

New Council of Europe framework convention on Artificial Intelligence and human rights, democracy and the rule of law

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The Council of Europe – an international organization based in Strasbourg comprising 46 European countries (including 27 that are members of the European Union) and which was set up in 1949 to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law – has contributed to the ever-developing regulation of Artificial Intelligence with the opening for signature early this month of its “*Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law*” (the “**Convention**”).

This follows hot on the heels of the coming into force last month of the European Union’s Regulation relating to AI (commonly referred to as “the AI Act”).

Whilst the AI Act’s focus is on the commercial parties that are developing and using AI, specifying rules that are intended to regulate their conduct, the Convention provides rather for obligations on *states* that sign up to it.

As such, it is the first-ever international legally binding treaty between states that is aimed at ensuring that AI systems throughout their entire life cycle will respect, and be consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Thus far, the Convention has been signed by Andorra, Georgia, Iceland, Norway, The Republic of Moldova, San Marino, the UK, Israel, the United States of America and the European Union.

There is the potential for many more countries to sign up to it and it has the potential to enter into force in the not-too-distant future (as to which see below).

Object and purpose of the Convention

The object of the Convention is to ensure that activities within the lifecycle of artificial intelligence systems are fully consistent with human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The Convention requires that parties to it maintain or adopt appropriate legislative, administrative or other measures to give effect to the provisions in the Convention, it being recognized that these measures will be graduated and differentiated as may be necessary in view of the severity and probability of the occurrence of adverse impacts on human rights, democracy and the rule of law throughout the lifecycle of AI systems.

[Read the full article.](#)