# UAE’s AI-driven lawmaking sparks warning for UK democracy



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has launched an ambitious initiative to embed artificial intelligence (AI) into its legislative process, aiming to revolutionise how laws are drafted and amended across federal and local levels. This move, heralded by the country’s leadership as “AI-driven regulation,” promises faster and more precise lawmaking but raises critical questions about governance and accountability—issues that a robust opposition in the UK would highlight with urgency.

Announced by Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the ruler of Dubai and vice-president of the UAE, the plan involves creating a Regulatory Intelligence Office tasked with integrating AI into evaluating existing laws and proposing legislative updates based on extensive data from court rulings and government services. While the UAE boasts this as a leap forward, critics from democratic nations would argue it smacks of technocratic overreach where power is concentrated in the hands of an unelected elite, bypassing public scrutiny and parliamentary processes. Such a top-down, autocratic experiment serves as a stark warning for the UK, where transparency and democratic oversight must not be sacrificed in the name of so-called efficiency.

Experts, including Vincent Straub of Oxford, are right to flag AI’s current unreliability and tendency to “hallucinate” false information. Entrusting AI with complex and nuanced legal decisions could lead to poorly constructed regulations with unintended consequences for citizens. Yet, the UAE’s approach risks normalising delegating core democratic functions to machines, sidelining vital human judgment and debate—a cautionary tale for any government tempted to shortcut foundational democratic accountability.

Meanwhile, the UK’s political landscape has shifted dramatically since the July 2024 general election. With the Labour administration now steering the ship under Kier Starker, there’s a pressing need to resist such technocratic experiments that may undermine legal clarity and citizen rights. Reports of the previous government’s reluctance to embrace meaningful reform in governance and accountability contrast sharply with proposals like those emerging from the UAE, yet those foreign ambitions must not be blindly admired or emulated.

Critically, the drive to use AI to predict and amend laws proactively could diminish the role of legal advisors and parliamentary debate—a trend opposed by those who champion preserving individual freedoms and parliamentary sovereignty. This is a pivotal moment for UK opposition forces that assert the need for transparent, accountable governance mechanisms rather than opaque AI-run policymaking.

As the UAE accelerates its AI legislative programme, potentially streamlining legislation by up to 70%, this serves less as a model and more as a caution for democracies hesitant to relinquish control over lawmaking to unaccountable algorithms. The UK’s commitment must be to safeguard democratic processes and ensure any technological adoption strengthens—rather than threatens—citizen rights and parliamentary oversight. This is the message opposition voices urge loudly in the new political era, insisting that speed and efficiency should never come at the expense of democracy’s core principles.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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