligence (October 2023)[43] present early examples of regulatory and legislative responses to AI risks. Additionally, the African Union (AU) promotes coordination among member states through the AU Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection and pursues a continental AI approach through an AU Working Group on AI.[44] As far back as 2019, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) issued a Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa, calling on states to ensure that the development of AI and its application is compatible with the protection of human rights.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) also collaborates with the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO), Smart Africa, and other African institutions to develop the African Standards Strategy for the 4th Industrial Revolution. In addition, IEEE has over thirty AI standards, either under development or in active use, and pre-standards and standards activities related to data governance, open data, and digital inclusion more broadly.

The IEEE has further published the Ethical Aligned Design (EAD), which includes pre-standard activities and a certification framework. This can serve as a reference to define ethical compliance in AI governance. ISO-IEC JTC 1/SC 42[3] produces a series of standards and best practices for using AI. In addition, standards are already being integrated at an informal level in some grassroots AI initiatives that are already taking place (e.g., in modelling agreements).

The US Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights, released in October 2022, addresses the human rights aspects and includes measures for safe and effective systems, protections against algorithmic discrimination, data privacy, notice and explanation, human alternatives, consideration, and fallback options.

It is worth noting that these initial policy frameworks have sparked intense debate, as regulating AI involves a delicate balancing act between opportunity and risk. However, these frameworks still serve as useful examples for a future South African approach to regulation.

It is also important for intergovernmental regulatory bodies to advocate for the inclusion of African languages in Large Language Models (LLMs) to address language inequality while also implementing safeguards to protect indigenous intellectual property rights, amongst others.

3 ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 42 is the international standards committee responsible for standardisation in the area of Artificial Intelligence (AI). It is set up as a joint committee between ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission).

To support a responsible local AI industry, South Africa will require appropriate governance frameworks, including appropriate regulation, attention to ethical risks (governance), and internal digital skills and skill capacity to support the implementation of these frameworks and regulations. The Government AI Readiness Index,[45] which measures the readiness of governments to implement and govern AI technology, ranks South Africa 77th globally. South Africa leads the Sub-Saharan region in data, infrastructure, and the overall Technology Sector. However, South Africa's governance ranking is significantly lower than our other indicators. This means that although data infrastructure is available through the private sector, the absence of a national framework for AI means we are not yet prepared to leverage our ICT network infrastructure to implement AI technology responsibly.

It is imperative that we not merely leverage existing AI technology but also work on 'self-grown' AI by cultivating and supporting local AI development skills. According to the AI for Africa Blueprint,[46] *"Africa must find a profitable niche in the global environment of fierce [AI] competition"*. At the same time, it is noted that AI can cause inequalities to rise between those who use AI and those who control it.[47]

South Africa has agreed to champion the AI for Africa Blueprint's development through the Smart Africa Alliance,[4] which will lay the foundation for the African Continental AI Strategy.[48] In November 2023, the South African office of the GIZ[5] called for a proposal from a service provider, in collaboration with GIZ's FAIR Forward Project and the Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR), to develop an AI Maturity Assessment Framework for South Africa.[49] This framework will assess South Africa's current position on AI readiness and maturity in various areas (e.g., AI skills, data, infrastructure), establish relevant indicators, and implement interventions to create a functional, ethical, and globally competitive AI ecosystem. The DA views this as a positive development in enhancing our understanding of the AI ecosystem and identifying opportunities for industry growth.

Existing government programmes, such as the Digital Economy Masterplan, the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Digital Transformation Infrastructure Roadmap, outline the national government's policy direction concerning ICT and related matters, including AI. Some of these documents' contents align with the positions outlined in this document and the DA's ICT policy, such as the commitment to universal internet access, making data and hardware more affordable and the development of digital skills. **However, our ICT policy and this document will continue to serve as the DA's primary strategy with respect to AI.**

The DA welcomes the national government's adoption of the final South African National AI Policy Framework. The party recognises the document's commitment to the development of AI regulations and the protection of private data and intellectual property. The party also aligns itself with the government's investment in developing AI skills in schools. However, the DA has, and will always remain, an advocate for the private sector to take the lead in creating job and investment opportunities in South Africa, and in the context of AI, we maintain this stance.

A balanced approach is urgently needed to address the triple AI regulatory challenges of what to regulate, who regulates it, and how to manage the rapid pace of AI development. South Africa must develop a strategy for regulating AI that suits our unique circumstances and does not merely adopt other countries' priorities and risk profiles. Factors to consider include local crime syndicates, the lack of a capable state caused by cadre deployment, and a long history of discriminatory practices, including harmful racial and cultural profiling.

4 Smart Africa is an alliance of 30 African heads of state and government that aims to leverage affordable broadband access and ICT usage across Africa to foster a knowledge economy.
5 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Regulation of AI in South Africa

South Africa urgently needs to enact the appropriate enabling legislation to regulate AI. While approaches to AI regulation are still evolving, they can currently be categorised as a mix of regulations and standards.

Hard and Soft Regulations

The regulatory framework must balance innovation and trust/protection in the broader context. Both law and regulation play a role, and hard and soft laws/regulations are employed in each of these spheres. According to the AI for Africa Blueprint, *"soft regulation refers to a wide range of quasi-legal instruments that differ from hard law as they lack immediate, uniformly binding, direct effects, precision, and clearly delineated monitoring, dispute settlement, and enforcement authorities. Such instruments include guidelines declarations and codes of practice."*[50]

An effective legal framework for AI should encompass several key elements. It must address copyright, patents, and unfair competition laws to protect intellectual property. Additionally, it must include mechanisms for data management, such as data protection, sharing, open data initiatives, and decisions regarding data localisation. Ethical considerations, including ethics-driven design and guidelines for public procurement, should also be integrated. Moreover, legal provisions that facilitate a conducive business environment are essential, encompassing aspects such as incentives, infrastructure, cybersecurity, liability issues, and licensing.[51]

The DA has identified a few instances where so-called "hard regulation" is needed. "Hard regulation" is a term used to describe new regulations and/or binding laws. These instances include:

- **Governing AI Systems:** AI software needs oversight. The current copyright and patent laws are not sufficient to address the unique challenges that AI technology presents.
- **Establishing Regulations for Fair Competition:** For the DA, ensuring healthy competition in the market is essential. Therefore, a regulatory framework must be established to ensure that AI is not abused to reduce competition in the market.
- **Establishing a Legal Framework for Investment and Accountability:** To attract investment and support technological transfer, it is necessary for South Africa to develop a legal framework that holds AI development to account, especially on matters relating to intellectual property protection.
- **Protecting citizens' Constitutional Rights:** Laws need to be updated to protect South Africans against AI's infringement of their rights. This includes protection against algorithmic biases and other forms of discrimination, protection against the spreading of fake news, and likeness protection.

While there are certain areas which already have established legal frameworks, they will require further development or enhancement to keep pace with advancements in AI.[52]

Several African countries, such as Mauritius, Rwanda and Zambia, have already begun implementing regulatory sandboxes and adopting standards. A regulatory sandbox is a framework established by a regulator that permits FinTech startups and other innovators to test new products or services in a live, controlled environment under the regulator's supervision.[53] This approach helps to ensure compliance while fostering innovation.

The DA believes that South Africa can benefit from adopting a risk-based approach to AI regulation, which implies that the severity of the specific outcomes of AI use will determine the level of regulation required. The main reason for adopting such an approach is that it allows regulators to immediately address serious concerns, whilst still allowing for a flexible framework for AI to develop. The EU's Artificial Intelligence Act (2024) provides an example of how such a tiered framework would work. According to the framework, a narrow set of AI uses is deemed harmful to the fundamental rights of citizens (such as social scoring and certain types of real-time biometric surveillance) and is banned outright. Issues that are considered high risk are subjected to strict regulations, while medium to low-risk issues are subjected to light obligations and optional requirements. If South Africa were to follow a similar approach, it would allow regulators (such as the Cyber Commissioner) to swiftly address the greatest risks presented by AI, while still allowing for the AI field to develop organically without unnecessary government interference.

Regulatory Challenges for the Use of Data in AI

Several regulatory issues relate specifically to the use of data in AI. There is a risk of undermining privacy and ownership, even when using this data purely for the public good. At the same time, data sharing and open data are necessary given the need for vast amounts of data for public planning and service delivery purposes, training AI, and scientific endeavours.

The UN Roadmap for Digital Cooperation[54] advises governments to establish common standards for open data, guiding the public and private sectors in providing safe access to open data while respecting privacy. According to the AI for Africa Blueprint, data protection principles (DPPs) are essential for regulating AI when personal data is involved, as they help safeguard the privacy of such data. These principles guide how users should collect, manage, and utilise data. However, DPPs do not apply when processing non-personal data, such as anonymised information or industrial machine-generated data.

Access to data is crucial for fostering a competitive AI environment. The AI for Africa Blueprint outlines several key objectives in this regard. First, implementing a comprehensive data strategy that includes practical recommendations for building a data market infrastructure, which will improve the availability and quality of accessible data through enhanced data access and voluntary sharing. Second, addressing gaps in data privacy legislation, as well as related laws, is essential to mitigate the risks associated with AI. Third, establishing guidelines for information exchange between the public and private sectors that comply with data protection laws is necessary. Lastly, developing and refining technical data de-identification, transfer, and processing methods will support secure and efficient use of data. Ultimately, any AI regulatory framework must balance safeguarding privacy with using data for the public good.

AI Regulation under a DA government

South Africa's Information Regulator claims to have started internal discussions on regulating ChatGPT and other AI Technologies to ensure they do not violate data privacy laws.[55] However, the focus appears to be on direct marketing and surveillance rather than AI itself.[56] The scope of AI extends far beyond protecting personal information and should be handled by a suitably qualified body. The development of the necessary regulatory and oversight frameworks should, therefore, be expedited in a controlled manner under the guidance of a Cyber Commissioner.

In July 2023, the DA introduced the Constitution Twentieth Amendment Bill into Parliament, hereinafter the 'Cyber Commissioner Bill'.[57] In contrast to the Cyber Commissioner, which will focus on the monitoring and investigation of cybersecurity incidents and threats in the private and public sectors, the Information Regulator will continue to focus on the lawful processing of personal information. For the Cyber Commissioner to perform their functions, they will need to possess specialised knowledge of, or a suitable qualification in, cybersecurity and cyber forensics.

The Cyber Commissioner will be responsible for establishing and maintaining effective cybersecurity measures for all government bodies and entities that handle public information. It must also create a cybersecurity hub to report, monitor, and investigate cybersecurity incidents and threats in the private and public sectors. Additionally, the Cyber Commissioner should offer advisory and technical support to other state entities, including guidance to the defence force on developing and sustaining cyber defence capabilities, assistance to the police service for conducting cyber forensic investigations, and counsel to institutions managing the country's critical infrastructure on cybersecurity matters.

Under a DA government, the Cyber Commissioner's role would be to provide policy guidance to support the promotion, monitoring and evaluation of compliance with cybersecurity standards across all government departments. These responsibilities would include, but are not limited to, adherence to the law, protection of personal information, interception of data, and providing recommendations to Parliament on amendments to existing legislation or the development of new legislation. Some of the key risks associated with AI include the use of copyrighted material to train AI and the use of deepfakes in generative AI that exploit images and voices of individuals without their consent or compensation. The Cyber Commissioner would, therefore, assist in mitigating against some of these risks.

Since the introduction of the Cyber Commissioner Bill in 2023, the AI landscape has developed rapidly, and it may be necessary to review the mandate of the Commissioner through amendments to address the risks and opportunities AI presents specifically. It should also be noted that South Africa might not have the necessary capacity and skills to execute the mandate of the Commissioner, especially concerning AI regulation. Therefore, the government must allocate resources to upskill officials.

Specialist capacity should also be developed for the early identification of politically motivated disinformation that incites violence or influences the outcome of elections. This would include open-access reporting and tracking mechanisms to respond to fake news reports. The IEC, for example, has issued a draft voluntary Code of Conduct on Digital Disinformation and an online reporting platform.[58] However, as is pointed out by various commentators,[59] the seemingly organic interactions between individuals and AI chatbots pull people into so-called "echo chambers" that make it increasingly difficult to distinguish between *real* social media content and interactions from *fake* ones. Therefore, one cannot rely on the public to instinctively know which posts to report. There is a need to introduce regulations that will make it mandatory for AI-generated content to be able to identify itself as AI-generated to mitigate this risk.

DA Policy Recommendations for Maximising AI's Potential and Mitigating Against Its Risks

For South Africans to fully benefit from the opportunities presented by AI, the country's ICT infrastructure and policies need to be adapted accordingly. The DA revealed its ICT policy in 2024, and within it is an outline for how the party would approach ICT. It is therefore important to read this position paper on AI as a complementary document to our ICT policy, as AI has immense potential to grow the economy and create jobs by optimising output in both the public and private sectors. However, harnessing these benefits must be coupled with a responsible regulatory approach. The DA proposes a comprehensive risk-based regulatory oversight approach to safeguard against the potential harms of AI, while utilising it to foster greater socio-economic development.

To safeguard against the potential harms of AI, while harnessing its potential to grow the economy, the DA will take the following steps:

1. Introducing AI regulation

- **Establishing a Cyber Commissioner** with specialised expertise in cybersecurity to oversee the development and enforcement of risk-based regulatory and oversight frameworks for AI technologies. The purpose of the Cyber Commissioner will be to ensure that these frameworks do not violate any data privacy laws. This role would complement the Information Regulator, whose scope includes cybersecurity incidents and threats that affect both the private and public sectors. Refer to the section on Cybersecurity and AI Regulation under the DA Government.
- **Introducing laws to protect South Africans.** The party will introduce laws ensuring the ethical use of AI, following the EU's risk-based approach, to protect against algorithmic biases and discrimination. Additionally, South African laws need to be updated to include **likeness and content protection for South African artists.**

2. Establishing a National AI Strategic Framework

- **Developing an AI National Framework** based on the Windhoek Statement on Artificial Intelligence in Southern Africa,[60] the AI for Africa Blueprint, and the African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy.
- **Developing guidelines for using AI in government and regulatory sandboxes** that serve as interim guardrails while legislation and regulation are developed. This process should include creating common standards on open data to guide the public and private sectors in providing safe open data access while respecting privacy and guidelines on the use of AI in crime and intelligence operations.

- **Creating a conducive environment for the private sector to realise the opportunities of AI.** This includes resources (i.e. expanding the availability of high-performance mobile internet network coverage and a reliable electricity supply), enabling regulations, and incentives for the private sector to leverage the growth opportunities offered by AI. Tax incentives or preferential procurement for private firms that invest in AI research and development are some of the possible policy measures that could be explored. By encouraging private businesses to contribute to AI skills development and retention, the South African economy will be equipped to take full advantage of this next stage of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

3. Improving Digital Infrastructure

- **Progressively improve South Africa's digital infrastructure** in terms of both access and affordability, especially in underserved and rural areas. This is outlined in further detail in our ICT Policy.
- **Offsetting AI's environmental impact** by investing in research into less energy-intensive computing technology and alternative cooling methods for computing hardware, such as adopting liquid cooling systems that utilise non-potable or recycled water.[61] Additionally, investing in green energy alternatives, as pointed out in the DA's Energy Policy, could also help offset some of the carbon footprint generated by South Africa's AI use.
- **Facilitating vehicles to fund and develop an Innovation Pipeline of investable lab-to-market initiatives**, including but not limited to the Hubs. An example of this is the Innovation Centre for Artificial Intelligence (ICAI) located in the Netherlands. This programme comprises a network of 17 public-private labs, funded by the Dutch Research Council, which employ around 170 PhD candidates to establish a collaborative network between academia, industry, and government, thereby developing the Dutch government's AI strategy.[62]
- **Implementing an enabling visa regime** to attract and retain top AI talent, as outlined in our Migration Policy. Following the UN's Social Development Goal (SDG) 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), to promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, the DA will provide automatic corporate visa allocation for scarce skills workers, as a percentage of the workforce, for companies in this sector.
- **Exploring incentives that will promote investment in cloud computing infrastructure** to enable startups and other businesses to lead the charge in building the sector in South Africa.

4. Enhancing Government Responsiveness

- **Progressively implement AI in cutting red tape and flagging fraudulent procurement, corruption, tax and social grant fraud.** There are multiple international success stories where AI has been implemented to flag corruption. In Australia, the taxation office prevented $2.5 billion in fraudulent payments and identified more than $530 million in unpaid taxes by implementing AI software.[63] Another example can be found in France, where the government implemented an AI software called "Albert" that automatically filters all government queries received and sends them to the appropriate government department and employees. This software has also been utilised to minimalise the bureaucratic functions of the state by managing court hearings, detecting forest fires, managing human resources and automating medical reports.[64]

Case Study: Department of Home Affairs under a DA Minister

The DA Minister for Home Affairs, Dr. Leon Schreiber, announced that his department would implement AI technology and machine learning to analyse the completeness and authenticity of documents, as well as to detect patterns and recognise anomalies in the department's database. This would increase the department's efficiency by clearing backlogs and reducing opportunities for corruption to take place. This move by the Minister is a clear demonstration of the DA's ICT Policy being implemented.

Implementing AI and machine learning in our government departments would further enable the realisation of some of the following recommendations within the DA's ICT policy in action:

- **Promoting the adoption of digital technologies across all government departments** and spheres;
- **Ensuring secure and reliable ICT infrastructure**, promoting institutional development through training and up-skilling, creating robust cybersecurity policies and establishing an independent Office of the Cyber Commissioner that will fall under the Constitution's Chapter 9 institutions;
- **Increasing the number of online government services** and ensuring they are user-friendly, regularly updated and available in all official languages;
- **Ensuring e-services address essential needs like healthcare, education, and municipal services** to minimise travel time and costs associated with in-person visits and reduce regulatory red tape.

- **Promoting cross-government, cross-sector and international collaboration on AI-related matters through local and international councils, networks, communities, and partnerships.** This includes active participation in international technical committees, particularly those fostering public-private initiatives designed for developing countries. Example initiatives where participation may be beneficial include the UNESCO-Southern Africa sub-Regional Forum on Artificial Intelligence (SARFAI), the African Union in the development of the Continental AI Strategy, UN Global Pulse and the IEEE's initiatives on the Recommended Practice for Internet Grades of Service in Rural Areas and the Government Engagement Program on Standards (GEPS).

5. Promoting AI Skills Development

- **Implementing AI learning in schools** will help develop AI and other computing skills early on and will enable South African graduates to be competitive in future job markets.

Case Study: AI introduced as a mandatory subject in UAE schools.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) government have announced that AI will be introduced as a mandatory subject in all grades (Kindergarten to Grade 12) to align its education sector with the skills demanded by an ever-evolving technological landscape and job market.

According to their Minister for Education, Sarah Al Amiri, an initial 20 lessons throughout the academic year are planned, with lessons varying in complexity. Younger students will learn what robots are and how they might be used in daily life, whilst older students will develop machine learning algorithms. This new curriculum will require students to develop their own AI systems while learning about bias, algorithms, ethical use of AI, plagiarism and practice prompt engineering with real-world scenarios.[66]

The UAE has made significant investments in its AI infrastructure and has indicated its ambitions to integrate AI use in multiple sectors, such as healthcare, logistics and education.[67]

- **Expanding free internet access to less-connected areas** to empower learners to take full advantage of the opportunities it can bring. This includes children gaining access to online learning materials and resources, as well as enabling them and their teachers to access AI software.

Implementing these recommendations will require significant resource allocations, which would require the national government to allocate budgets to capacitate their human and other resources to adapt to the fast-changing digitalised world. However, this will be required for South Africa not to be left behind during this technological revolution. The adoption of our **risk-based approach** will mitigate against any unnecessary red tape which stifles innovation and growth in this strategic sector.

Conclusion

The EU AI Act, UK AI Safety Summit Bletchley Declaration, G7 declaration, US executive order, and African Continental AI Strategy have all been implemented. However, South Africa still lags behind without a National AI Framework that guides how we unlock AI's potential to grow the economy and create jobs.

Establishing and capacitating a Cyber Commissioner is a key first step towards a capable state component which can support oversight and regulatory development. Developing an AI National Framework is another urgent step in defining and designing a conducive environment for the public and private sectors to realise AI's opportunities.

To ensure the successful roll-out of AI in South Africa, it is necessary to establish local skills and infrastructure and develop an innovation pipeline that fosters economic growth and creates jobs. We must act urgently to ensure that all South Africans can benefit from AI's enormous economic potential.

End Notes

1 Stryker, C. & Kavlakoglu, E. (n.d.). *What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?* Available at: https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/artificial-intelligence (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

2 Stryker, C. & Kavlakoglu, E. (n.d.). *What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?* Available at: https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/artificial-intelligence (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

3 Bond S. (2024). 'How AI deepfakes polluted elections in 2024', *NPR*, 21 December. Available at: https://www.npr.org/2024/12/21/nx-s1-5220301/deepfakes-memes-artificial-intelligence-elections (Accessed: 8 April 2025).

4 McCallum, S. (2023). 'ChatGPT banned in Italy over privacy concerns', *BBC*, 1 April. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-65139406 (Accessed: 8 April 2025).

5 Hurst, L. (2023). ''Profound risk to humanity': Tech leaders call for 'pause' on advanced AI development', *Euronews*, 29 March. Available at: https://www.euronews.com/next/2023/03/29/profound-risk-to-humanity-elon-musk-and-steve-wozniak-join-calls-to-halt-ai-development (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

6 PricewaterhouseCoopers (n.d). *Sizing the prize What's the real value of AI for your business and how can you capitalise?* Available at: https://www.pwc.no/no/publikasjoner/Digitalisering/pwc-ai-analysis-sizing-the-prize-report.pdf (Accessed: 06 July 2026).

7 Cann, O. (2018). 'Machines Will Do More Tasks Than Humans by 2025 but Robot Revolution Will Still Create 58 Million Net New Jobs in Next Five Years', *World Economic Forum*, 17 September. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/press/2018/09/machines-will-do-more-tasks-than-humans-by-2025-but-robot-revolution-will-still-create-58-million-net-new-jobs-in-next-five-years/ (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

8 Nexford University (2026). 'How Artificial Intelligence Will Change the World', *Nexford University*, 4 April. Available at: https://www.nexford.edu/insights/how-will-ai-affect-jobs (Accessed: 12 May 2026).

9 Shine, I. (2023). 'We often hear that AI will take our jobs. But what jobs will it create?', *World Economic Forum*, 18 September. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/09/jobs-ai-will-create/ (Accessed: 11 November 2024).

10 The Economist (2016). 'Automation and anxiety: Will smarter machines cause mass unemployment?', *The Economist*, 23 June. Available at: https://www.economist.com/special-report/2016/06/23/automation-and-anxiety (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

11 Cognizant (2019). *Advanced AI/ML Solution Detects Check Fraud for a Global Bank*. London: Cognizant. Available at: https://www.cognizant.com/en_us/case-studies/documents/ai-driven-solution-reduces-fraud-risk-for-bank-codex3688.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

12 Rogers, J. & Jonker, A. (n.d.). *What is AI Inventory Management?* Available at: https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/ai-inventory-management (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

13 Piddubna, A. (2024). 'AI in Agriculture – The Future of Farming', *Intellias*, 4 May. Available at: https://intellias.com/artificial-intelligence-in-agriculture/ (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

14 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2025). *Mauritius: artificial intelligence readiness assessment report*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000397391 (Accessed: 14 My 2026).

15 Berryhill, J., Kok Heang, K., Clogher, R. and McBride, K. (2019). *Hello, World: Artificial Intelligence and its Use in the Public Sector.* [n.p.]: OECD. Available at: https://oecd-opsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/AI-Report-Print.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

16 Viechnicki, P. and Eggers, W.D. (n.d.). *How much time and money can AI save government?* [n.p.]: Deloitte University Press. Available at: https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/articles/2024/3834_how-much-time-and-money-can-ai-save-government/DUP_How-much-time-and-money-can-AI-save-government.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

17 Ministry of East African Community & Regional Development (2020). *Ease of Doing Business Reform Milestones 2014-2020*. [n.p.]: Government of Kenya. Available at: https://www.innovationagency.go.ke/uploads/Ease_of_Doing_Business.pdf (Accessed: 10 September 2024).

18 Department of Home Affairs (2024). 'Minister Leon Schreiber's Opening Statement at the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs in Parliament', *Department of Home Affairs,* 20 August. Available at: https://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/statements-speeches/1803-minister-leon-schreiber-s-opening-statement-at-the-portfolio-committee-on-home-affairs-in-parliament (Accessed: 22 August 2024).

19 Schreiber, L. (2022). 'R373 million salary increase for top ANC cadres while 73% of phone calls and emails to government departments go unanswered', *Democratic Alliance,* 29 May. Available at: https://www.da.org.za/2022/05/r373-million-salary-increase-for-top-anc-cadres-while-73-of-phone-calls-and-emails-to-government-departments-go-unanswered?s=03 (Accessed: 18 August 2022).

20 The White House (n.d.). *Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at: https://data.aclum.org/storage/2025/01/OSTP_www_whitehouse_gov_ostp_ai-bill-of-rights.pdf (Accessed: 14 May 2026).

21The White House (n.d.). Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at: https://data.aclum.org/storage/2025/01/OSTP_www_whitehouse_gov_ostp_ai-bill-of-rights.pdf (Accessed: 14 May 2026).

22 Aarvik, P. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence – a promising anti-corruption tool in development settings?* [n.p.]: U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. Available at: https://www.u4.no/api/publications/artificial-intelligence-a-promising-anti-corruption-tool-in-development-settings/pdf (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

23 Corruption Watch (2023). 'Artificial intelligence to add a new dimension to anti-corruption efforts', *Corruption Watch*, 17 October. Available at: https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/artificial-intelligence-to-add-a-new-dimension-to-anti-corruption-efforts/# (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

24 European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (2024). *AI and policing: The benefits and challenges of artificial intelligence for law enforcement*. Luxembourg: Europol Innovation Lab. Available at: https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/AI-and-policing.pdf (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

25 Sigsworth, R. (2023). 'Risks and rewards of AI for organised crime in Africa', *ISS Today*, 11 July. Available at: https://issafrica.org/iss-today/risks-and-rewards-of-ai-for-organised-crime-in-africa (Accessed: 24 August 2024).

26 Sang, R. & Kniepmann, C. (2024). 'AI and fraud: What CPAs should know', *Journal of Accountancy*, 1 May. Available at: https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/issues/2024/may/ai-and-fraud-what-cpas-should-know/ (Accessed: 8 April 2025).

27 Vidya, V., 2024. 'Impact of Artificial Intelligence in Auditing', *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 5(5), pp.3169–3178. Available at: doi:https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.5.0524.1219. (Accessed: 24 August 2024).

28 National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (n.d.). *Artificial Intelligence in Predictive Policing Issue Brief*. Available at: https://naacp.org/resources/artificial-intelligence-predictive-policing-issue-brief# (Accessed: 11 March 2025).

29 Sigworth, R. (2023). 'Cybercrime / AI and organised crime in Africa', *Enact Africa*, 29 June. Available at: https://enactafrica.org/enact-observer/ai-and-organised-crime-in-africa (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

30 Almaslukh, A. (2024). 'AI could empower and proliferate social engineering cyberattacks', *World Economic Forum*, 25 October. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/10/ai-agents-in-cybersecurity-the-augmented-risks-we-all-need-to-know-about/ (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

31 Mackenzie, A. (2022). 'Namibia leads the way with digital nomad visa', *Southern & Eastern African Tourism Update*, 12 October. Available at: https://www.tourismupdate.com/article/namibia-leads-the-way-with-digital-nomad-visa (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

32 Pilling D. (2019). 'Are tech companies Africa's new colonialists?', *Financial Times*, 5 July. Available at: https://www.ft.com/content/4625d9b8-9c16-11e9-b8ce-8b459ed04726 (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

33 Pilling D. (2019). 'Are tech companies Africa's new colonialists?', *Financial Times*, 5 July. Available at: https://www.ft.com/content/4625d9b8-9c16-11e9-b8ce-8b459ed04726 (Accessed: 18 August 2025).

34 Mzekandaba, S. (2024). 'SA opens Africa's first military-focused AI hub', *ITWeb*, 6 May. Available at: https://www.itweb.co.za/article/sa-opens-africas-first-military-focused-ai-hub/LPwQ57lbE8oqNgkj (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

35 Hankins, E., Nettel, P.F., Martinescu, L., Grau, G. & Rahim, S. (2023). G*overnment AI Readiness Index 2023.* [n.p.]: Oxford Insights. Available at: https://oxfordinsights.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-Government-AI-Readiness-Index-2.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

36 Dev (2016). 'CHPC's Lengau ranked 121st on the world's 'Top500 list' of supercomputers', *Centre for High Performance Computing*, 11 November. Available at: https://www.chpc.ac.za/chpcs-lengau-ranked-121st-on-the-worlds-top500-list-of-supercomputers/ (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

37 Heikkilä, M. (2023). 'AI's carbon footprint is bigger than you think', *MIT Technology Review*, 5 December. Available at: https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/12/05/1084417/ais-carbon-footprint-is-bigger-than-you-think/ (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

38 Heikkilä, M. (2022). 'We're getting a better idea of AI's true carbon footprint', *MIT Technology Review*, 14 November. Available at: https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/11/14/1063192/were-getting-a-better-idea-of-ais-true-carbon-footprint (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

39 Sellman, M. & Vaughan, A. (2024). ''Thirsty' ChatGPT uses four times more water than previously thought', *The* Times, 4 October. Available at: https://www.thetimes.com/uk/technology-uk/article/thirsty-chatgpt-uses-four-times-more-water-than-previously-thought-bc0pqswdr (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

40 *European Union Artificial Intelligence Act* (2024). Available at: https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/ai-act-explorer/ (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

41 Prime Minister's Office, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office & Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (2023). 'The Bletchley Declaration by Countries Attending the AI Safety Summit, 1-2 November 2023', *AI Safety Summit*, Bletchley Park, 2 November. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ai-safety-summit-2023-the-bletchley-declaration/the-bletchley-declaration-by-countries-attending-the-ai-safety-summit-1-2-november-2023 (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

42 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2023). 'G7 Leaders' Statement on the Hiroshima AI Process', G7 2023 Hiroshima Summit, Hiroshima, 30 October. Available at: https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100573466.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

43 Biden, J.R. (2023). 'Executive Order 14110—Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence' *American Presidency Project,* 30 October. Available at: https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-14110-safe-secure-and-trustworthy-development-and-use-artificial (Accessed: 14 May 2026).

44 African Union (2024). *Draft Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy: Harnessing AI for Africa's Development and Prosperity*. Available at: https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fposts.kictanet.or.ke%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F05%2FEN_Draft-Continetal-AI-Strategy-May-2024-9-5-2024-Version-for-Validation.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

45 Hankins, E., Nettel, P.F., Martinescu, L., Grau, G. & Rahim, S. (2023). G*overnment AI Readiness Index 2023.* [n.p.]: Oxford Insights. Available at: https://oxfordinsights.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-Government-AI-Readiness-Index-2.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

46 Sedola, S., Pescino, A.J. & Greene, T. (2021). *AI for Africa Blueprint.* Kigali: Smart Africa. Available at: https://www.bmz-digital.global/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/70029-eng_ai-for-africa-blueprint.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

47 Barrett, M. (2023). 'The dark side of AI: algorithmic bias and global inequality', *University of Cambridge, Judge Business* School, 31 October. Available at: https://www.jbs.cam.ac.uk/2023/the-dark-side-of-ai-algorithmic-bias-and-global-inequality/ (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

48 African Union (2024). 'African Ministers adopt landmark Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy', *African Union*, 17 June. Available at: https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20240617/african-ministers-adopt-landmark-continental-artificial-intelligence-strategy (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

49 Wouter Grove (n.d.). 'The AI Maturity Assessment Framework for South Africa.' Available at: https://www.woutergrove.com/post/the-ai-maturity-assessment-framework-for-south-africa (Accessed: 06 July 2026).

50 Sedola, S., Pescino, A.J. & Greene, T. (2021). *AI for Africa Blueprint.* Kigali: Smart Africa. Available at: https://www.bmz-digital.global/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/70029-eng_ai-for-africa-blueprint.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

51 Sedola, S., Pescino, A.J. & Greene, T. (2021). *AI for Africa Blueprint.* Kigali: Smart Africa. Available at: https://www.bmz-digital.global/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/70029-eng_ai-for-africa-blueprint.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

52 Sedola, S., Pescino, A.J. & Greene, T. (2021). *AI for Africa Blueprint.* Kigali: Smart Africa. Available at: https://www.bmz-digital.global/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/70029-eng_ai-for-africa-blueprint.pdf (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

53 Gilbert, P. (2025). 'The role of African regulatory sandboxes in the age of AI', *Connecting Africa,* 26 February. Available at: https://www.connectingafrica.com/ai/the-role-of-african-regulatory-sandboxes-in-the-age-of-ai (Accessed: 28 March 2025).

54 Chan, Y.P. (2020). *United Nations Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*. [n.p.]: UNIN. Available at: https://www.uninnovation.network/innovation-library/the-secretary-generals-roadmap-for-digital-cooperation# (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

55 Malinga, S. (2023) 'InfoReg examines regulation of ChatGPT, AI in SA', *ITWeb*, 6 April. Available at: https://www.itweb.co.za/article/inforeg-examines-regulation-of-chatgpt-ai-in-sa/JN1gPvOAxVXMjL6m (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

56 Cooper, D., Haley, B., Govender, D. & Mokbad, A. (2024). 'Long-Awaited POPIA Guidance on Direct Marketing Published by South Africa's Information Regulator', *Global Policy Watch*, 20 December. Available at: https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2024/12/long-awaited-popia-guidance-on-direct-marketing-published-by-south-africas-information-regulator/ (Accessed: 28 March 2025).

57 Breytenbach, G. (2023). 'DA introduces Bill to regulate cyber security', *Democratic Alliance*, 18 July. Available at: https://www.da.org.za/2023/07/da-introduces-bill-to-regulate-cyber-security (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

58 Electoral Commission of South Africa (n.d.). 'Electoral Commission launches online reporting platform for digital disinformation', *Electoral Commission of South Africa.* Available at: https://www.elections.org.za/content/About-Us/News/Electoral-Commission-launches-online-reporting-platform-for-digital-disinformation/ (Accessed: 18 August 2024).

59 Legends, R. (2024). 'Echo Chamber Effect: How AI is Quietly Redefining Human Interaction', *Medium*, 28 October. Available at: https://medium.com/@ronakkabra26/echo-chamber-effect-how-ai-is-quietly-redefining-human-interaction-744930a16320 (Accessed: 12 May 2025).

60 UNESCO & Republic of Namibia (2022). 'Windhoek Statement on Artificial Intelligence in Southern Africa', *UNESCO Southern Africa sub-Regional Forum on Artificial Intelligence,* Windhoek, 9 September. Available at: https://sarfai2022.org/assets/documents/Windhoek_Statement_on_Artficial_Intelligence%20in%20Southern%20Africa_English.pdf (Accessed 18 August 2024).

61 Gama-Kotzé, T. (n.d.) 'A green future for Generative AI in South Africa?', *Leader*. Available at: https://www.leader.co.za/article.aspx?s=209&a=9430&title=AI (Accessed: 8 April 2025).

62 Maastricht University (2023). 'Artificial Intelligence programme ROBUST receives additional €25 million in funding from NWO', *Maastricht University*, 10 January. Available at: https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/news/artificial-intelligence-programme-robust-receives-additional-%E2%82%AC25-million-funding-nwo (Accessed: 31 March 2025).

63 Rootcode (2024). 'Intelligence in Modernizing Government Operations and Services', *Rootcode*, 11 June. Available at: https://rootcode.io/blog/ai-for-governments (Accessed: 31 March 2025).

64 Gumede, L. (2024) *How South Africa can leverage the Artificial Intelligence Revolution*. Cape Town: Inclusive Society Institute. Available at: https://www.inclusivesociety.org.za/post/how-south-africa-can-leverage-the-artificial-intelligence-revolution (Accessed: 31 March 2024).

65 Roos, A. (2024) 'Home Affairs' digital shift spearheads Public Service modernisation', *Democratic Alliance*, 1 September. Available at: https://www.da.org.za/2024/09/home-affairs-digital-shift-spearheads-public-service-modernisation# (Accessed: 14 March 2024).

66 Warner, K. (2025) 'Why the UAE has mandated AI learning in schools', *Semafor*, 7 May. Available at: https://www.semafor.com/article/05/07/2025/why-the-uae-has-mandated-ai-learning-in-schools (Accessed: 12 May 2025).

67 The New Arab (2025) 'UAE to introduce AI in schools from age four as part of nationwide curriculum shift', *The New Arab*, 6 May. Available at: https://www.newarab.com/news/uae-introduce-ai-schools-age-four-tech-drive (Accessed: 12 May 2025).

Democratic Alliance

Our_DA

our_da

our_da

Democratic Alliance

da.org.za