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ECONOMIC SYSTEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF DIGITALISATION AND AI: THEORETICAL AND LEGAL MODELLING

Yana Tytska[1], Vitalii Anisimov[2], Oleksii Matvieiev[3]

Abstract. The present article examines four interrelated elements of the economy: namely, markets, labour, production, and distribution. These elements thus function as principles and laws. This approach is predicated on the premise that laws exert their influence on the economy from within rather than as extrinsic forces. The permitting of data and algorithms, the financial implications of compliance, the risk of legal action, and the equitable distribution of the benefits of digital transformation are all challenging within regulatory frameworks. It is therefore incumbent upon regulatory bodies to ensure that all individuals have access to data, support platform markets, and that artificial intelligence redistributes wealth among the owners of capital, data and labour. An additional chapter is devoted to an examination of the legal systems of Ukraine and the EU. The European Union has established standards for the digital economy and has fully embraced artificial intelligence. The scope of these regulations encompasses platform usage, digital goods liability, data protection (GDPR), and artificial intelligence (AI). However, the majority of the laws adopted in Ukraine are based on extant structures and systems. The cultural and procedural differences between Europe and Ukraine are of particular relevance to business and legal matters. These factors pertain to regulatory stability, the cost of innovation, data accessibility, the balance of market power, and guarantees for consumers and employees. It is recommended that the development of comprehensive rules for the digital economy be pursued, with these rules being adapted to suit the requirements of national institutions and with inspiration being drawn from European models. Moreover, the analysis indicates that the proliferation of digital technologies necessitates a recalibration of the equilibrium between legal certainty and technological innovation. In the absence of explicit legislation pertaining to the utilisation of digital data and artificial intelligence, the economic potential of these technologies may remain unexplored, whilst concomitantly resulting in increased market concentration, inequality, and the risk of personal information being misused. It is imperative that future research endeavours concentrate on conducting empirical assessments of the economic ramifications of artificial intelligence. This is particularly salient in the context of enhancing productivity, restructuring the labour market, and ensuring equitable income distribution. The *subject of the present study* is the transformation of modern economic systems as a result of digitalisation and the introduction of artificial intelligence, as well as the legal mechanisms that regulate these processes. *Methodology.* The study was conducted using standard scientific methods. A comparative approach was employed to analyse and synthesise various theoretical perspectives on the study of digitalisation and artificial intelligence within economic systems. In the context of technological transformation, this analysis identified key structural elements of the digital economy, including the market, labour relations, productivity dynamics and income distribution. Through this process of synthesis, a theoretical and legal model of the economic system was developed, combining economic mechanisms with the regulatory parameters that govern the use of digital platforms, algorithms, and data. Using inductive and deductive methods, the main patterns of interaction between legal regulation and technological development were identified. General decisions were also made about how legal frameworks govern the digital economy. Furthermore, a comparative approach was employed to analyse regulatory strategies for the digital economy and artificial intelligence governance in the EU and Ukraine. This allowed the study to highlight

[1] International Humanitarian University, Ukraine *(corresponding author)*
E-mail: yana1maslova@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5777-8225
[2] International Humanitarian University, Ukraine
E-mail: remid.evg@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1335-5084
[3] International Humanitarian University, Ukraine
E-mail: avmatveev87@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1725-6489

significant institutional differences between these legal systems and evaluate their potential influence on economic growth and innovation. This *article aims* to examine the impact of digitalisation and artificial intelligence on changes to the economic system, and to develop a theoretical and legal model that explains the interaction between technological development, economic processes, and regulatory frameworks. The study seeks to understand the influence of laws governing the use of data, algorithms, digital platforms and artificial intelligence on labour relations, productivity dynamics, income distribution and market functioning. It also examines regulatory approaches to the digital economy and artificial intelligence in the European Union and Ukraine, identifying institutional differences and assessing their impact on innovation and economic development. The *results* of the study show that the rise of digital technologies and artificial intelligence will dramatically improve the way existing economic systems function. Digitalisation is making data and algorithmic systems increasingly important economic resources, thereby changing the way markets operate, how labour is organised, how productivity is measured and how income is distributed. *Conclusion*. A study of the transformation of economic systems in the context of digitalisation and artificial intelligence has revealed that technological innovations, monetary policy and legislative measures are having an increasingly significant impact on the performance of modern economies. The proposed theoretical and legal model considers law to be an integral part of the economic system that influences income distribution, labour relations, market structure and productivity dynamics. This distinguishes it from traditional approaches. It can explain how data, artificial intelligence, digital platforms and competition laws shape the institutional conditions for developing the digital economy. A comparison of the Ukrainian and EU legal and regulatory frameworks revealed significant differences in their respective regulatory and institutional development patterns. The European Union has already established a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework for the digital economy and artificial intelligence. This includes special legislation governing data management, the platform economy, labour conditions and product liability in the digital environment. The existing Ukrainian legislation on personal data protection, electronic communications, competition policy, cybersecurity and digital sector incentives essentially forms the legal basis for the developing digital economy. However, there are some institutional gaps in the governance of digital technologies due to the absence of a unified regulatory system designed specifically for artificial intelligence. This study's practical significance lies in broadening the theoretical basis of the digital economy and artificial intelligence from economic and legal standpoints. The results of this comparative analysis and the proposed conceptual model could inform the development of more effective regulatory policies to ensure balanced interaction between technological innovation, economic growth and the protection of socioeconomic rights in the context of rapid digital transformation.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, digital economy, data economy, platform markets, algorithmic governance, labour market transformation, legal regulation, EU law, Ukrainian law.

JEL Classification: B22, E22, E24, J24, O15

1. Introduction

Rapid economic transformation is occurring due to advances in AI and digital technology. Academics generally define artificial intelligence (AI) as computer programs or other technical systems that are capable of mimicking human intellect in tasks such as data analysis, prediction, decision-making, and picture recognition (Setiawan & Hendayana, 2024, p. 698). The European Union (EU) employs the term "artificial intelligence" to denote software capable of making choices, generating forecasts, or providing recommendations that impact the physical or digital realm (European Parliament & Council, 2024).

Artificial intelligence is a critical component of the digital transformation of the economy. These days, digitalisation refers to managing people, manufacturing products, running businesses and sharing information using digital methods. This transition has created new opportunities for employment, business management and financial gain. Digital technologies are becoming increasingly important to how economies operate, offering more than just an easier way to manage things.

These innovations are having an increasingly significant impact on the economy. Firstly, information is widely recognised as a vital economic asset that fosters innovation, enhances productivity and boosts competitiveness. Algorithms can also support decision-making processes in areas such as the public sector, marketing, finance, logistics and human resources. Thirdly, digital platforms provide varied user groups with new opportunities to interact, and the repercussions of network and data access can substantially impact competitiveness.

Various economic development strategies are being implemented. Although research indicates that digital technology can improve productivity, the

benefits typically take time to manifest. The enormous investments required for these technologies, including data systems, software, new ways of organising work and qualified personnel, are causing delays. This pattern is described by the "J-curve" of digital productivity.

Alongside its advantages, the increasing use of AI gives rise to new challenges for economic theory and legal regulation. When data and digital infrastructure are centralised, algorithms can influence wealth distribution, labour conditions and ownership. Together, these factors contribute to the widely held assumption in current research that technology, legislation and institutions form an intricate network within the digital economy.

This highlights the critical need for regulations governing AI and digital data. Such regulations clarify who is responsible for deploying algorithmic systems, where automated decisions can be made, how information can be used and how people's rights can be protected. The Artificial Intelligence Act is one of many such regulations currently being developed within the European Union. It classifies AI systems according to the level of risk they pose.

A growing systemic problem for Ukraine is the need to legally regulate the internet economy. Following its approval by the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers, the Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Ukraine was published by the National Institute for Strategic Studies in 2021. It outlines the primary pathways for advancing AI.

According to recent studies (OECD, 2019), the digital economy can be better understood by combining legal and economic viewpoints. While new technology alters markets, productivity and employment opportunities, legal systems establish guidelines for the use of data, algorithms and digital platforms. Consequently, research on the effects of digitisation should integrate legal frameworks with economic models.

2. Theoretical and Legal Architecture of the Economic System in the Context of Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence

In order to adequately describe how digitalisation and AI have transformed the modern economy, it is helpful to consider the impact of AI. As previously mentioned, AI is a set of machine systems that can autonomously make predictions, recommendations or decisions that affect the real or virtual world.

This concept is already enshrined in European Union legislation, including the Artificial Intelligence Act (European Parliament & Council, 2024). The focus is twofold: firstly, on the technical aspects of a system; and secondly, on its operation and its impact on social and economic processes. This approach is predicated on the premise that AI is not merely an add-on to the economy, but rather an integral component of a new economic order that is engendering profound changes in the manner in which value is created, markets function, labour is organised, and income is distributed.

Consequently, digitalisation should not be regarded merely as the transfer of economic processes to computers. Instead, it should be regarded as a transition in which institutions and technologies are the primary agents of change. In this paradigm, data, algorithms, computing infrastructure, and digital platforms become pivotal instruments for economic growth. This is directly related to the creation of a data economy and the development of specific rules for access, reuse, and exchange of data in Europe. These regulations are codified in the Data Governance Act (European Parliament & Council, 2022) and the Data Act (European Parliament & Council, 2023). In the context of AI, the economic system should be regarded as a multi-layered organisation consisting of at least four interconnected modules: the market, the labour market, the product market, and the distribution market. The modules are not arranged in a linear configuration; alterations in one module invariably have ramifications for the others.

To illustrate this point, consider the transformative impact of algorithmic pricing and selection systems on markets for goods and services. These systems are not merely affecting the way in which platforms generate revenue; they are also fundamentally altering the distribution of income across those who work, own capital, and possess data. A comparable phenomenon is observed in the context of the automation of labour tasks. It is modifying not only employment opportunities but also the competencies required for their acquisition, investments in intangible capital, and the objectives of government regulation.

The proposed model is thus based on the idea that law cannot be viewed as an external factor of the economy. Conversely, regulatory control should be incorporated into the model as an endogenous factor that exerts a direct influence on the economy's functioning. In this sense, the law serves at least four purposes. Firstly, it establishes the parameters within which data and algorithms are to be used. Secondly, it results in increased financial costs for market institutions, both in terms of conducting business and adhering to regulatory frameworks. Thirdly, it establishes a framework for accountability and sanctions for non-compliance. Fourthly, it determines how the benefits of digital growth will be distributed to people through tax, social and labour policies. Consequently, the AI Act, the Data Governance Act, the Data Act and associated legislation pertaining to cybersecurity, platform regulation and product liability should not be regarded as independent regulations. Instead, they should be regarded as institutions that ensure the functioning of the digital economy.

In essence, the economy can be delineated by a series of pivotal variables. Firstly, there is the number of digital processes and infrastructure employed within the economy, denoted by δ. Secondly, the amount of available data is measured by *D*. The stock of AI capital is comprised of models, software components, computing resources, and integrated automation systems. Thirdly, the amount of available physical capital is measured by *K*. Finally, the amount of available labour is measured by *L*. Then the output of the economic system can be analytically represented as a function:

$$Y = A(\delta) \times K^{\alpha} \times L^{\beta} \times \left(AI \times D_{eff} \right)^{\gamma}$$

Where D_{eff} is the increase in total factor productivity due to the digitalisation of processes, and D_{eff} is not just the amount of data that should be available, but the amount of data that can actually be used for economic purposes.

It is the category D_{eff} that is most important for law and theoretical modelling. In the digital economy, not all available data can be used freely to train models, make automated decisions or generate revenue for businesses. Their real monetary value depends on laws governing access, processing methods, minimisation requirements, purpose, licences, privacy and safety. Because of this, the info that is actually available can be shown as:

$$D_{eff} = D \times \left(1 - \pi_{priv}\right) \times \left(1 - \pi_{ip}\right) \times \left(1 - \pi_{sec}\right)$$

Here, π_{priv} means limits on protecting personal data; π_{ip} means limits on intellectual property, contractual control, or licenses, and π_{sec} means limits on cybersecurity and other infrastructure. Therefore, the law affects the factors of the production function in a tangible way, rather than just symbolically. It alters the amount of data available to the economy.

The subsequent stage of the process pertains to the market module. In the contemporary digital economy, platforms that function as two-sided or multi-sided marketplaces are experiencing a marked increase in importance. A distinctive attribute of these systems is their capacity to process interactions across multiple user groups concurrently. Their pricing structure is designed to leverage network effects. Conventional platform competition theory posits that platforms should seek to maximise the number of transactions and retain as many participants in the ecosystem as possible (Evans & Schmalensee, 2007, pp. 152-153, 164). In the domain of artificial intelligence, this process becomes increasingly intricate, as ranking, personalisation, control, and pricing algorithms have the capacity to influence demand, impede the entry of new participants, and redistribute surplus goods among market participants.

Formally, this can be demonstrated as the dependence of platform participants' activities on each other: $n_U = f\left(p_U, n_B, a_R\right)$ $n_B = g\left(p_B, n_U, a_R\right)$

Here, where n_U is the number of users or user activities, n_B is business activity, p_U and p_B are entry prices or fees, and a_R is the efficiency of algorithmic ranking and recommendations. In such cases, the program transitions from a neutral technological entity to a source of market power. In such cases, the law must intervene by introducing transparency rules, prohibiting self-determination, controlling algorithmic pricing, and preventing the use of data that harms competition.

The importance of the work aspect should not be underestimated. The impact of AI on the world of work must not be characterised as the substitution of human labour with that of a machine. Instead, it should be described as the shifting of jobs between a person and an algorithmic system. The prevailing economic literature characterises automation as follows: technology does not displace entire occupations, but rather specific functions, tasks or operations (Autor, 2015, pp. 4-5).

The model shows this like this: for each job i, there is a human performance $a_H(i)$ and an algorithm performance $a_I(i)$. When the relative cost of using AI is higher than the relative cost of using humans, taking into account legal costs, automation happens:

$$\frac{w}{a_H(i)} > \frac{r_I + c_{comp}(L)}{a_I(i)}$$

w is the payment, r_I is the rent or cost of AI capital, and $c_{comp}(L)$ is the cost of compliance, which varies according to the law. In other words, laws directly affect the pace and scale of technological development. In the event of a system being deemed high-risk, necessitating documentation, human oversight, external verification, or adherence to specific compliance rules, its implementation may become less economically viable. This signifies that the law does not merely impede or facilitate progress; it also exerts a significant influence on the decision between human and machine.

Conversely, the socio-legal dimension of the digital economy is most evidently manifested in the labour sector. The advent of algorithmic work management, encompassing monitoring, evaluation, automated task allocation, and success determination, has precipitated a fundamental shift in the balance of power between employers, platforms, and workers. Therefore, this discussion is not just about efficiency; it also considers the limits of automation, the right to know why certain actions were taken, the right to have decisions reviewed by humans and the right to protection from discrimination. This clearly links the economic system model to the subsequent legal analysis of AI, platforms, and labour law.

The issue of productivity should be considered separately. While AI can improve productivity and facilitate more informed decision-making, its impact is not immediate. This is because implementing digital technologies requires significant investment in

invisible and intangible factors, such as restructuring work processes, retraining employees, collecting data and establishing new procedures. In academic literature, this is referred to as a "J-shaped productivity curve" (Brynjolfsson, Rock & Syverson, 2018, p. 1). In this case, the initial effect seems small, but the true impact becomes apparent over time.

This section is also influenced by legislation. While strict but clear rules may temporarily increase implementation costs, they build trust in the technology, improve data quality and stabilise organisations in the long term. Conversely, legal uncertainty deters investment in AI as it increases the risk of fines, lawsuits and costly changes to technology architecture after implementation.

The final element of the model is the revenue allocation module. The total income of the digital economy can be represented as the sum of labour income, income from physical capital, income from AI-generated capital and data rent:

$$Y = W + R_K + R_{AI} + R_D$$

Here W is the wage fund, R_K is the return on traditional capital, and R_{AI} is the return on AI. This element is key to understanding why digitalisation can both increase overall well-being and exacerbate inequality. In the event of a group of people having exclusive access to data, models and infrastructure, the positive impact of AI on productivity will not immediately result in a more equitable society. It is therefore vital to consider tax policy, social security, labour guarantees and antitrust regulation as political and economic structures, and as integral components of the economy itself.

3. Comparative Regulatory Model of AI and Digital Economy Regulation in the European Union and Ukraine

A comparison of the two entities reveals that the European Union and Ukraine are the two foremost entities in data and artificial intelligence. The EU has implemented a comprehensive regulatory framework encompassing AI regulations through a specific act, as well as regulations on data, platforms, employment, cybersecurity, and liability. Conversely, in Ukraine, the establishment of this order has been confined to its structural and infrastructural components. The European model is characterised by its comprehensive governance of the digital market through legislation. The Ukrainian model is chiefly concerned with formulating overarching regulations for digital advancement and specific guidelines for individual enterprises.

Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 on AI of 13 June 2024 delineates the implementation of the AI Act (European Parliament & Council, 2024). The crux of the issue does not lie in the utilisation of AI; rather, it is the establishment of regulations for each system that are commensurate with the level of danger involved. Conversely, the European Commission utilised public instruments to achieve objectives, including the establishment of European regulatory frameworks on AI. The European approach to regulating AI through legislation has evolved from a mere policy declaration to an integral component of an operational framework.

The model exhibits an absence of autonomy. The execution of this aspect is facilitated by the existence of legal frameworks. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the principal legislation that safeguards personal data (European Parliament & Council, 2016). The document establishes guidelines for the utilisation of substantial quantities of data to educate and operate AI systems. The Data Governance Act establishes formal mechanisms for the secure sharing and reutilisation of data in both the business and public sectors. The present status of the Data Act is the subject of the present study. The primary function of the organisation is to regulate equitable access to data and its utilisation, primarily for associated commodities and services. Consequently, the EU will be able to ensure data security.

It is evident that a number of components of the European model are subject to a regulatory framework that stipulates the functionality of the platform, the principles of safety, and the establishment of accountability. The EU Directive 2024/2831 delineates the types of automated systems permissible for monitoring and decision-making (European Parliament & Council, 2024). Furthermore, it may be argued that there is a correlation between the utilisation of these technologies and the protection of the rights of information, process, and platform workers. The EU Directive 2024/2853 on product liability explicitly states that the Directive does not cover AI, although software is (European Parliament & Council, 2024). This finding suggests that EU regulations are extending beyond generic AI ethics to specifics such as risk allocation and the determination of legal accountability in the digital economy.

This is a crucial aspect for the development of business concepts. The European system has established fundamental regulations concerning legal risks, market access, compliance, and data stewardship. In the context of the EU's digital economy, enterprises are bound by a range of obligations that incur expenses in the following areas: technology and data, regulatory compliance, record-keeping, audits, data protection, monitoring individuals, and the potential engagement in legal proceedings. Consequently, from a European standpoint, the law is not regarded as an

external constraint; rather, it is considered an integral component of market operations.

The Ukrainian model is distinctly dissimilar. Ukraine has a strategy for artificial intelligence development, sanctioned in 2020 (The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On Approval of the Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Ukraine", 2020), and in 2025, the OECD proposed an action plan for its implementation during 2025-2026 (OECD.AI Policy Observatory, 2025). The strategy document sets out the drafting and submission of a draft law to regulate the development of artificial intelligence in the fourth quarter of 2026.

Conversely, Ukraine's digital legal framework must not be overlooked. It is already encompassing multiple governmental entities. The digital economy and digital services would be inoperable without them. The legislation on personal data protection delineates the regulations governing the utilisation of personal data. The Law of Ukraine "On Stimulating the Development of Digital Economy in Ukraine" (Official portal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2021) establishes a distinct framework of rules for the digital industry. These statutes encompass the institutional foundation of the Diia City. The regulations governing the use of technologies in digital services are set out in the Law of Ukraine "About Electronic Communications" (Official portal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2020). The legislation on electronic identity and electronic trust services enhances the legal framework for digital interactions and transactions. The Law of Ukraine "On Promoting the Development of the Digital Economy in Ukraine" (The Law of Ukraine "On Promoting the Development of the Digital Economy in Ukraine", 2017) delineates fundamental regulations for safeguarding digital systems. The Law of Ukraine "On Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine" (The Law of Ukraine "On Antimonopoly Committee of Ukraine", 1993) and the Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Economic Competition" (The Law of Ukraine "On the Protection of Economic Competition", 2001) continue to serve as effective instruments for addressing potential infractions in digital markets.

Conversely, the legislation does not set out any specific regulations for artificial intelligence systems. While they govern multiple facets of the digital realm, they fail to provide an exhaustive list of AI dangers, particular regulations for high-risk applications, conformity assessments, transparency mandates, human oversight, post-market surveillance or centralised governance of these systems. The main difference between the Ukrainian and European models is that legislation in the EU has already defined the AI economy as a separate regulatory domain. In contrast, artificial intelligence in Ukraine predominantly relies on existing data, information technology and infrastructure.

New legal liabilities also emerge. The main problem in the EU is that there are so many laws that all new activities must adhere to immediately. This increases compliance costs while making market regulations less predictable. In Ukraine, however, the main concern is the use of hazardous AI applications in sectors such as labour, banking, key infrastructure and public administration. Market participants may rely on current legislation relating to data, competition, cybersecurity and the digital economy, but there is a lack of adequate regulations to define the applicable rules in these areas. While this ambiguity may encourage the adoption of proprietary solutions in the short term, it undermines the long-term predictability of institutions and discourages substantial investment in systems requiring a clear legal framework to define responsibilities and procedures.

Variations in working conditions are particularly notable. The EU Platform Work Directive (Directive 2024/2831) introduced explicit regulations linking algorithmic governance to workers' rights, transparent decision-making processes, and the right to access information. Ukraine's specific legislation, "Diia City" (Sydorchuk, 2025), significantly influences the organisation of labour in the digital economy. Nevertheless, it does not represent a particular type of digital governance or platform labour. Consequently, Ukraine's current labour market prioritises developing the digital industry over protecting workers from the dangers of automated governance.

Similarly, altering data analysis methodologies is crucial. In the EU, the Data Governance Act and the Data Act demonstrate an intention to establish data processing as a separate regulatory domain. These statutes include provisions on access, fair use, interoperability and trust. While Ukraine has the necessary structures and overarching legislation to facilitate the unrestricted flow of data, it lacks regulations that meet the standards of the EU's acquis communautaire. In the Ukrainian model, data issues are addressed through overarching regulations rather than institutions dedicated solely to the data economy.

4. Conclusions

The study concludes that the rapid development of digital technologies and artificial intelligence systems will transform the way modern economic systems function. Currently, artificial intelligence serves not only as a technological tool for optimising individual processes, but also as a significant structural element that influences income distribution, employment structure, market organisation and productivity dynamics. In the digital economy, data, algorithms and digital infrastructure are becoming increasingly important economic resources, creating new mechanisms of economic interaction.

This article analyses the impact of digitalisation and artificial intelligence on economic systems. It also proposes a theoretical and legal model to explain the interaction between technological development, economic processes and legislation. The results demonstrate that this objective has been achieved. This study has developed a conceptual model of an economic system comprising interrelated elements, including labour markets, production processes, income distribution systems and markets. It also examines how legal norms influence the activities of these elements.

The study found that legal regulation of the digital economy is an integral part of the economic system, rather than an external constraint. The rules that govern the use of data, the application of artificial intelligence, competition protection, cybersecurity and labour relations influence the extent to which technology is used, the costs of automation and the economic benefits. Consequently, the legal and institutional environment plays a significant role in the development of the digital economy.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis reveals significant differences between the regulatory models of the EU and Ukraine. The EU has already established a comprehensive regulatory framework for the digital economy, encompassing specific regulations on artificial intelligence, data management, digital platform operations, and workers' rights protection. In contrast, Ukraine's legislation on the digital economy mainly focuses on competition, personal data protection, electronic communication and the digital economy. Therefore, a comprehensive framework for governing artificial intelligence has yet to be developed.

Thus, the results of this study confirm the need for an integrated approach to analysing the digital economy that incorporates the economic and legal aspects of artificial intelligence development. An effective regulatory system must strike a balance between encouraging technological innovation and maintaining competitiveness while protecting the rights of workers and consumers and ensuring that the economic benefits of digital transformation are distributed equitably.

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