



National
AI Center
of Latvia

AI & Elections

A Guide for
People in Latvia

2026

For everyone in Latvia

who wants to better understand how AI can
influence their choices during elections.

The best defence against disinformation starts with you!

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Key Terms

Artificial intelligence (AI)

A range of technologies and systems that enable computers to analyse information and perform tasks that previously required human involvement, such as writing text, answering questions, translating languages, recognising images, or creating new content.

Examples: search engines, translation tools, chatbots, and image generators.

Large Language Models (LLM)

AI systems trained on vast amounts of text that can generate human-like language. Rather than "knowing" the correct answer, they predict which words or sentences are most likely to come next. For this reason, information generated by LLMs should always be evaluated critically.

Examples: translation tools, chatbots, and AI image generators

Generative AI

Type of AI capable of creating new content, including text, images, audio, and video, based on patterns learned from existing data.

Examples: text generators, image generators, voice-cloning tools, and AI video generators.

Machine Learning (ML)

A subset of AI (Data-Driven AI) that uses statistical methods to enable systems to learn from data and improve performance over time.

Examples: Netflix and Spotify recommendations, email spam filters, and fraud detection systems used by banks.

Hallucinations

AI systems can sometimes generate inaccurate, misleading, or entirely fabricated information that appears convincing. These errors are known as hallucinations. For this reason, information generated by AI should always be verified using reliable sources.

Example: When summarising the biographies of political candidates, AI may also hallucinate by falsely claiming that a politician has criminal convictions, academic qualifications, or a voting record in Parliament that they do not actually have.

Prompt

A question, instruction, or command given to an AI system to generate a response or create specific content. The more precise the prompt, the more useful and relevant the response is likely to be.

Examples: "Generate 5 populist slogans for a social media campaign promoting tax cuts" or "Create an image of me saving Latvia".

Algorithm

Noteikumu vai darbību kopums, ko dators izmanto, lai apstrādātu informāciju vai atrisinātu konkrētu uzdevumu.

Piemērs: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok un YouTube algoritmi nosaka, kādu saturu lietotājs redz savā ziņu plūsmā.

Chatbot

A computer program that can communicate with people by answering questions in writing or through speech. Some chatbots use artificial intelligence to provide detailed, human-like responses.

Examples: Customer support chatbots on company websites or automated chatbots on social media that pose as genuine supporters and flood comment sections with messages promoting a particular political party.

Deepfake

An image, audio recording, or video that has been created or manipulated using artificial intelligence to make it appear that a person said or did something that never actually happened. Not all deepfakes are created with malicious intent. However, they can be used for fraud, manipulation, and disinformation.

Example: AI can generate a video that appears to show a politician saying something they never said, or create images depicting events that never occurred, such as explosions, military attacks, mass protests, or natural disasters.

Disinformation

False or misleading information that is deliberately created or shared to influence people's opinions, emotions, or behaviour. AI is not disinformation in itself. However, it can be used to create and spread misleading content more quickly, more convincingly, and on a much larger scale.

Examples: Fabricated news stories, manipulated images, or AI-generated content designed to influence public opinion.

Misinformation

False or inaccurate information that is shared without the intention to deceive. Unlike disinformation, it is not created or distributed with the purpose of misleading others. It often spreads because of misunderstanding, carelessness, or a failure to verify the facts.

Example: Someone shares a false image or news story on social media believing it to be true.

Botnet

A large group of fake social media accounts controlled by automated software (bots). Combined with AI, bot networks can create the false impression that large numbers of people support or oppose a particular idea, political party, or candidate.

Example: Within minutes of a politician publishing a social media post, hundreds of AI-generated comments appear expressing either support or criticism, creating the false impression that "everyone thinks this way."

Microsegmentation & Microtargeting

Data-driven strategies that use AI algorithms to analyse people's data, such as their interests, age, location, concerns, or preferences, and deliver highly personalised content tailored to each individual. While these techniques are widely used in advertising, they can also be used in political campaigns to deliver different messages to different groups of voters.

Example: AI may identify that one voter is most concerned about access to childcare and schools, while their neighbour is more interested in national security. Each person is then shown different political advertisements designed to appeal to their specific concerns..

Cheapfakes / Shallowfakes

Unlike deepfakes, which use AI to generate or significantly alter content, cheapfakes (also known as shallowfakes) are genuine images, videos, or audio recordings that have been edited using simple techniques, such as slowing down, speeding up, trimming, or taking content out of context, to change their meaning. Although they are easier to create than deepfakes and require no advanced AI tools, they can be just as misleading.

Example: A video of a public official is slightly slowed down, making it appear as though the politician is intoxicated or has a medical condition.

Content Labelling / Digital Watermarking

Methods used to indicate that content—such as an image, video, or text—has been created or modified using artificial intelligence.

Many social media platforms now automatically apply these labels to AI-generated content to help users better understand what they are viewing.

Example: When viewing an image on Instagram or Facebook, the platform may display a label such as "Made with AI" or show a special icon indicating that the image was created or edited using artificial intelligence.

AI & Deepfakes

What is a deepfake?

Deepfakes are images, audio recordings, or videos that have been created or altered using AI to appear authentic, even though they are false.

In some cases, the people or events shown are entirely fictional. In others, real people or real events are manipulated by changing their content or context, creating misleading impression of reality.

For example, AI can be used to:

- create fictional people and realistic-looking images;
- imitate a person's voice;
- generate videos that appear to show people saying or doing things that never happened;
- manipulate existing images, audio recordings, or videos to create a false impression of reality;
- create images or videos depicting events that never occurred, such as military attacks, natural disasters, or other fabricated incidents.

Why are deepfakes created?

To Spread Disinformation & Manipulate Public Opinion

Deepfakes and other AI-generated content can be used to spread false information, create fake news, and influence public opinion. This type of content is often designed to trigger strong emotions because emotionally charged content is more likely to attract attention and be shared online.



To Commit Fraud

Criminals can use fake audio or video recordings to impersonate other people, steal money, or gain access to personal information.

For example, AI can replicate a person's voice, making it appear as a family member, colleague, or bank representative is calling.

To Attract Attention

Content that surprises people or provokes strong emotions often reaches a wider audience on social media. For this reason, AI-generated images, videos, and audio recordings may be used to gain attention, increase views, or encourage people to share content online, even when the intention is not direct deception.

To Influence Elections

Deepfakes can be used to discredit political candidates, spread false claims, or manipulate voters' perceptions.

Fake images, audio recordings, and videos can create a misleading impression of candidates or events, particularly during election campaigns, when people are actively seeking information and making decisions about how they will vote.

For Entertainment and Creative Projects

Deepfakes are widely used in films, advertising, and social media to create visual effects and engaging content. They can also be used in art, to recreate historical figures, or to localise content for different audiences. Not all deepfakes are created with malicious intent.

AI & Elections

(AI is increasingly influencing how people access information, form opinions, and participate in democratic processes. AI is not a threat to democracy in itself. It can be used to inform the public, but it can also be misused to manipulate and mislead. However, AI can also generate inaccurate or entirely false information (hallucinations). That is why critical thinking is more important than ever. Always verify important information, especially about elections, using official and trusted sources.)

Potential Benefits

AI can support elections and democratic participation by helping to:

- search for and summarise information;
- translate content and improve accessibility;
- communicate with voters;
- prepare campaign materials.

Potential Risks

AI can also be misused to:

- create deepfakes (fake images, audio recordings, and videos);
- generate false or misleading content;
- automate the spread of disinformation;
- create fake social media profiles and AI-powered chatbots;
- produce manipulative content designed to provoke strong emotions and influence voters' decisions.

Remember - there are limits to everything!



The use of AI in election campaigns is permitted in Latvia. However, campaign materials that include AI-generated images, audio, or video must clearly disclose that the content was created using AI.

What to do

when AI is used to mislead?

1. Pause before you share!
2. Check the source
3. Look for confirmation
4. Pay attention to the details
5. Report suspicious content



Organisation	When to contact them	Contact
KNAB	Unlabelled AI-generated campaign content, fake accounts, hidden political advertising, campaign spending violations.	zino.knab.gov.lv
State Chancellery	Accepts reports of all forms of disinformation, misinformation, hate speech, and propaganda found online.	meinsuzbalta.lv
State Police	Criminal offences involving deepfakes, fraud, hate speech, defamation, or election-related crimes.	vp.gov.lv tel: 110
CVK	False or misleading information about election dates, voting procedures, polling stations, or polling hours.	cvk.lv
CERT.LV	Cybersecurity incidents, fake online profiles, malware, and attacks on digital infrastructure.	cert.lv
National AI Centre of Latvia	Provides expert opinions to public authorities in cases involving suspected AI-generated or deepfake content. The Centre does not accept reports from the public or carry out individual assessments of online content.	info@ailatvia.lv

Useful Resources

Examples from Other Countries

- Hungary** A DW report examining how AI-generated misleading content has been used in political campaigns.
([video link](#))
- United States** A CNN report exploring how AI is changing political communication, election campaigns, and public trust in information.
([video link](#))
- Armenia** A CivilNet article analysing the use of an AI-generated avatar in political communication and highlighting the importance of public awareness.
([article link](#))
- Germany** A DW report examining how AI-generated virtual influencers are being used to spread political content and influence public opinion on social media.
([video link](#))

Fact - Checking Resources

- Re:Check** Latvia's fact-checking platform.
([website link](#))
- AFP Fact Check** An international fact-checking platform operated by the global news agency Agence France-Presse (AFP).
([website link](#))
- EDMO** A European network dedicated to combating disinformation and supporting fact-checking.
([website link](#))

AI & Deepfakes

- CERT.lv** [Practical guidance on how to identify deepfakes.](#)
([article link](#))
- LSM** An informative article explaining how deepfakes have evolved and the risks they pose.
([article link](#))
- MIT Media Lab** An AI glossary that explains key artificial intelligence terms and technologies in clear, accessible language.
([glossary link](#))
- King's College London** An article exploring how AI can be used as a tool for political manipulation, disinformation, and influence operations.
([article link](#))