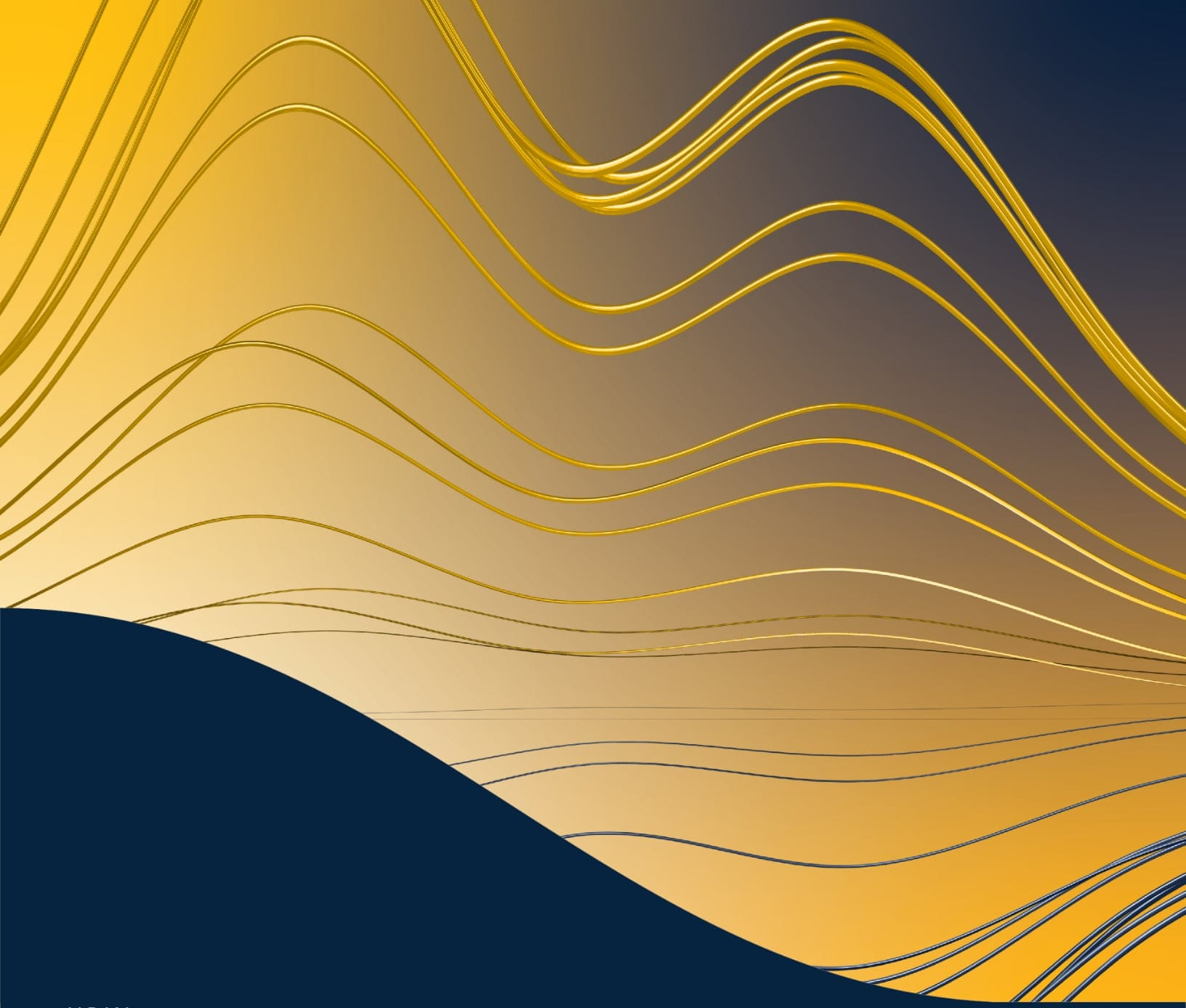


JAPAN

AI Laws of the World

DLA PIPER

Introduction



Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming the way we work. As AI technology advances, governments are grappling with how to regulate its development to maximise benefits whilst mitigating risks.

Some jurisdictions have implemented AI-specific laws, whilst others are in the process of drafting regulations, and many rely on existing legal frameworks to address AI-related concerns.

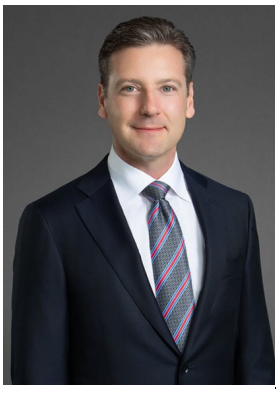
This guide provides an overview of AI laws and proposed regulations across 50+ territories. It highlights key legislative developments, including regulations, proposed bills and guidelines issued by governmental bodies.

As the global landscape of AI regulation evolves at an accelerating pace, our 2026 Q3 snapshot provides an insightful overview of these developments, as well as of the common thematic approaches of lawmakers and AI-focused organisations around the world.

Global key contacts



Gareth Stokes
Partner
Global Co-Chair, AI Practice
gareth.stokes@dlapiper.com
Full bio



Danny Tobey
Partner
Global Co-Chair AI and Data Analytics
danny.tobey@us.dlapiper.com
Full bio

Japan

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Law / proposed law

On 16 February 2024, the ruling party's project team on the 'Evolution and Implementation of AI' released 'the rough draft of the Basic Law for the Promotion of Responsible AI'. This rough draft of the AI Act intends to propose legal governance for frontier AI models. Frontier AI models are recognised as high-performance, general-purpose AI models capable of performing a wide variety of tasks and are as capable or more capable than today's most advanced models. The AI Act seeks to minimise risks and maximise benefits through appropriate AI governance.

Subsequently, the Act on Promotion of Research and Development, and Utilization of AI-related Technology ('**AI Act**') was enacted on 28 May 2025, and promulgated on 4 June 2025, with many of its provisions (except for certain sections) coming into force on the same day. The remaining provisions, including those concerning the establishment of the AI Strategy Headquarters, came into force on 1 September 2025, and the AI Act is now fully in force. While the AI Act primarily serves as a basic framework law targeting the national and local governments, it also sets forth responsibilities for AI-utilising business operators to proactively strive to improve the efficiency and sophistication of their business operations and to create new industries through the use of AI-related technologies, as well as to cooperate with measures implemented by national and local governments.

Separately, proposed amendments to the Act on the Protection of Personal Information may also affect AI development in Japan. The amendment bill reportedly includes measures to facilitate the use of data for AI development in certain cases where the data is used in a manner that does not identify individuals.

Following the full enforcement of the AI Act, the AI Strategy Headquarters was established as the government body responsible for promoting AI-related policy measures. The AI Act also provides for the formulation of an AI Basic Plan and guidelines concerning the appropriate research, development and utilisation of AI-related technologies.

The AI Basic Plan, which was adopted by the Japanese government on 23 December 2025, sets out the Japanese government's basic policy for promoting the research,

development and utilisation of AI-related technologies. It emphasises both the promotion of AI development and utilisation and the need to address AI-related risks, with a view to strengthening Japan's AI competitiveness, improving productivity and addressing social challenges.

Regulatory guidance / voluntary codes

On 19 April 2024, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry released the 'AI Guidelines for Business Ver1.0' ('**AI Guidelines**'). The AI Guidelines were subsequently updated, and the latest version is the 'AI Guidelines for Business Ver.1.2', published on 31 March 2026. Ver.1.2 reflects recent developments in AI technology, including AI agents and physical AI, by adding definitions of these technologies and addressing their expected benefits, associated risks and practical considerations. The updates cover, among other things, the benefits of autonomous coordination, analysis and decision-making by AI agents and the use of physical AI in real-world environments, while also highlighting risks such as unintended autonomous behaviour, expanded attack surfaces, increased difficulty of control and malicious code generation, as well as safeguards such as human involvement mechanisms and minimum privilege settings. Although the AI Guidelines are non-binding, they aim to establish guiding principles for business operators using AI to promote innovation and use of AI while reducing the social risks posed by AI. The AI Guidelines are abstract in nature, outlining the basic principles and approaches for ensuring safety of AI use whilst maximising the benefits. In response, the 'Appendix to the AI Guidelines' provides specific desirable approaches for AI-related business entities.

In addition to the AI Guidelines, there are several guidelines that establish legal interpretations of AI-related matters within the existing legal framework. For example, on 15 March 2024, the Agency for Cultural Affairs released the 'General Understanding on AI and Copyright in Japan' to clarify its view on the copyrightability of AI-generated works. The copyrightability of such works is determined on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as the quantity and content of instructions and inputs (such as prompts), the number of attempts to generate works and the selection process from among multiple generated works.

The LDP Headquarters for the Promotion of Digital Society Project Team on the Evolution and Implementation of AIs published an 'AI White Paper 2024: New Strategies in Stage II - Toward the world's most AI-friendly country' in April 2024 ('**2024 White Paper**'). The 2024 White Paper reflects on the rapid evolution of the AI landscape since the publication of the 2023 White Paper (referred to below) and sets out a Stage II strategy to enhance Japan's AI competitiveness and safety, promote AI R&D and utilisation, and lead international AI rulemaking, whilst fostering cooperation with Asian countries and the global south.

The LDP Headquarters for the Promotion of Digital Society Project Team on the Evolution and Implementation of AIs published an 'AI White Paper Japan's National Strategy in the New Era of AI' in April 2023 ('**2023 White Paper**'). The 2023 White Paper outlined Japan's strategy in the new era of AI, focusing on the impact of large-scale language models like ChatGPT, the need for a new national strategy and the importance of international competitiveness and regulatory frameworks.

In January 2019, the Cabinet Office of Japan published 'Social Principles of Human Centric AI' ('**Social Principles**'), introducing a collection of social principles for AI and highlighting some factors to be considered in the research and development of AI, as well as its implementation in society.

Appointed supervisory authority

A supervisory body with authority for AI has not yet been appointed in Japan by way of statutory appointment. Please note that Japan's AI Basic Plan refers to the strengthening of the functions of the Japan AI Safety Institute ('**AISI**'), including in relation to technical evaluation of AI models and understanding AI-related risks. AISI is not a dedicated AI supervisory authority with statutory enforcement powers.

Definitions

Under the AI Act, '**AI-related technology**' is defined as technology necessary to realise functions that substitute for human intellectual abilities such as cognition, reasoning, and judgment through artificial means, as well as technology related to information processing systems that utilise such functions to process input data and produce outputs.

The AI Act also defines '**AI-utilising business operators**' as those who intend to develop or provide products or services utilising AI-related technologies, or otherwise intend to utilise such technologies in their business activities.

Prohibited activities

Currently, there are no laws in Japan that specifically address this point.

High-risk AI

Currently, there are no laws in Japan that specifically address this point.

Controls on generative AI

Currently, there are no laws in Japan that specifically address this point.

Enforcement / fines

The AI Act does not contain any penal provisions.

User transparency

The Social Principles state that appropriate explanations should be given in suitable cases, such as how the AI data is obtained and used. Also, to allow people to understand the proposal of the AI and make informed decisions, open dialogue may be required regarding the use, adoption and operation of AI.

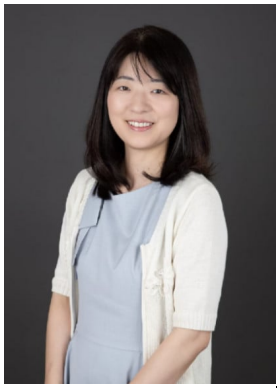
Fairness / unlawful bias

The Social Principles state that the use of AI should not create inequality or social disadvantage. Relevant policy makers and businesses must have a thorough understanding of AI, along with the knowledge and ethical awareness to use AI appropriately. Furthermore, an educational environment that promotes learning and literacy must be made accessible to everyone.

Human oversight

Currently, there are no laws in Japan that specifically address this point.

Key contacts



Tomomi Fujikouge
Of Counsel
DLA Piper
tomomi.fujikouge@dlapiper.com
View bio



Naoto Kosuge
Senior Associate
DLA Piper
naoto.kosuge@dlapiper.com
View bio



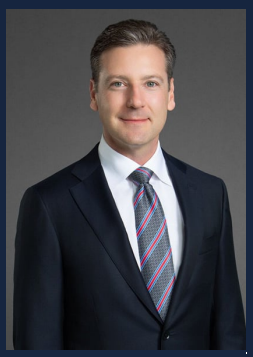
Fumiya Matsumoto
Associate
DLA Piper
fumiya.matsumoto@dlapiper.com
View bio

For more information

To learn more about DLA Piper, visit dlapiper.com or contact:



Gareth Stokes
Partner
Global Co-Chair, AI Practice
gareth.stokes@dlapiper.com
Full bio



Danny Tobey
Partner
Global Co-Chair AI and Data Analytics
danny.tobey@us.dlapiper.com
Full bio

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