# UK delays AI regulation bill until 2026 amid copyright and oversight concerns



The UK Government has delayed its long-anticipated artificial intelligence regulation bill by at least a year, pushing it into the next parliamentary session, expected after the King’s Speech in May 2026. The move aims to allow time for the development of a more comprehensive framework to address the growing complexities of AI.

Science, Innovation and Technology Secretary Peter Kyle confirmed the postponement, which has sparked concern about the ongoing lack of oversight in a sector evolving at speed. Initially, Labour had planned to introduce a focused AI bill targeting large language models such as ChatGPT, requiring companies to submit systems for review by the AI Security Institute. The goal was to manage risk while strengthening the UK’s position in the global AI race.

The delay reflects a broader strategy to align UK regulations with those of the United States. According to a government source quoted by The Guardian, the revised bill may include copyright provisions designed to strike a balance between supporting creators and encouraging AI innovation. This effort includes ongoing discussions with rights holders and technology leaders.

Copyright has already become a flashpoint. A separate data bill that permits AI companies to train models on copyrighted content—unless creators opt out—has provoked backlash from the House of Lords and the creative industries. Artists including Elton John, Paul McCartney and Kate Bush have criticised the policy, warning it could erode copyright protections and damage the cultural sector.

Public opinion appears to support greater oversight. A survey by the Ada Lovelace Institute and the Alan Turing Institute found that 88% of people believe the government should intervene when AI products pose serious risks. Over 75% also support formal regulation over private sector self-governance.

The debate comes amid rising demand for AI skills across the UK job market. A report by PwC highlights a long-term increase in AI-related job postings, even as overall AI vacancies have recently dipped. The findings point to a sustained need for skilled workers as AI adoption grows.

The government is under pressure to strike a balance—fostering innovation while safeguarding intellectual property and public trust. Some, including investor Nathan Benaich, have welcomed the delay as an opportunity to craft sound policy. But others warn that timely regulation is essential, especially as AI becomes more deeply embedded in daily life.

As ministers prepare the next steps, the challenge remains to develop legislation that keeps pace with technology while addressing mounting ethical, legal and economic concerns.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.techmonitor.ai/digital-economy/ai-and-automation/uk-defers-ai-regulation-bill> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/feb/24/uk-delays-plans-to-regulate-ai-as-ministers-seek-to-align-with-trump-administration> - The UK government has postponed its plans to regulate artificial intelligence (AI), aiming to align with the US administration's approach. Initially, ministers intended to publish an AI bill before Christmas, but it is now expected to appear in parliament by summer. The bill was intended to require companies to submit large AI models, such as ChatGPT, for testing by the UK's AI Security Institute. However, the government's desire to attract AI companies and avoid regulations that might deter them has led to the delay. The government remains committed to bringing forward legislation that allows the safe realisation of AI's benefits.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/britains-new-government-aims-regulate-most-powerful-ai-models-2024-07-17/> - Britain's new Labour government, led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, announced intentions to regulate the most powerful artificial intelligence (AI) models but has not proposed specific laws yet. In a speech by King Charles outlining the legislative agenda, the government plans to establish appropriate legislation for AI model development. Previously, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak aimed to position Britain as a leader in AI safety, hosting a global summit and launching the AI Safety Institute. Nathan Benaich of Air Street Capital praised the government's cautious approach, avoiding rushed decisions on AI regulation. The sector-based regulatory strategy is seen as a competitive advantage against the EU. However, experts like Gaia Marcus from the Ada Lovelace Institute stress the urgency of new legislation due to the rapid integration of AI tools into daily life and the resulting risks.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/dec/19/uk-arts-and-media-reject-plan-to-let-ai-firms-use-copyrighted-material> - A coalition of UK arts and media organisations, including the British Phonographic Industry and the Society of Authors, has rejected a government proposal allowing AI firms to use copyrighted material for training without explicit permission from rights holders. The plan, subject to a 10-week consultation, aims to improve access to content for AI developers while allowing rights holders to control how their content is used. However, the coalition argues that the proposal could undermine existing copyright laws and harm the creative industries.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/technology/artificial-intelligence/dont-let-ai-rip-off-artists-beatles-star-mccartney-warns-uk-government-2025-01-26/> - Paul McCartney has cautioned that artificial intelligence (AI) could exploit artists and urged the UK government to ensure copyright reforms protect the creative industries. He expressed concerns that AI models could produce content based on popular works without compensating the original creators. In December, Britain proposed a way for artists to license their work for AI training but suggested an exception for large-scale use where rights aren't reserved. McCartney emphasized that proper copyright protection is essential for creative people, warning that only tech giants might benefit otherwise. He cited his own experience using AI to recreate John Lennon's voice, illustrating the risk of artists losing control over their work. The government is reviewing copyright laws, seeking to clarify legal ambiguities to support AI investment while protecting creators' rights.
6. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/virginieberger/2025/02/28/how-the-uks-ai-copyright-exception-hands-creators-work-to-big-tech-for-free/> - The UK government is reviving a controversial proposal to grant AI companies unrestricted access to copyrighted material for training their models. First introduced in 2022, the plan was paused in 2023 following backlash but has now resurfaced, with a public consultation concluding on February 25, 2025. This proposed change, which effectively legalizes the mass scraping of artistic works, has ignited fierce opposition from musicians, composers, and the broader creative industry. More than 1,000 artists, including icons such as Kate Bush, Annie Lennox, Damon Albarn, and Hans Zimmer, have come together to protest what they describe as the 'legalization of music theft' through a silent album titled Is This What We Want?