

# Co-creating the future of data-centric AI governance in Mexico

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**ODI Research**  
ADVANCING TRUST IN DATA



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# About

This report has been researched and produced by the Open Data Institute (ODI), and published in June 2024. Its lead author was Thomas Carey-Wilson, with contributions from Dr Gefion Thuermer and Stuart Coleman.

This report has been developed in collaboration with the British Embassy in Mexico. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the UK government.

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# Executive summary

*The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, propelled by advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), heralds a paradigm shift in productivity, product diversity, and consumer choice and demand. Recognising the transformative potential of AI, the Open Data Institute (ODI), in partnership with the British Embassy in Mexico, has conducted an assessment of data-centric AI governance approaches in the UK and Mexico with a view to identifying opportunities for cooperation.*

*Our recommendations are intended to accelerate cooperation between the two countries, build on areas of consensus from the initial engagement with Mexico's regulatory community, government representatives and civil society, and leverage existing areas of trade where there are already well-established flows of data which could support AI innovation and data-centric AI governance controls.*

*Further engagement with the Mexico AI governance community will be critical to iterate and develop these recommendations into a logical implementation approach, and to drive engagement and support from policymakers.*

# Background

AI is driving what some have called a Fourth Industrial Revolution.<sup>1</sup> As a general-purpose technology,<sup>2</sup> AI stands to impact all sectors and will likely move at the fastest pace in those sectors which are ‘data-ready’ and which (as regulation gathers pace) can demonstrate strong data governance. With this in mind, our research included economic analysis of prominent trade sectors between the UK and Mexico which stand to benefit the most from AI technologies, both in terms of consumption and production-side enhancements. This is important as not only does responsible data governance support broad societal outcomes,<sup>3</sup> better understanding and aligning the boundaries of how data is to be governed also reduces friction for firms in stewarding and exchanging it, leading to a fair prospect of economic benefit. Knowing where the economic opportunities might be for AI technologies is important for realising the potential benefits.

This is forecast to bring significant enhancements to productivity, generating greater product diversity and consequently stimulating consumer demand. AI is also driving change in major UK export sectors such as professional services and healthcare.<sup>4</sup> These developments in emerging digital technologies are signalling a new economic paradigm and present vast potential for mutually beneficial prosperity if developed equitably.

The ODI has worked in collaboration with the British Embassy in Mexico and local thought leaders to develop initial training, to carry out desk research, and to deliver workshops with government, academia, civil society and industry stakeholders. The aim of this work was to better understand the gaps and opportunities for more effective AI data governance across Mexico’s regulatory landscape. We have subsequently developed a brief, non-exhaustive assessment of the data-centric AI governance landscapes of the UK and Mexico, and identified specific data governance-related cooperation opportunities. Our approach is pictured below in **Figure 1**.

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<sup>1</sup> McKinsey & Company (2022), [What are Industry 4.0, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and 4IR?](#)

<sup>2</sup> Hotte K et al. (2022), [Exploring Artificial Intelligence as a General Purpose Technology with Patent Data](#)

<sup>3</sup> United Nations (2017), [Harnessing the power of data for sustainable development](#)

<sup>4</sup> Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and Office for Artificial Intelligence (2023), [Artificial Intelligence sector study 2022](#)



**Figure 1.** Summary of the project approach

Following initial desk research, we held workshops with two diverse groups of 18 stakeholders representing regulators, academia and some industry players. These workshops were 150 minutes in length and involved demonstrating the UK’s existing work in this space and highlighting where Mexico might adopt similar principles and build on these with new ones. During these workshops, we also asked the regulators to generate regulatory use cases for AI systems in Mexico and consider what the data governance-related considerations for these use cases might look like.

This report consolidates insights and makes recommendations intended to underpin future AI and data governance, and foster longer-term regulatory cooperation between the UK and Mexico in a manner intended to support a pro-innovation approach to governing AI. In particular, the recommendations target fostering collaboration on data governance to mitigate the risks and challenges posed by AI technologies, as well as advancing opportunities for national and bilateral innovation.



**Figure 2.** Summary of the project recommendations

## Recommendations

1. **Develop an AI data governance toolkit tailored for the Mexican regulatory community.** This would include use cases, policy solutions, best practices and risk management frameworks. This toolkit would empower regulators to navigate the complexities of data-centric AI governance effectively and foster responsible data stewardship across various sectors.
2. **Leverage the expertise of the UK in AI education to enhance data and AI literacy among Mexican regulators, policymakers and critical areas of trade.** By adapting leading UK educational offerings and developing Mexico-specific case studies, regulators could acquire the strategic skills necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of data-centric AI governance effectively.
3. **Connect regulators and policymakers in Mexico to the UK's leadership in AI safety research and data-centric AI governance to assist the community in launching its own cross-sectoral initiative.** Notably, this would be through engagement with critically relevant UK institutional initiatives including the Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute and the Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum. This would support Mexican regulators to take learnings from UK approaches while recognising how they might need to be adjusted to fit the Mexican context.

4. **Co-design and facilitate a Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Mexico.** This would be a platform for both countries to cooperate and adopt common data-centric tools, practices and approaches to governing AI; and to develop the capability, tools and policies needed to mitigate the wider risks posed by AI adoption. This cooperation would support the scalable and ethical adoption of AI in a pro-trade, pro-innovation capacity.
5. **Shaping international cooperation and calls to action.** Secure endorsements from UK and Mexican leaders in government, industry and academia to reinforce their commitment to responsible AI development. Craft a compelling narrative on the benefits of data-centric AI governance and UK-Mexico collaboration. Develop a roadmap for engaging additional jurisdictions, fostering global cooperation and improving AI governance frameworks. Engage with international research communities to explore data-centric AI and enhance governance. These actions will strengthen UK-Mexico relations and support responsible AI governance.

By embracing international collaboration and leveraging each other's strengths, the UK and Mexico have the opportunity to drive innovation, foster responsible AI development, and initiate dialogue from which wider Latin American regional collaboration can grow.



# Why data governance?

*“Without data, there is no AI.”<sup>5</sup>*

The responsible stewardship of data<sup>6</sup> (defined as its collection, management and use), access to data and technical standards that govern data are pivotal to ensuring AI drives distributed prosperity and ultimately works for everyone.

The recent explosion of AI foundation models (FMs) has highlighted the critical role of data and data access in shaping AI capabilities and outcomes. While AI advancements hold immense potential, concerns around data privacy, bias and misuse necessitate a comprehensive approach to data governance. The ODI’s data-centric AI programme<sup>7</sup> tackles these challenges by looking beyond algorithms to the entire socio-technical data infrastructure of AI. This includes the data itself, the tools and practices used to manage it, and the communities involved in its development and use.

Data-centric governance for AI refers to the set of principles, policies, processes and frameworks adopted by communities of AI practice and regulation to ensure the data used to train and operate AI systems is collected, managed and used responsibly.<sup>8</sup> This is crucial because:

- **Fairness and transparency:** Data governance helps ensure AI systems don’t perpetuate discrimination or unfairness based on biases present in the data. Biased or flawed data can lead to biased or flawed AI outputs. Data governance also promotes transparency by allowing stakeholders to understand how data is used in AI systems.
- **Security and privacy:** Data governance safeguards sensitive data used in AI development, mitigating risks like breaches or unauthorised access. It also helps ensure compliance with data privacy regulations.
- **Accountability and trust:** By establishing ownership and responsibility for data used in AI, data governance fosters trust and accountability for the outcomes of AI systems.

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<sup>5</sup> ODI (2023), [‘What do we mean by “without data, there is no AI”?’](#)

<sup>6</sup> ODI (2023), [Defining responsible data stewardship](#)

<sup>7</sup> ODI (2023), [Data-centric AI](#)

<sup>8</sup> ODI (2023), [ODI Inside Business: Unlocking the power of good data governance](#)

This report consolidates our insights and outlines a roadmap for future collaboration between the UK and Mexico. It highlights how aligning data-centric AI governance can mitigate the risks associated with AI technologies and enhance the potential for bilateral innovation. This collaboration would leverage the UK's advanced regulatory experience and its strategic position as a bridge to the EU, along with Mexico's proximity to the US market, to foster mutual economic gains, particularly in sectors such as healthcare and professional services.

# Cross-country market and policy applicability

There are two key contexts relating to the applicability and desirability of common AI data governance approaches between the UK and Mexico: market and policy.

## Market applicability

Several areas of potential mutual advantage exist between the market landscapes of the UK and Mexico. According to the World Bank, Mexico holds the seventh greatest value-add by manufacturing in the world.<sup>9</sup> The UK excels in several areas of manufacturing and engineering, such as aerospace, automotive, pharmaceuticals and advanced materials, and maintains high regulatory standards in manufacturing and engineering, ensuring quality, safety and sustainability in production processes.

The UK is well known for its research ecosystem, hosting many of the top universities in the world<sup>10</sup> and is ranked third globally in AI research and innovation.<sup>11</sup> Mexico is predicted to be the world's seventh-largest economy by 2050.<sup>12</sup>

Although the so-called post-2020 'AI boom'<sup>13</sup> occurred a relatively short time ago (in economic terms), some salient resources for understanding the projected economic impact of these technologies have been developed. For instance, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated that about 60% of jobs may be impacted by AI, with roughly half of the exposed jobs expected to benefit from AI integration, enhancing productivity.<sup>14</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) estimates that although US\$6.6 trillion is likely to come from increased productivity, US\$9.1 trillion is likely to come from the consumption side, with product enhancements stimulating consumer demand.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The World Bank (n.d.), '[Manufacturing, value added](#)'

<sup>10</sup> QS Top Universities (2024), '[QS World University Rankings 2024: Top global universities](#)'

<sup>11</sup> UK Research and Innovation (2024), '[AI review: Transforming our world with AI](#)'

<sup>12</sup> PwC (2017), '[The World in 2050](#)'

<sup>13</sup> Human Centred Artificial Intelligence (Stanford University) (2023), '[AI Spring? Four Takeaways from Major Releases in Foundation Models](#)'

<sup>14</sup> IMF (2024), Blog: '[AI Will Transform the Global Economy. Let's Make Sure It Benefits Humanity](#)'

<sup>15</sup> PwC (2017), '[Sizing the prize](#)'

There are early indications that certain sectors are likely to benefit (in both consumption and production enhancements) from the use of AI-driven technologies. Several pieces of work highlight healthcare,<sup>16,17,18</sup> financial services<sup>19,20</sup> and other professional services,<sup>21</sup> transportation,<sup>22,23,24</sup> media<sup>25,26</sup> and many others.

Although this evidence is important, it does not tell us which sectors are due to benefit disproportionately from these technologies. In response to this, PwC has broken down the estimated economic impact of these technologies according to particularly powerful use cases: the 'PwC AI economic opportunity index'.<sup>27</sup> Through this index, PwC identified those sectors with substantial potential for economic contributions driven by AI applications.

The index scores range from 1 to 5, where 5 denotes the highest potential impact of AI. Below is a breakdown of the scores for each sector and sub-sector:

1. **Healthcare:** Score of 3.7, with impactful sub-sectors including providers/health services, pharma/life sciences, insurance and consumer health.
2. **Automotive:** Score of 3.7, encompassing after-market and repair, component suppliers, personal mobility as a service, original equipment manufacturer (OEM) and financing.
3. **Financial services:** Score of 3.3, which includes asset wealth management, banking and capital, and insurance.
4. **Transportation and logistics:** Score of 3.2.
5. **Technology, communications and entertainment:** Score of 3.1.
6. **Retail:** Score of 3.0, involving consumer products and retail.

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<sup>16</sup> Ali O et al. (2023), '[A systematic literature review of artificial intelligence in the healthcare sector: Benefits, challenges, methodologies, and functionalities](#)' *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*

<sup>17</sup> CEPR (2023), '[What happens when AI comes to healthcare](#)'

<sup>18</sup> Alowais SA et al. (2023), '[Revolutionizing healthcare: the role of artificial intelligence in clinical practice](#)' *BMC Medical Education*

<sup>19</sup> Maple C et al. (2023), '[The AI Revolution: Opportunities and Challenges for the Finance Sector](#)' The Alan Turing Institute

<sup>20</sup> World Economic Forum (2020), '[AI has started a financial revolution - here's how](#)'

<sup>21</sup> Nanda A and Narayandas D (2021), '[What Professional Service Firms Must Do to Thrive](#)' *Harvard Business Review*

<sup>22</sup> Jevinger A et al. (2023), '[Artificial intelligence for improving public transport: a mapping study](#)' *Public Transport*

<sup>23</sup> European Parliament (2021), '[Artificial intelligence in road transport](#)'

<sup>24</sup> Sadou A and NJoya E (2023), '[Applications of Artificial Intelligence in the Air Transport Industry: A Bibliometric and Systematic Literature Review](#)' *Journal of Aerospace Technology and Management*

<sup>25</sup> Alam S (2024), '[Media and Artificial Intelligence: Current Perceptions and Future Outlook](#)' *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*

<sup>26</sup> Harper Macleod LLP (2023), '[The Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Publishing Industry](#)'

<sup>27</sup> PwC (2017), '[Sizing the Prize](#)'

7. **Energy:** Score of 2.2, consisting of oil and gas, and power and utilities.
8. **Manufacturing:** Score of 2.2, which includes industrial manufacturing and industrial products/raw materials.

These scores highlight the sectors where strategic investments in AI could yield significant economic returns, thereby potentially reshaping industry landscapes and creating new market dynamics.

Even though this space is relatively nascent for any certain or even very likely conclusions to be drawn (ie, given the pace of technological change and the indeterminate period of time constituting the economic ‘long run’<sup>28</sup>), these findings are still a powerful tool for identifying preliminary areas of investment and collaboration for firms and beyond.

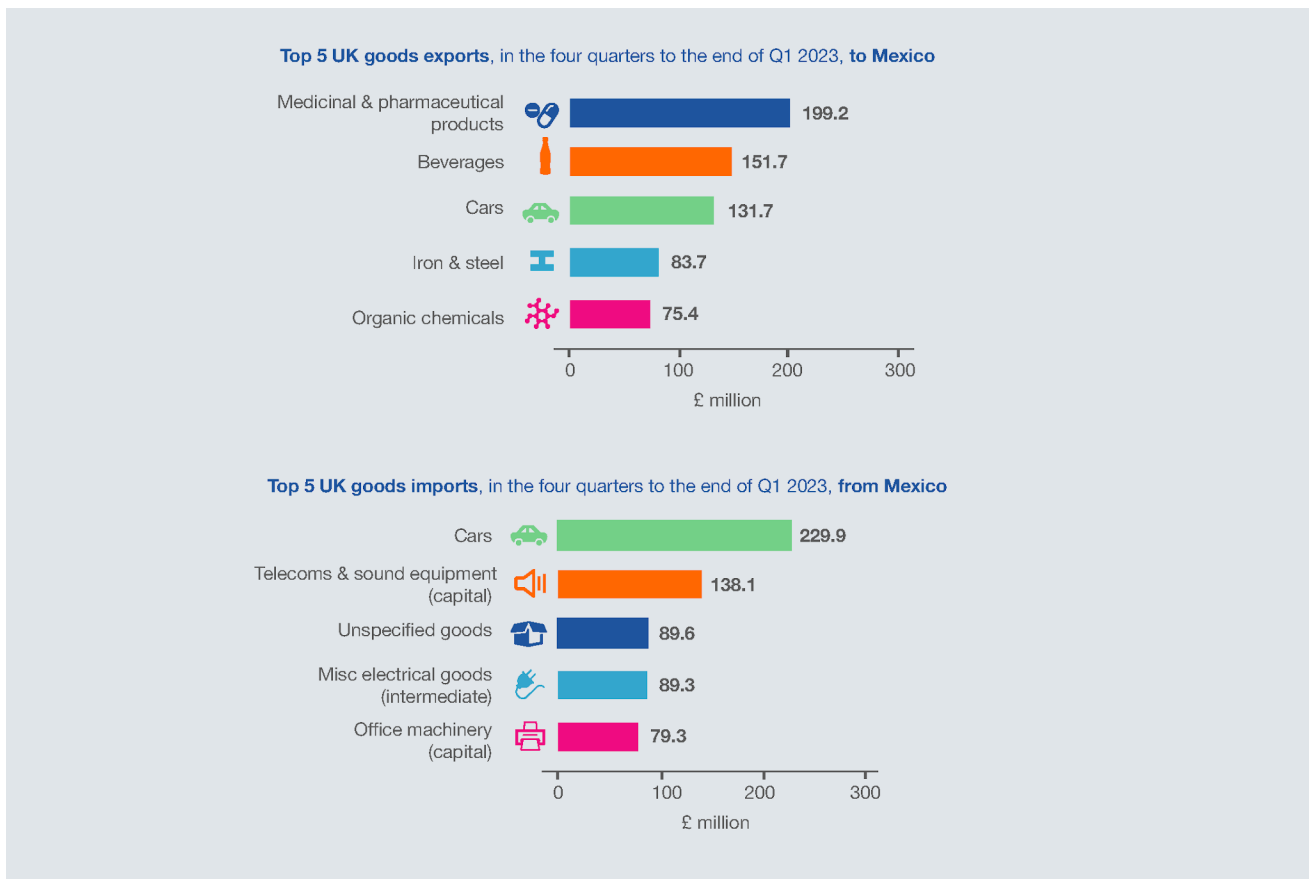
In conjunction with this evidence, we have examined the sector-level trade in goods and services data between the UK and Mexico and noticed several overlaps between these sectors and those highlighted in the literature discussed above. Therefore, based on market analysis and existing trade relationships, several sectors present significant opportunities for UK-Mexico collaboration in AI governance and adoption.

For data relating to goods (see **Figure 3**):

- the top export from the UK to Mexico is ‘medicinal and pharmaceutical products’, while ‘healthcare’ is emphasised in the literature
- the top import from Mexico to the UK is ‘cars’, while ‘automotive industry’ and ‘transportation’ is emphasised in the literature
- the second top import from Mexico to the UK is ‘telecoms and sound equipment (capital)’, while ‘technology, communications and entertainment’ and ‘media’ are emphasised in the literature.

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<sup>28</sup> Grant M (2023), [‘Long Run: Definition, How It Works, and Example’](#)



**Figure 3. Goods traded between the UK and Mexico**<sup>29</sup>

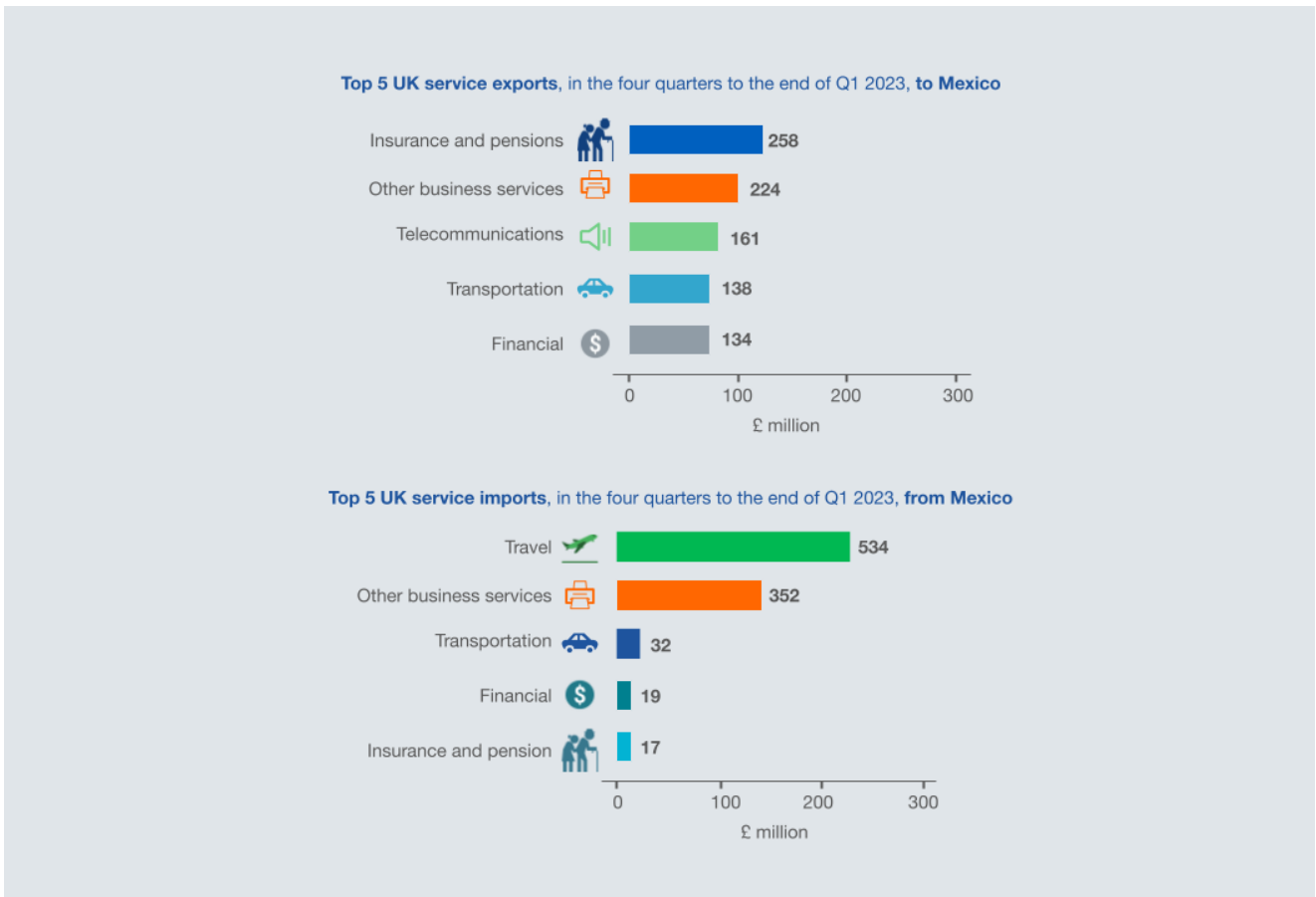
For data relating to services (see **Figure 4**):

- both the UK and Mexico exchange ‘financial services’, which is a sector on the PwC index
- both the UK and Mexico exchange ‘transportation’ services, while ‘transportation and logistics’ is on the PwC index
- the third highest export from the UK to Mexico is ‘telecommunications’, while ‘technology, communications and entertainment’ is on the PwC index.

The second highest service imports from the UK to Mexico and vice versa are listed as ‘other business services’. There is a body of literature identifying professional services as a collection of industries (eg, financial, legal, other administrative) due to be impacted significantly by AI technologies. For instance, management consultancy Bain put professional services at the top of their ranking of industries due to having labour time automated by generative AI, with more than 40% of the current labour time potentially undergoing this transformation.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Department for Business and Trade (2023), [‘Trade and Investment Factsheet: Mexico’](#)

<sup>30</sup> Consultancy.uk (2023), [‘Two-fifths of professional services work could be automated with AI’](#)

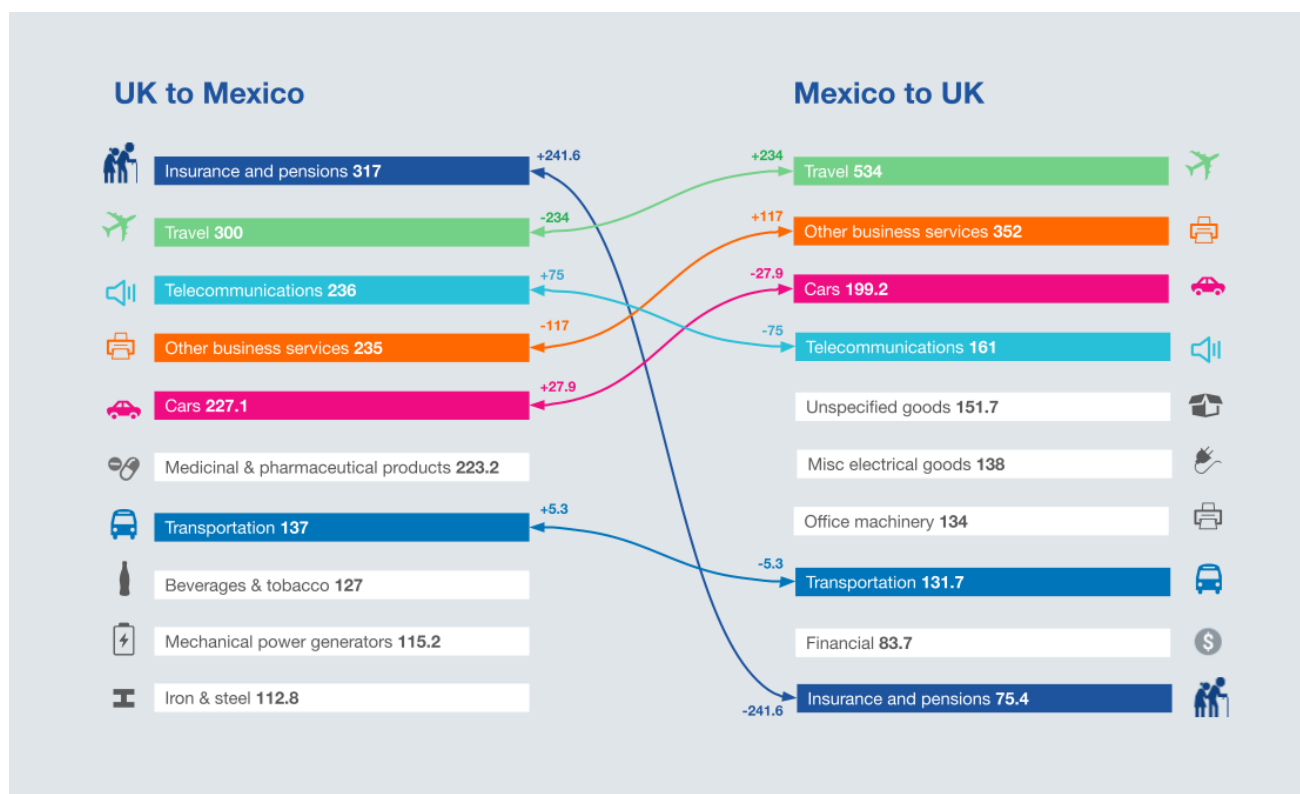


**Figure 4.** Services traded between the UK and Mexico<sup>31</sup>

Our analysis of market research and AI regulations highlights key policy implications for AI data governance. The UK and Mexico face unique challenges and opportunities in integrating AI within key sectors like healthcare and telecommunications.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*

A summarised view of these opportunities in terms of the net flow of trade in goods and services both from the UK to Mexico and vice versa, is shown below:



**Figure 5.** Summarised view of trade opportunities between the UK and Mexico in terms of the net flow of trade in goods

In addition to ‘medicinal and other pharmaceutical products’, which shows the market opportunity for healthcare-orientated AI innovation, several sectors ranking in the top 10 goods and services exchanged (‘insurance and pensions’, ‘telecommunications’, ‘cars’, ‘transportation’) represent a net gain in that category for UK exports to Mexico, and others (‘travel’, ‘other business services’) represent a net gain for Mexican exports to the UK.

These sectors demonstrate that there are clear opportunities for bilateral coordination between the UK and Mexico on AI data governance. Many of these sectors match those expected to provide productivity and consumption-related enhancements, like ‘healthcare’, ‘financial services’, ‘automotive’, ‘transportation and logistics’ and ‘technology communications and entertainment’.

Therefore, there are many strong opportunities for supporting mutual economic benefit in bilateral UK-Mexico coordination around AI data governance as a crucial pillar of broader AI system development. While this demonstrates that the market opportunity for collaboration exists, whether this opportunity is fully developed depends on policy alignment between the two countries.



# Policy applicability

In light of foreign policy developments such as the UK's withdrawal from the EU, the governments in the UK and Mexico have been working on normalising pre-2020 trade relations via the UK-Mexico Trade Continuity Agreement (TCA).<sup>32</sup>

During one of our workshops, we spoke to 18 individuals from:

- Federal Commission for the Protection Against Sanitary Risks (COFEPRIS)
- Federal Telecommunications Institute (IFT)
- National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI)
- AI Research Group from Monterrey Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Federal Institute for Access to Public Information and Data Protection (INAI)
- Federal Economic Competition Commission (COFECE)

We asked them for feedback on two key areas:

1. AI use cases for a regulatory sandbox,<sup>33</sup> a useful framing tool for identifying AI data-related issues, as it provides a relaxed environment in which to experiment with and resolve problematic regulatory issues.
2. A critical review of the UK's principles for AI regulation; highlighting which principles work and where further principles could be included for the Mexican context.

## AI use cases

Potential use cases for a regulatory sandbox identified in the workshops were:

- **Data protection:** INAI explored using the sandbox to experiment with data governance tools and training programmes. Similar work on a regulatory sandbox for data per se was conducted by the UK's Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which may be useful for informing this concept.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Department for Business and Trade (2020), [Trade with Mexico](#)

<sup>33</sup> For an explanation of this, see the explainer on page 23–24 of this report.

<sup>34</sup> ICO (n.d.), '[Regulatory Sandbox](#)'

- **Public health:** COFEPRIS, the health regulator, saw the potential for the sandbox to test AI applications for identifying counterfeit drugs and improving access to regulatory information for businesses. In the UK, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) recently announced their ‘AI-airlock’ regulatory sandbox for generating evidence for AI-enabled medical products.<sup>35</sup>
- **Telecommunications:** IFT identified the sandbox as a platform to explore how AI can help map secure and efficient broadband infrastructure for major events like the 2026 World Cup. The Office of Communications (Ofcom) in the UK has developed a ‘spectrum sandbox’ programme to experiment with regulatory approaches for spectrum access for wireless broadband evolution to 6G.<sup>36</sup>
- **Competition regulation:** COFECE, the competition authority, expressed interest in using the sandbox to test AI for analysing competition issues and promoting digital transformation within their agency. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in the UK has not released a regulatory sandbox, but it continues to work with the industry on circumstantial initiatives for safeguarding data, such as its ‘privacy sandbox’ with Google.<sup>37</sup>

## Review of principles

We asked the workshop participants to provide their perspectives on the UK’s principles for AI regulation. All participants agreed on the applicability of the UK’s ‘cross-cutting principles’ for AI regulation.<sup>38</sup>

However, the participants outlined a need for further discussion on additional principles which could help tailor them to the Mexican context, including:

- **Innovation** – collaboration among AI developers, which is not explicitly mentioned in the UK principles.
- **Ethics and equity** – mapping and incorporating measures to mitigate data-related inequalities and inequities.<sup>39</sup>
- **Cooperation** – building and maintaining institutions that enable continuous learning and coordination on data policy issues.

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<sup>35</sup> MHRA (2023), [‘MHRA to launch the AI-Airlock, a new regulatory sandbox for AI developers’](#)

<sup>36</sup> Ofcom (2023), [‘Opportunities for dynamic or adaptive approaches to managing spectrum in the UK’](#)

<sup>37</sup> Competition and Markets Authority (2021), [‘Investigation into Google’s ‘Privacy Sandbox’ browser changes’](#)

<sup>38</sup> These principles are listed later on in the section ‘Assessment of current AI governance landscapes’ under the subsection ‘UK AI Regulatory Regime’.

<sup>39</sup> As noted by one of the workshop participants, a major aspect of this would be the need to be inclusive with minority ethnic groups (indigenous, Mestizo, Afro-mexican).

In addition to the above, a particularly noteworthy consideration for shaping Mexico's approach to AI data governance articulated by the participants was ensuring alignment with international best practices but also allowing flexibility for national/local contexts. In doing so, this would avoid digital colonialism<sup>40</sup> whereby governments and large commercial entities risk 'locking in' less resource-rich entities to approaches which are not fit for their purpose.

The workshop discussions also revealed a clear consensus on the need for better alignment between policy and regulation in Mexico, particularly concerning AI and data governance. Participants emphasised that while current legislation is moving forward, the pace is slow, and there is a significant gap in the alignment between legal frameworks and the rapid evolution of technology. This misalignment often results in reactive rather than proactive legislation, as seen with the Olimpia law,<sup>41</sup> which was enacted in response to social unrest rather than through forward-thinking policy development.<sup>42</sup>

Participants highlighted the need for a multi-stakeholder approach that includes not only regulators and government bodies, but also academia, civil society and the private sector. This approach would ensure a more holistic understanding of AI technologies and their implications, thereby informing more comprehensive and pre-emptive legal and regulatory frameworks. The creation of a central coordinating body was frequently suggested as a crucial step towards achieving effective governance and oversight of AI technologies in Mexico. A recurring theme in the workshop discussions was that successful AI governance cannot be achieved without strong and informed leadership. Such an entity would therefore be responsible for harmonising efforts across various sectors and ensuring that AI governance is integrated and consistent at a national level.

Moreover, the discussion also underscored the importance of open data and transparency in governance. Workshop participants from INEGI, for example, have been instrumental in making geospatial data accessible and fostering transparency. However, challenges such as governmental interference, lack of buy-in and corruption can pose significant risks to the integrity and effectiveness of such institutions. Strengthening these bodies, ensuring their autonomy, and protecting them from external pressures are essential for the successful implementation of AI governance that aligns with both national interests and international best practices.

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<sup>40</sup> Browne G (2023), '[AI Is Steeped in Big Tech's "Digital Colonialism"](#)' Wired

<sup>41</sup> Carrillo AZ (2022), '[Olimpia Law and legislation against digital violence in Latin America](#)' Mexican Center for International Relations

<sup>42</sup> Pascu M (2024), '[A Closer Look: Mexico's Proposed Artificial Intelligence Bill](#)' ING Consulting

These findings show that there are some clear opportunities for increased international knowledge sharing, and perhaps more practical cooperation, in data-centric AI governance. Establishing shared regulatory principles such as transparency, fairness and accountability could be a useful first step for effective collaboration on regulatory matters across borders. Mexico has already recognised the importance of multilateral collaboration, taking an active role in pursuing international cooperation for the ethical development of AI by endorsing the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) AI principles in 2019.<sup>43</sup> But, plurilateral,<sup>44</sup> or even bilateral collaborations can also play an important role in advancing data-centric AI governance frameworks.

Kerry et al. (2021) note that while complete global harmonisation may be difficult due to differences in national priorities and legal traditions, “international collaboration can nonetheless create the level playing field that would enable countries to engage in fruitful agreeing on basic principles and when possible seeking joint outcomes, but also competing for the best solutions to be scaled up at the global level”.<sup>45</sup>

Meanwhile, López et al. (2024) highlight that countries like Mexico are taking a “principles-based approach” to AI regulation, which “prioritises ethical and moral considerations” and “provides a clear and comprehensive framework for decision-making based on shared values”.<sup>46</sup> This indicates that Mexico is open to collaborating with partners to establish common principles, even if full regulatory harmonisation remains challenging.

Therefore, in addition to multilateral initiatives, Mexico and other countries can also pursue more focused, plurilateral or bilateral collaborations to align on key data-centric AI governance principles and standards. This can help create a more coherent global framework while still allowing for national differences and innovation. By working together across different levels, countries can more effectively harness the benefits of AI while managing its risks.

Given this, a deeper understanding of each country's regulatory regimes for AI is an important first step for assessing the degree to which further collaboration (ie, relating to, and even going beyond, alignment of principles) is desirable.

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<sup>43</sup> Boston Global Forum (2020), [The AI Social Contract Index 2020](#)

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (n.d.), [‘Plurilateral agreements’](#)

<sup>45</sup> Kerry CF et al. (2021), [‘Strengthening international cooperation on AI’](#) Brookings

<sup>46</sup> Speyside Group (2024), [‘AI regulation is not only a technology issue’](#)

# Assessment of current AI governance landscapes

## International context

Although current policy developments are only early steps in this space, in recent years a clear regulatory regime specific to AI and AI data has taken shape. The explosion in the development of FMs has led to substantial regulatory attention worldwide. However, different jurisdictions are taking at times dramatically different approaches to regulation. This is to be expected given different political cultures and the various levels of risk that certain AI use cases present.

The EU's approach, via the EU AI Act, outlines a series of risk tiers for different AI system use cases, from 'no risk' to 'unacceptable risk', with the former including relatively harmless uses of AI such as inventory management systems, and the latter containing potential exploitative uses of AI such as for social scoring and biometric identification.<sup>47</sup> Each of these tiers comes with associated (and increasingly stringent) regulatory obligations on the developers.

In contrast, the US has taken a more decentralised, industry-led approach to AI governance so far, with limited federal regulation and a reliance on voluntary industry standards and self-regulation. This reflects the US's historical preference for a lighter regulatory touch and a belief that the private sector is best positioned to drive innovation in emerging technologies. However, there are signs this may be changing, with increasing public pressure and congressional attention leading to proposals for more targeted federal AI legislation.<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, China has pursued a more proactive, government-led approach to AI governance, with a focus on establishing national standards, ethical principles and concrete rules to regulate the development and use of AI, particularly in sensitive domains like online content and surveillance.<sup>49</sup> This reflects China's more centralised political system and its strategic prioritisation of AI as a key technology for economic and social development, as well as national security.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> FTI Consulting (2023), ['The Four Risks of the EU's AI Act'](#)

<sup>48</sup> Au A (2023), ['China vs US Approaches to AI Governance'](#) The Diplomat

<sup>49</sup> Gong J et al. (2024), ['AI Governance in China: Strategies, Initiatives, and Key Considerations'](#) Bird & Bird

<sup>50</sup> Sheehan M (2023), ['China's AI Regulations and How They Get Made'](#) Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Globally, several non-binding standards and best practices for AI governance and even data-centric AI governance are emerging. For instance, the OECD AI principles and the practical guidance for responsible AI developed by the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI),<sup>51</sup> or UNESCO's recommendations on AI.<sup>52</sup>

Furthermore, as AI's impact transcends borders, these differing national approaches, combined with efforts to establish international frameworks through bodies like the ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission), are shaping the evolving landscape of AI governance, with significant global implications.<sup>53,54</sup> For example, the ISO/IEC 42001 'Artificial Intelligence Management System' standard, or the ISO/IEC 8183 standard which defines the key stages of the AI data lifecycle.

There are few non-regulatory developments in AI, or data-centric AI governance, at a national level. Therefore, regulatory developments play a significant role in defining the different national approaches in this space.

## UK AI regulatory regime

While there is no formal legislation solely relating to AI in the UK yet, AI as a domestic and international strategic priority for investment, technological development and responsible governance has been recognised by the UK government for some time. However, related policy developments such as the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Digital Markets Act (due to gain royal assent this year) intersect with AI technologies by imposing regulations on online platforms, including requirements for independent audits and addressing the implications of AI technologies on competition and consumer welfare.

Influential policy papers such as the Cabinet Office's Integrated Review 2021 repeatedly mention the objective of enabling the UK to become a 'science and tech superpower' through establishing leading capabilities in, and fostering the responsible use of, cutting-edge technologies like AI.<sup>55</sup> The 2017 Industrial Strategy white paper announced £300 million of investment to attract highly skilled labour in emerging domains like AI.<sup>56</sup> This was followed by a deal struck between the UK government and a

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<sup>51</sup> The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (2020), [Data Governance Working Group Report](#)

<sup>52</sup> UNESCO (n.d.), [UNESCO's Input in reply to the OHCHR report on the Human Rights Council Resolution 47/23 entitled "New and emerging digital technologies and human rights"](#)

<sup>53</sup> ODI Think Tank (2023), [International AI Governance must be truly global](#)

<sup>54</sup> Meltzer JP (2023), ['Toward international cooperation on AI governance—the US executive order on AI'](#) Brookings

<sup>55</sup> Cabinet Office (2021), [Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#)

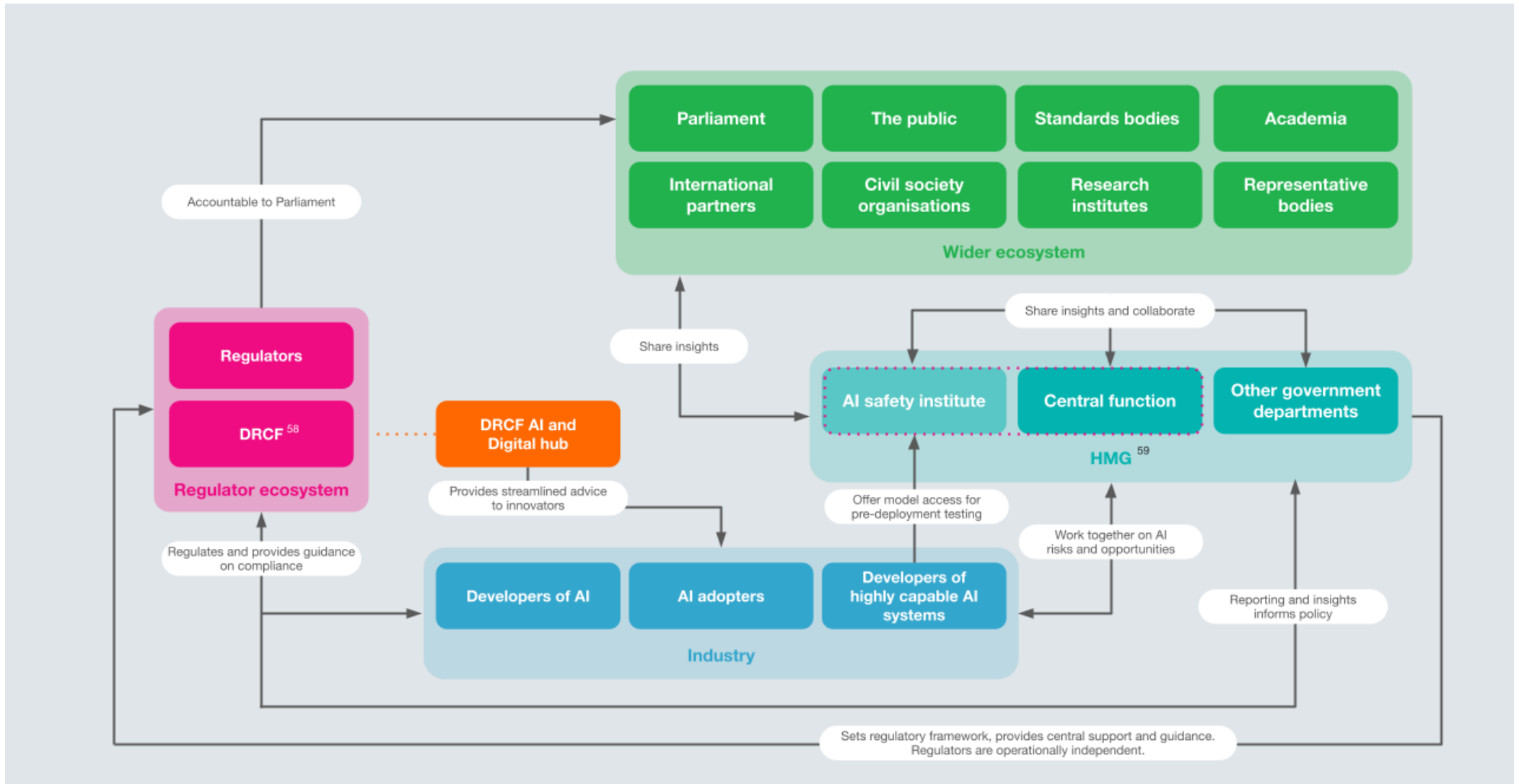
<sup>56</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2017), [Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future](#) (withdrawn)

range of key actors in the AI ecosystem for investment of nearly £1 billion to boost the UK as a global leader in developing AI systems.<sup>57</sup>

The UK has taken a flexible approach to data-centric AI governance, driven by a diverse ecosystem involving government agencies, regulatory bodies, research institutions and industry players. Recognising the need to monitor AI systems according to different degrees of risk, while at the same time giving industry players leeway to innovate, the UK government has emphasised a multi-stakeholder approach from the beginning (see **Figure 6**).

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<sup>57</sup> Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, Office for Artificial Intelligence, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2021), [National AI Strategy](#)



**Figure 6.** UK AI regulatory landscape – the big picture

<sup>58</sup> DRCF (2024), [Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum](#)

<sup>59</sup> Department for Science, Innovation & Technology and Office for Artificial Intelligence (2023), [A pro-innovation approach to AI regulation](#)



This approach was first outlined in the UK government's National AI Strategy, published in April 2021.<sup>60</sup> The strategy outlined a three-pronged approach to solidify the UK's position as an AI leader: investing in and planning for the long-term needs of the AI ecosystem; supporting the transition to an AI-enabled economy; and ensuring responsible and ethical development of AI technologies. The strategy acknowledged the importance of a pro-innovation regulatory environment to foster domestic industry growth, while also emphasising the need for robust ethical frameworks to ensure public trust in AI.

Building on the National AI Strategy's emphasis on responsible innovation, the UK government published the AI Regulation white paper in March 2023.<sup>61</sup> This proposed a novel, principles-based framework for governing AI, with five cross-cutting principles that all AI systems should adhere to:

1. Safety, security and robustness
2. Appropriate transparency and explainability
3. Fairness
4. Accountability and governance
5. Contestability and redress.

The principles provide a flexible foundation for regulating AI, allowing existing regulators to interpret and apply them within their specific domains. The key principles, particularly transparency and fairness, have significant data implications. Transparency encourages developers to be clear about how AI systems utilise data, allowing users to understand what information is collected and how it influences AI decision-making.

## Central risk function

The foundational framework of the UK government's approach to regulating this space is also reflected in the AI Regulation white paper, which acknowledges the need for central oversight from the government to ensure coherence and to address potential regulatory gaps across different sectors. To this end, it proposes the establishment of a new central function<sup>62</sup> within the UK government to monitor AI risks across the economy and support coordination between various regulators. This creates feedback loops in the identification and ongoing monitoring of these risks, whereby the government is fed insights related to cross-sector AI risks from businesses via regulators; and the government then consolidates these risks to update key principles and policies for regulators to apply, ensuring that the grounds on which enforcement may occur are as up-to-date as possible.

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<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Department for Science, Innovation & Technology and Office for Artificial Intelligence (2023), [A pro-innovation approach to AI regulation](#)

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*

Coordination among regulators is key for AI regulation in the UK. While not mentioned in AI legislation explicitly, the Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum (DRCF)<sup>63</sup> brings together regulators from different sectors to discuss and share best practices on emerging digital technologies. This collaborative approach aligns well with the government's emphasis on multi-stakeholder engagement and will no doubt be a valuable tool for ensuring consistent and effective application of AI principles across various regulatory bodies.

Existing data protection laws also play a crucial role in governing AI data practices. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 set the foundation for responsible AI development by establishing how personal data is collected, used and protected. The ICO acts as the lead regulator for data protection in the UK and plays a vital role in overseeing the responsible use of data in AI practices, and has updated its guidance accordingly.<sup>64</sup>

## Challenges and potential mitigations

There are several challenges that are yet to be overcome. First, there are certain sector-specific issues, such as how to effectively enforce copyright protections amidst large-scale data scraping operations conducted by AI companies.<sup>65</sup> Second, there is a lack of a singular set of AI data governance best practices for regulators and others in the field. As well as coordination bodies like the DRCF, the UK (like Mexico) has implemented techniques for experimenting with different regulatory approaches to overcome these challenges, such as regulatory sandboxes.

Regulatory sandboxes in the UK FinTech sector are frameworks set up by financial regulators to allow businesses to test innovative products, services, technologies and business models in a controlled environment with real consumers, but under the regulator's supervision. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in the UK was one of the first regulators to introduce a regulatory sandbox to test blockchain technology for cross-border money remittance. Given the often sensitive nature of data used for certain AI systems (eg, medical devices), these techniques may be indispensable to finding the most effective interventions moving forward.

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<sup>63</sup> Competition and Markets Authority, Information Commissioner's Office, Ofcom, and Financial Conduct Authority (2021), [The Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum](#)

<sup>64</sup> ICO (2023), [Guidance on AI and data protection](#)

<sup>65</sup> Milmo D (2024), ['UK ministers urged to protect creatives whose work is used by AI firms | Artificial intelligence \(AI\)'](#) *The Guardian*

## How do regulatory sandboxes work? An example from the FCA

1. **Application and selection:** FinTech companies apply to participate in the sandbox, outlining their business model, the innovation they propose, how it benefits consumers or the financial system, and the specific regulatory requirements they wish to test. The regulatory body then selects participants based on criteria such as innovativeness, readiness for testing, consumer benefit and the company's need for a sandbox to proceed.
2. **Testing phase:** Once accepted, the companies enter a testing phase where they can launch their products or services to a limited number of consumers for a limited time. During this phase, regulators may provide certain relaxations of regulatory requirements, but they will set clear boundaries, such as limits on the number of customers or transaction volumes.
3. **Oversight and reporting:** Throughout the testing phase, the sandbox participants are closely monitored by the regulatory authority, and they must provide regular reports on their progress, the outcomes of the test, and any issues encountered. This allows both the regulators and the companies to learn from the experience.
4. **Evaluation and exit:** At the end of the testing period, the sandbox experience is evaluated based on the reports and outcomes. Depending on the results, the FinTech company may either proceed to a full market launch with the necessary regulatory approvals, adjust its product or service based on feedback, or cease the proposed offering.

There is also the more fundamental issue of when and how to legislate. The UK government has stated that it will introduce legislation relating to AI in the future,<sup>66</sup> but serious risks (such as those relating to the AI-enabled intensive production of misinformation during election cycles) remain an urgent issue<sup>67</sup> that may not be conducive to this loose timeline. Overall, the UK's approach to AI regulation highlights the importance of flexibility and adaptability in governance structures.

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<sup>66</sup> Pinsent Masons (2024), '[AI laws inevitable but not right for today, says UK' government](#)

<sup>67</sup> Adami M (2024), '[How AI-generated disinformation might impact this year's elections and how journalists should report on it](#)' Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

# Mexico AI regulatory regime

Mexico's approach to AI data governance reflects a dynamic landscape focused on harnessing AI for economic growth and societal advancement. Central to this approach is the 2018 IA2030Mx strategy, a roadmap outlining objectives for AI research, talent cultivation, data infrastructure enhancement, ethical guidelines establishment and regulatory framework development.<sup>68</sup> This strategy is the guiding document for Mexico's efforts to position itself as a competitive player in the global AI arena, while ensuring responsible AI deployment.

Like the UK, there is not currently any cross-sectoral, binding legislation on AI technologies and/or data in Mexico and progress since the 2018 IA2030Mx strategy has been slow. However, in 2019 a survey was conducted by the 'IA2023 coalition', collecting information from 400 diverse actors relating to major areas of concern related to AI in Mexico. This provided indispensable data for informing regulation, although difficulties were experienced due to a lack of collaboration with regulators by the federal government.

Meanwhile, in 2023, the Mexican Senate created the National Alliance for Artificial Intelligence (ANIA), a central body responsible for seeking a legal basis to develop and propose regulatory frameworks for AI.<sup>20</sup>

Other than this, not dissimilar to the UK, key oversight on many topics related to AI technologies in Mexico comes from disparate regulators. The use and protection of AI data are primarily regulated by measures set out by the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data (INAI). The INAI plays a crucial role in safeguarding data protection and privacy,<sup>69</sup> a key consideration for the safe development and deployment of AI systems. The INAI contributes to the building of trust among stakeholders and fostering responsible data practices within the AI ecosystem.

However, the 2018 strategy recommended that as data is 'a competitive asset', the national competition regulator, the Federal Economic Competition Regulator (COFECE), should bring data assets under its regulatory remit.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, with data framed as a competitive asset, Mexican regulators like COFECE may feel the need to assert regulatory ownership on relevant data on a sectoral basis, potentially conflicting with the remits of other regulators.

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<sup>68</sup> OECD.AI (2024), '[Mexican National AI Agenda](#)'

<sup>69</sup> Network for Integrity (n.d.), [National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection](#)

<sup>70</sup> Boston Global Forum (2020), [The AI Social Contract Index 2020](#)

## Non-state actors

Mexico's academic and research institutions are crucial in shaping the country's AI data governance policies. By collaborating with industry partners and engaging in international AI research initiatives, these institutions not only contribute to the generation of new knowledge but also play a key role in developing skilled talent and facilitating the transfer of cutting-edge technologies. This expertise is vital for informing effective AI policies and regulations that promote innovation while ensuring ethical standards and data protection.<sup>71</sup> For instance, the Monterrey Institute of Technology hosts specialised research groups in 'advanced artificial intelligence', focusing on developing data science techniques that directly impact AI system efficiency and safety, thereby influencing policy making in Mexico.<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, even parts of Mexico's regulatory environment have their roots in academia, with the INAI regulator developing from the Grupo Oaxaca, a group of academic stakeholders wishing to enshrine the 'right to know (right of access to public information)' in Mexico.<sup>73</sup> Mexico's universities also contribute to its leading technical capabilities in the Latin American region. For instance, the 2023 Latin American AI Index indicates that Mexico and Brazil account for over 95% of AI patents in Latin America.

This patent-related capacity is driven by both academic and industry stakeholders. According to a 2019 survey by the OECD, 99.7% of all private enterprises in Mexico are small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which account for 35.6% of gross national production (GNP). Consequently, Mexico's burgeoning startup ecosystem will play a major part in supporting any growth from AI-driven innovation. Fuelled by accelerators and innovation hubs, this ecosystem nurtures entrepreneurial endeavours focused on AI-driven solutions across various sectors, which in turn makes regulation necessary.

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<sup>71</sup> British Embassy In Mexico (2018), [Towards an AI Strategy in Mexico](#)

<sup>72</sup> Tecnológico de Monterrey (n.d.), [Advanced Artificial Intelligence](#)

<sup>73</sup> Freedom Info (n.d.), [Mexico](#)

## Challenges and potential mitigations

Access to data to effectively regulate its stewardship is a common issue in the UK and Mexico. For instance, in its 2020 Digital Strategy, COFECE outlined the challenges of identifying and collecting large amounts of data relating to potentially anti-competitive practices.<sup>74</sup> Our recommendation (described in further detail later) to develop an AI data governance toolkit tailored for Mexican regulators would ensure they are equipped to manage AI developments effectively and responsibly – such tools are pivotal as they help navigate complex regulatory landscapes, reflecting the collaborative insights gained from the UK’s experiences.

There is some evidence of a lack of coordination between different levels of government in Mexico and between regulators. Given the cross-sectoral nature of these technologies, coordination in this space is key. There may therefore be space for a coordinating body loosely reminiscent of the DRCF in the UK, tailored to the Mexican policy context and with clear consensus from regulators and potentially beyond (eg, academia, civil society).

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<sup>74</sup> COFECE (2020), [COFECE Digital Strategy](#)

# Recommendations and next steps

Building upon the valuable insights gained from our workshops, we have the following recommendations for supporting the regulatory community in advancing responsible AI development in Mexico:

## 1. Develop an AI data governance toolkit tailored for the Mexican regulatory community

The intersection of AI technology with critical sectors like healthcare and telecommunications presents both opportunities and challenges, pointing to the need for international cooperation in data-centric AI governance. Our analysis suggests that sector-specific collaborative frameworks between the UK and Mexico could streamline efforts and capitalise on mutual strengths. A toolkit would provide Mexican regulators with a comprehensive set of evidence-based resources to experiment with different approaches to data governance for AI. Alignment on data governance is vital for both reducing friction and enhancing responsibility in the stewardship of data for all purposes (ie, commercial and regulatory). The ODI has developed a range of similar resources for different types of organisations, such as the ODI's data toolkit for business.<sup>75</sup> The recommended toolkit for regulators could include:

- A repository of AI data uses cases for exploration via a regulatory sandbox, similar in shape to the ODI's data institutions register.<sup>76</sup> These use cases would focus on the priority sectors identified in our market analysis (eg, healthcare, telecommunications), ensuring that the outputs are appropriate for strengthening UK-Mexico collaboration.
- An outline of how innovative policy solutions like data access remedies (safe and efficient data access methods for regulatory purposes<sup>77</sup>) can be implemented in a range of regulatory contexts to facilitate the sharing of data and insights between multiple stakeholders.

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<sup>75</sup> ODI (2020), [The ODI's Data Toolkit for Business](#)

<sup>76</sup> ODI (2021), [The Data Institutions Register](#)

<sup>77</sup> Schnurr D (2023), '[Data Access Remedies: Regulatory Approaches, Economic Trade-Offs and Information Technology Design](#)'

Current examples of best practice (where available) for data collection, data sharing, data storage, data use and licensing of datasets used in AI applications.

- Guidance on mitigating bias and ensuring fairness in the data used for AI systems.
- Frameworks and instruments for assessing and managing risks associated with AI (with an emphasis on experimental policy instruments like regulatory sandboxes).
- Global case studies showcasing successful implementations of AI data governance practices in regulatory use cases.

## **2. Leverage the expertise of the UK in AI education to enhance data and AI literacy among Mexican regulators, policymakers and critical areas of trade**

Effective regulation of digital technologies and data requires a strong bedrock of domain knowledge. Mexico's academic and research communities hold a great degree of capability in AI research (and consequently related knowledge assets<sup>78</sup>). Since it might help to connect multiple stakeholder groups, the coordinating body outlined in the previous recommendation might help to disseminate some of this capability to regulators. However, there are also existing learning offerings which may help to build capacity in this way:

1. Adapting leading UK data (and specifically AI data) educational offerings to support the strategic skills and capability roadmap of Mexico's regulator community, such as the ODI's suite of learning offerings which help organisations evolve their data practices and get more value from data.<sup>79</sup>
2. Developing Mexico-specific case studies with local industry for inclusion in tailored learning content.
3. Working with local Mexico educational institutions to localise relevant UK educational offerings and certification pathways.
4. Grow and formalise a community of responsible data and AI stewards

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<sup>78</sup> NHS Improving Quality (n.d.), [Knowledge assets](#)

<sup>79</sup> ODI (n.d.), [ODI Learning](#)



### **3. Connect regulators and policymakers in Mexico to UK's leadership in AI safety research and data-centric AI governance to assist the community in launching its own cross-sectoral initiative**

The workshops highlighted the need for some kind of entity to oversee AI data governance and other pressing data and digital policy issues in Mexico. It should be stressed that designing and implementing this is strictly not in the remit of the British Embassy. Throughout our work, we heard from numerous regulators about how such a body would substantially benefit digital and data policy coordination. In our workshops, we asked the stakeholders to vote on which model would work best: 1) a new, multi-regulator council serving as a new body for this coordination; 2) a steering committee with representatives from various regulatory bodies; 3) an initiative led by a single regulator. Ten participants favoured option one, and eight favoured option two, with none favouring option three. Therefore, whether a new body or a more decentralised steering group structure, clearly some degree of multi-regulator entity for coordination on digital and data policy is desired. The responsibilities of this body could include:

- Coordinating regulatory efforts related to AI and AI data across different sectors and in different international jurisdictions.
- Ensuring that regulation in this space is aligned with international best practices.
- Fostering collaboration between regulators, industry stakeholders and civil society organisations.
- Overseeing the implementation and effectiveness of dynamic policy instruments such as regulatory sandboxes for AI.
- Experimenting with different policy enforcement mechanisms.

## 4. Co-design and facilitate a Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Mexico

This would be a platform for both countries to cooperate and adopt common data-centric tools, practices and approaches to governing AI, as well as to develop the capability, tools and policies needed to mitigate the wider risks posed by AI adoption. This cooperation would support the scalable and ethical adoption of AI in a pro-trade, pro-innovation capacity.

Additionally, establishing an initial bilateral joint task force could focus on developing and enforcing cross-border AI ethics standards and compliance mechanisms. This task force would ensure unified guidelines and protocols for ethical AI development, monitor compliance and promote inclusive AI policies that consider the diverse socio-economic landscapes of both nations. The approach could be opened up to wider multilateral engagement and grow a regional Latin American model of consensus.

Finally, during our workshops there was broad agreement on the UK principles for AI regulation and for leveraging the ongoing data-related AI safety research objectives of the UK's Artificial Intelligence Safety Institute (AISI).<sup>80</sup> The AISI research focuses on developing 'technical tools for governance and regulation'. These tools, such as secure methods for handling sensitive data or techniques for analysing training data for bias, could be invaluable resources for Mexican regulators as they build their own data-centric AI governance frameworks. By collaborating with Mexico on these recommendations, the FCDO could contribute to fostering a responsible AI ecosystem in Mexico, while also scaling the impact of the UK's AI safety research efforts globally.

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<sup>80</sup> Department for Science Innovation and Technology (2024), '[Introducing the AI Safety Institute](#)'

## 5. Shaping international cooperation and calls to action

To advance longer term AI governance and to ensure work conducted with Mexico can lay the foundations for multilateral progress in AI governance, several long-term interventions are necessary. Securing broad endorsements from government, regulatory, industry and academic leaders in both the UK and Mexico will be crucial for reinforcing commitments to responsible AI development and fostering international cooperation.

Co-development of a compelling narrative around the benefits of data-centric AI governance built on evidence from a UK-Mexico collaboration will ensure effective communication of its positive impacts. These activities can lead to a 'momentum' roadmap serving to engage and foster interest from additional jurisdictions, while supporting continuous improvement of governance frameworks.

Engaging with UK international research initiatives and communities (such as the International Science Partnerships Fund) will enable this community to shape research to explore the critical intersection of data, AI governance, trade and international development.

The recommendations made here can lead to significant short-term developments, paving the way for these longer-term opportunities to enhance the UK-Mexico economic and diplomatic relationship.