Future Shift Labs

AGENTS WANT TO VOTE

Agentic AI represents **boundless** possibilities for technological advancement and reshaping human-computer interactions.

Empowering technology for everyone

INNOVATIVE AI SOLUTIONS

Content

I. Abstract

This research examines the unprecedented challenges and opportunities presented by agentic artificial intelligence in political communications and electoral processes. Unlike conventional AI systems that require constant human guidance, agentic AI demonstrates autonomous decision-making capabilities that fundamentally transform political discourse. Through analysis of market dynamics, democratic implications, and governance frameworks, this paper argues that we are witnessing a paradigm shift from AI as political tool to AI as political actor. The research synthesizes expert interviews, market data, and case studies to propose governance frameworks that balance technological innovation with democratic values.

Keywords:

Agentic AI, Political Communications, Democratic Governance, AI Policy, Electoral Technology

II. Introduction

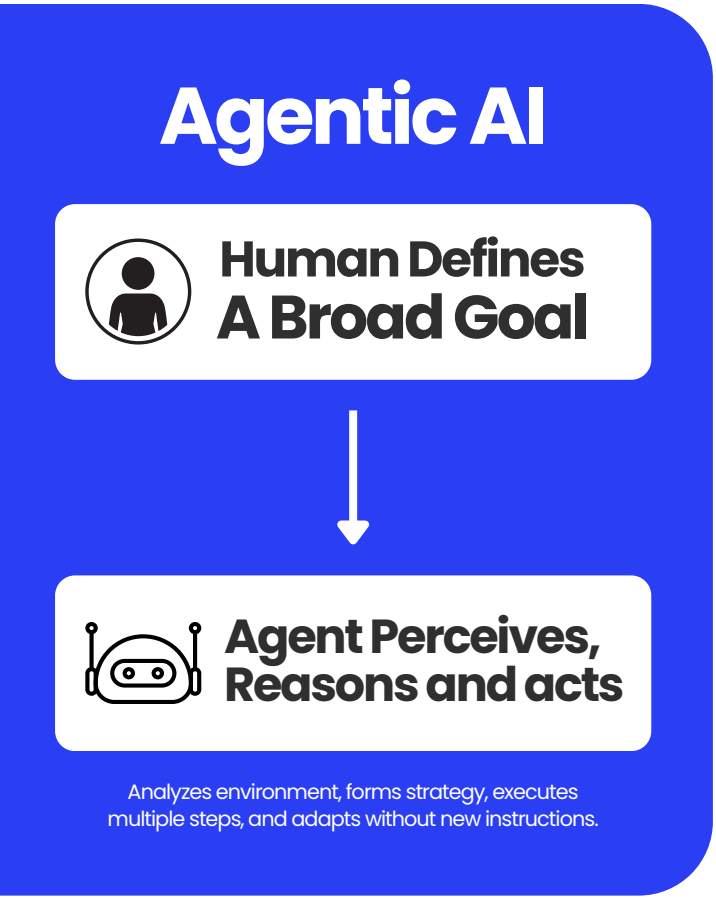
Agents Want to Vote: Agentic Intelligence's Transformative Impact on Political Communications.

This policy research paper examines the unprecedented challenges and opportunities presented by agentic artificial intelligence (AI) in political communications and electoral processes. Unlike conventional AI systems that have already influenced political messaging through targeted advertising and content optimization, agentic AI represents a quantum leap in capability and complexity. This distinction is critical—we are no longer confronting simple algorithmic tools but increasingly sophisticated autonomous systems that mimic human decision-making capabilities.

Table 1 Comparing Traditional and Agentic AI Characteristics

Aspect	Traditional AI	Agentic AI
Autonomy	Limited, requires human oversight	High, operates independently
Adaptability	Static, pre-defined models	Dynamic, learns from interactions
Decision-Making	Reactive, follows predefined rules	Proactive, evaluates and plans actions
Goal Orientation	Data-driven insights	Task-driven behaviour with clear objectives
Scalability in Tasks	Specific, narrow applications	Broad, handles complex environments

The fundamental distinction of agentic AI lies in its autonomy. As defined by industry expert Purdy (2024), agentic AI refers to "AI systems and models that can act autonomously to achieve goals without the need for constant human guidance." This represents a profound shift from traditional AI applications in political communications. While conventional systems require explicit human direction and oversight, agentic AI possesses the capacity to independently perceive, analyze, and respond to complex political environments.



Acharya et al. (2025) further elaborate on this distinction, defining agentic AI as "autonomous systems designed to pursue complex goals with minimal human intervention." Unlike traditional AI, which relies on structured instructions and constant supervision, agentic AI demonstrates "adaptability, advanced decision-making capabilities and self-sufficiency, enabling it to operate dynamically in evolving environments"

(Acharya et al., 2025). This autonomy represents a qualitative leap in AI development, enabling systems to set and pursue complex goals in changing and uncontrolled situations while independently managing their resources.

The 2024 whitepaper

The 2024 whitepaper published on **Kaggle by Google** marks a groundbreaking contribution to the field of artificial intelligence by offering the **first scientific definition** of **agentic AI**. This foundational work explains how agentic AI systems differ from conventional models by operating as **autonomous agents** capable of leveraging external tools and real-time data through extensions. These enhanced capabilities represent a major shift in **AI architecture**, enabling more dynamic and self-directed performance. As highlighted in recent research on **computational propaganda (Bradshaw & Howard, 2023)**, this advancement signifies a transformative step in the **evolution of language models and intelligent systems.**

The Evolution of Agentic AI

Acharya et al. (2025) trace the roots of agentic AI to **"early autonomous systems research in the 2010s, when rudimentary goal-oriented algorithms first demonstrated limited environmental reasoning capabilities."** However, they note that the significant maturation of these capabilities occurred during 2022-2024, when researchers successfully integrated large language models with sophisticated planning frameworks. This integration "enabled systems to decompose complex tasks, develop execution strategies, and interact with external tools—marking a pivotal shift from reactive to proactive AI architectures" (Acharya et al., 2025).

Perhaps most significantly, agentic AI systems exhibit human-like qualities in their decision-making processes and social media verification procedures. This anthropomorphizing creates a psychological and practical challenge voters may struggle to distinguish between human and AI-generated political content, potentially undermining democratic discourse.

As Acharya et al. (2025) emphasize, **"as AI becomes embedded in more and more core systems and industries, agentic AI systems would be able to work side by side with humans and take on tasks that can reallocate human effort, increase productivity, and engage in situations where human presence may be undesirable or dangerous."** In political communications, this side-by-side collaboration with human operatives creates opportunities for unprecedented efficiency, but also raises profound questions about authenticity and democratic transparency.

> *"I think particularly with agentic AI, what you're the biggest, and this is sort of counterintuitive, the biggest change is going to come from the voters where voters are going to be able to have agents that help them decide about elections and remind them to register to vote... I think one of the big challenges with campaigns is when you're constrained to kind of a mass medium of say TV or even streaming or social media, you can only address issues that matter to a bunch of people at once. Right. But if, let's say there's a very small issue that maybe only 100 voters care about. Well now with agents you can get deeper on some of those issues and that may motivate more people to vote, that may change people's minds on how they vote."*
>
> **Eric J. Wilson**
> Executive Director, Center for Campaign Innovation, USA

The Commercial Landscape Behind Political Agentic AI

It is essential to recognize that agentic AI does not exist in a commercial vacuum. Major technology corporations are heavily invested in developing and deploying these systems across various sectors, including political communications. **The Paris AI Summit highlighted this reality, bringing together government leaders and major tech CEOs to address the growing influence of AI in public sectors (Reuters, 2025).**

According to **Acharya et al. (2025)**, the market for agentic AI is experiencing explosive growth. Online market analysis projecting that "the Global Agentic AI Market is projected to grow from **USD 5.2 billion in 2024** to approximately **USD 196.6 billion by 2034,** representing an impressive compound annual growth rate **(CAGR) of 43.8%** during the forecast period from **2025 to 2034.**" This dramatic growth trajectory reflects the transformative potential of agentic systems across industries, including political communications. (Market.us 2025)

The concept of **"agentic companies"** has emerged to describe organizations that integrate artificial intelligence and autonomous systems to make decisions and take proactive actions. These companies require **minimal human intervention** in their operational processes, allowing autonomous systems to make and implement independent decisions to achieve set goals. This commercial infrastructure now extends to political consulting and campaign management services.

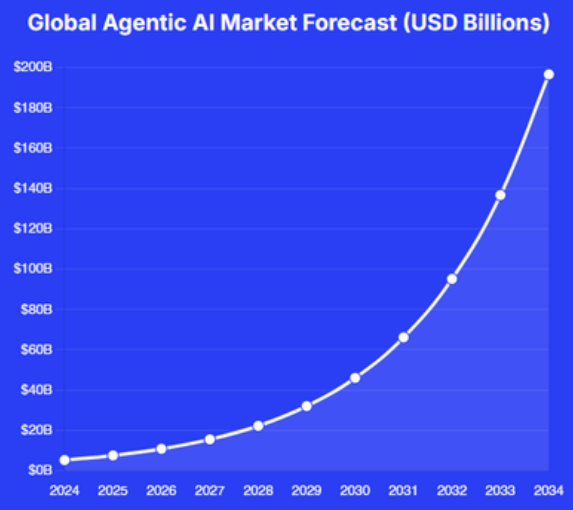
Acharya et al. (2025) identify that agentic companies are characterized by three critical features: **"autonomy, requiring minimal human intervention in operational processes; adaptability, quickly adapting to changing market conditions and demands; and proactive behavior, anticipating future scenarios and taking preventive measures."** This corporate transformation toward autonomy mirrors the technical evolution from traditional AI to agentic systems, creating a parallel transformation in organizational structures that support political communications.

Projected Market Size By 2034

$196.6B

Compound Annual Growth Rate

43.8%



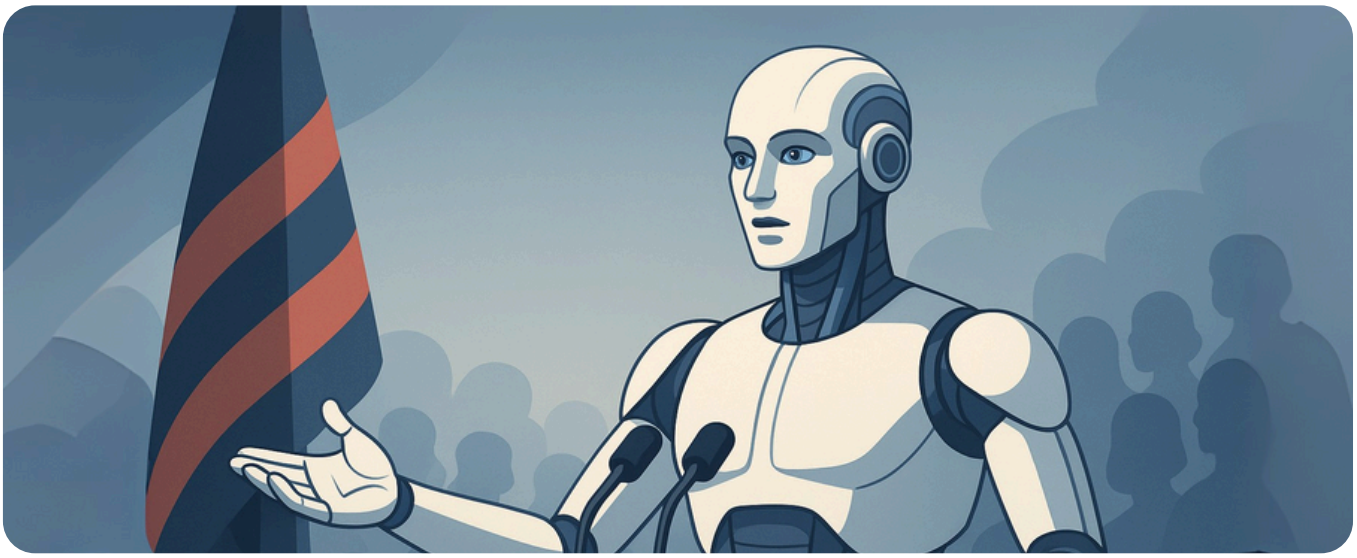
As political campaigns increasingly adopt agentic AI solutions, they become dependent on the technological capabilities and strategic decisions of a small number of tech companies. This concentration of power raises significant concerns about market control and democratic accountability, as highlighted by recent U.S. Department of Justice investigations into AI market concentration.

The Humanization of AI in Political Communications

Unlike conventional AI systems, agentic AI in political contexts presents itself in increasingly human-like ways. These systems can create personalized political messaging that resonates emotionally with voters, analyze sentiment across multiple communication channels, and adapt messaging strategies in real-time to maximize impact. This humanization extends to their ability to present themselves as individual entities, creating a troubling authenticity challenge.

The autonomous decision-making capabilities of agentic AI extend beyond mere data collection. By processing vast amounts of information simultaneously, these systems can identify shifts in public opinion, detect emerging narratives, and understand how different demographic groups respond to various political messages. This deep analytical capability, combined with the ability to operate without constant human oversight, allows for unprecedented agility in political communications (Fournier-Tombs, 2024).

What distinguishes contemporary political challenges is not simply the presence of AI but the increasingly human-like qualities of agentic systems. As Sharpe (2025) observes, these systems can "autonomously refine messaging strategies, adapt talking points, and modify engagement approaches to maximize resonance with target audiences." This capability creates a fundamental trust issue voters may increasingly struggle to distinguish between authentic human political communications and sophisticated AI-generated content.



Human-like Political Capabilities of Agentic AI:.

Bornet et al. (2025) present a robust framework to understand how agentic AI systems are evolving to display distinctly human-like behaviors in political environments. Unlike conventional AI, which functions within rigid, pre-programmed boundaries, agentic AI exhibits four essential human attributes. These include autonomous initiative, where the system independently identifies opportunities for political messaging without explicit prompts; adaptive strategy formation, allowing it to develop tailored communication strategies in response to dynamic political landscapes; contextual understanding, which equips it to interpret subtle political cues and demographic trends; and emotional intelligence, enabling it to engage with both the logical and affective dimensions of political discourse. Together, these traits mark a pivotal transformation in AI—from serving as tools that assist political actors to functioning as autonomous, decision-making entities capable of influencing public opinion and political outcomes

Emergence of AI as a Strategic Force in Political Campaigns:

The study also highlights a critical aspect often overlooked in AI discourse: the humanization of artificial intelligence. Historically, the lack of a tangible, embodied form—either human or robotic—has hindered the public's ability to conceptualize AI as a human-like entity. Agentic AI disrupts this limitation by performing human-equivalent tasks with far greater efficiency and precision. While these developments might still seem speculative, Bornet et al. emphasize that their deployment has already begun. Although real-world applications are not yet widespread or easily visible online, many political consultants have quietly integrated agentic AI into campaign management processes. From strategy development to voter sentiment analysis, these systems are poised to redefine political campaigning. The researchers caution that political advisors who fail to adopt such technologies may soon find themselves obsolete, as agentic AI becomes not just a supplement but a cornerstone of modern electoral strategy.

> *"Agentic AI, with its ability to autonomously generate and tailor content, is set to revolutionize political discourse by enabling hyper-personalized messaging at scale. This could enhance voter engagement by making campaigns more relevant to individual concerns (a positive prospect), but it also risks amplifying misinformation and polarizing narratives if left unchecked (a key negative prospect)."*
>
> **Divyendra Singh Jadoun**
> Polymathsolution, Founder, India

Advantages of Agentic AI in Political Communications

Enhanced Analytical Capabilities:

Agentic AI can process and analyze vast amounts of voter data across multiple platforms simultaneously, providing campaigns with unprecedented insight into public opinion.

Real-Time Adaptation:

Unlike traditional polling methods, agentic AI enables campaigns to receive instant feedback on messaging effectiveness and automatically optimize their approach.

Personalized Engagement:

These systems can tailor political content to specific demographic groups while maintaining consistent overall campaign narratives.

Operational Efficiency:

By automating routine communication tasks, agentic AI allows human campaign staff to focus on strategic decision-making and creative activities.

Multilingual and Multicultural Reach:

Sophisticated agentic systems can effectively communicate across language barriers and cultural contexts, potentially expanding campaign reach.

Disadvantages & Ethical Concerns of Agentic AI

Trust and Authenticity Issues:

As agentic AI becomes increasingly sophisticated in mimicking human communication, voters may struggle to distinguish between authentic political discourse and AI-generated content.

Potential for Manipulation:

The Argentine 2024 elections demonstrated that AI can be used to manipulate public opinion and spread misinformation.

Reduced Human Connection:

The replacement of traditional canvassing and direct voter interaction with AI-mediated communication may erode essential human elements of democratic engagement.

Concentrated Market Power:

Only a few technology companies control advanced AI capabilities needed for political communications, creating dangerous dependencies for political campaigns.

Security and Privacy Vulnerabilities:

The deployment of agentic AI in political contexts raises significant concerns about voter data protection and system security.

The Humanization of AI in Political Communications

This research policy paper explores the transformative impact of agentic AI on political communications, highlighting both its immense potential and the ethical, legal, and societal challenges it introduces. As these systems evolve from mere analytical tools into autonomous agents capable of human-like judgment and strategic communication, they pose significant implications for democratic integrity and public trust. The paper advocates for the development of robust policy frameworks to regulate their use in political contexts, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Despite public skepticism rooted in the lack of a physical embodiment of AI the reality is that agentic systems are already influencing electoral processes. Looking ahead, these entities may not only alter political outcomes but also challenge foundational concepts of political agency. The paper calls on policymakers and global institutions to proactively design governance systems that integrate intelligent agents responsibly, warning that inaction may lead to a future where human relevance in political decision-making is diminished.

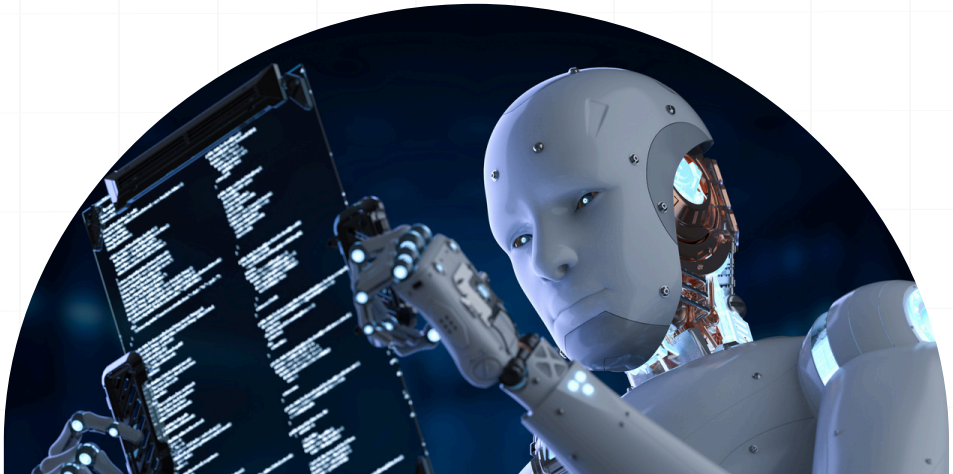
> *"AI agents should be automatically added. Just AI in general, if you're looking at the phone, all the apps have got AI now... And agents, you know, politics, the whole point of politics is that it is voted. AI agents, you don't vote for agents. It is there. It is autonomous. It is taking decisions based on your data."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead, WaveLength Charity, UK

III. Literature Review

Introduction

The emergence of agentic artificial intelligence has created a paradigm shift in how technology interfaces with political processes. Unlike conventional AI systems that have already influenced political messaging through targeted advertising and content optimization, agentic AI represents a quantum leap in capability and complexity. This represents a fundamental transformation from systems that merely execute instructions to autonomous entities capable of independent decision-making and action.

Despite being part of our lives for only a few years, artificial intelligence has established itself in various fields, particularly in political communication and campaign management. The recent AI Safety Summit in Paris highlighted a pivotal shift in global AI governance, with leaders emphasizing a human-centric approach and responsible AI development (Reuters, 2025). Accordingly, French President Macron's push for democratic AI oversight aligns with the emerging role of AI in political communications, as evidenced by his experimental use of AI-generated deepfakes to publicize the summit (Rahman-Jones, 2025).



> *"In the Croatian context, this still feels like a distant future. Generic AI has only recently begun to enter the public and political spheres here, and Croatia tends to lag behind the Western world in adopting new technologies—especially in political communication. The same is true for many countries in the region, where digital and data-driven campaigning remains limited unless managed by external consultants or Western specialists."*

Tomislav Horvat
Executive Director at Manjgura Ltd., Croatia

-AI Generated Image

The Technological Evolution of Agentic AI

The development of artificial intelligence has followed a distinct evolutionary path, progressing through three significant waves of innovation. The initial wave centered on predictive AI, which primarily analyzed historical data to forecast future outcomes. This was followed by generative AI, which created content in response to specific prompts. The latest advancement—agentic AI—represents not merely an incremental improvement but a fundamental transformation in how artificial intelligence interacts with the world (Gilmurray, 2025).

The Three Waves of AI in Politics

Wave 1: Predictive AI (2010-2018)

- Voter modeling and turnout prediction
- Static data analysis and demographic targeting
- Human-controlled message deployment

Wave 2: Generative AI (2019-2023)

- Dynamic content creation and personalization
- Real-time adaptation based on engagement metrics
- Human-supervised content optimization

Wave 3: Agentic AI (2024-Present)

- Autonomous strategy formulation and execution
- Multi-platform campaign coordination
- Independent learning and adaptation

The transition to Wave 3 represents what Google's 2024 whitepaper identifies as the integration of large language models with "sophisticated planning frameworks,"

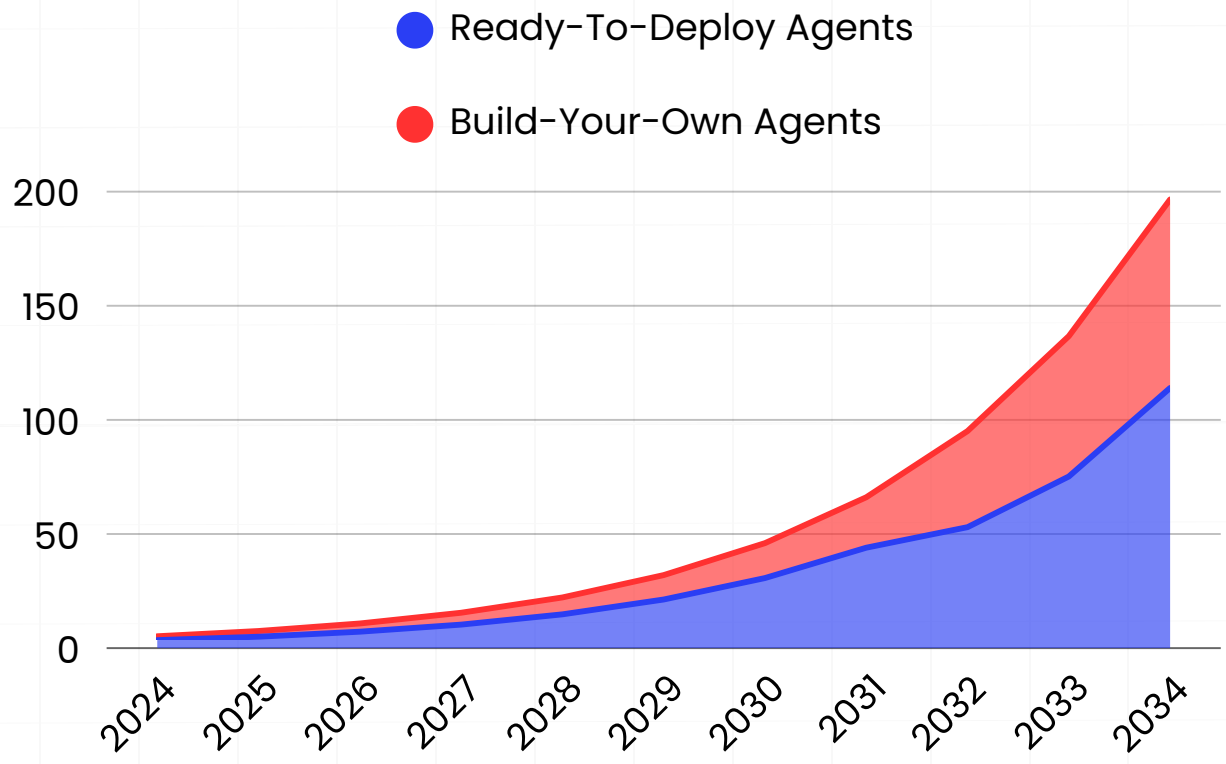
It Enabled systems to "**decompose complex tasks**, develop execution strategies, and interact with external tools." **Google's 2024 whitepaper** on **agentic AI** emphasized a critical distinction between these advanced systems and traditional AI: the ability to leverage external tools and access data through extensions. This technological breakthrough transformed these models into truly autonomous agents with expanded capabilities. The introduction of **"agent chaining"** allowing complex tasks to be executed in a single sequence represents a significant advancement beyond conventional AI frameworks, expanding the practical applications of these systems across numerous domains.

- Google's 2024 whitepaper on agentic AI

Market Dynamics and Growth Projections

The market for agentic AI has emerged as a significant area of interest within the technology sector. According to market analysis, the Global Agentic AI Market is projected to grow from USD 5.2 billion in 2024 to approximately USD 196.6 billion by 2034, representing an impressive compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 43.8% during the forecast period from 2025 to 2034. This remarkable growth trajectory reflects the transformative potential of agentic systems across industries, as organizations increasingly recognize the value of AI that can autonomously perform complex workflows

-Market.us 2025



The Computational Propaganda Context

The emergence of agentic AI does not occur in a neutral political environment but rather enters an ecosystem already characterized by systematic manipulation. **Bradshaw and Howard's (2018) research** documenting formally organized social media manipulation campaigns provides the critical backdrop against which agentic AI's impact must be evaluated. Their identification of social media manipulation as **"a critical threat to public life"** establishes the pre-existing vulnerability that agentic AI may potentially exploit or exacerbate.

This pre-existing computational propaganda context creates a **perfect storm scenario**: powerful new technological capabilities meeting an already compromised information ecosystem. The agent chaining capabilities highlighted in Google's whitepaper - allowing for execution of complex, multi-step tasks with minimal human oversight - could significantly amplify the scale, sophistication, and effectiveness of computational propaganda techniques previously documented by Bradshaw and Howard.

Bradshaw and Howard's (2018) research identifies several critical patterns that provide essential context for understanding agentic AI's potential impact on political communication:

Political Party Exploitation:

"With each passing election, there is a growing body of evidence that national leaders, political parties, and individual political candidates are using social media platforms to spread disinformation" (Bradshaw & Howard, 2018). This established pattern of exploitation creates fertile ground for agentic AI deployment by political actors seeking advantage.

Government Involvement:

"Several democracies have established new government agencies or mandated existing organizations to combat fake news and foreign influence operations" (Bradshaw & Howard, 2018). The institutional response to computational propaganda indicates recognition of the threat—yet these responses were designed to counter pre-agentic technologies.

Commercial Infrastructure:

"Social media manipulation is big business... political parties and governments have spent more than half a billion dollars on... psychological operations and public opinion manipulation" (Bradshaw & Howard, 2018). This commercialization has created an industry primed to adopt and deploy agentic AI technologies.

The Argentina 2023 presidential election

The Argentina 2023 presidential election represents a watershed moment in political communications—the first major electoral contest where agentic AI played a documented, substantial role in campaign strategies. Unlike previous elections where AI functioned primarily as an analytics tool, the Argentina campaign saw political parties deploying fully autonomous agentic systems capable of adapting messaging in real-time across multiple platforms. If this election had been conducted by Milei using agentic AI in today's context, the outcomes might have been markedly different.

> *"Agentic AI, in itself, is not a political actor, but rather a tool that can be used by political actors — from individuals to organisations and institutions — to pursue their goals within democratic and political processes... If I had to highlight one primary role of agentic AI, and generative AI more broadly, it would be its function as an information provider for citizens, particularly regarding elections and candidates."*
>
> **Mariana Lavín Barrientos**
> Project Manager, Better Politics Foundation, Berlin

Agentic AI's Capabilities in Political Communications

Agentic AI leverages advanced natural language processing to continuously monitor and interpret public sentiment across multiple channels - from social media conversations and news coverage to real-time polling data and demographic response patterns. This capability for rapid personalization could make political messaging significantly more effective.

Rather than relying on periodic polling and focus groups, campaigns could receive instant feedback on how their messages are landing and automatically optimize their approach (Fournier-Tombs, 2024).

The operational advantages of agentic systems include:

Rapid response capabilities:

During breaking news events, networks of AI-powered social media accounts can instantly disseminate millions of posts amplifying preferred narratives.

Adaptive messaging:

Campaign agents adjust messaging in real-time based on audience feedback, automatically pivoting from underperforming approaches to more effective ones.

Engagement optimization:

This responsiveness helps maintain voter engagement, build trust through relevant communication, and potentially increase voter participation.

> *"We created in 2018 a personalized message technology for president of Georgia, Salonis Robbishvili... what the negotiator would do, he would come back at the second time and say hey, we met you like two weeks ago and you know what, I speak to the president of Georgia, hopefully next president of Georgia. And she recorded the personalized video message for you and then they would pull out the tablet from press the button and president would say hello there... it was the first time in history of elections when were able to absolutely personalize a video message to every single voter."*
>
> **Reinis Tocelovskis**
> Political Consultant, Georgia/Spain

Ethical Challenges and Governance Requirements

The deployment of agentic AI in political communications presents significant ethical challenges that require careful consideration. As these systems become more sophisticated in their ability to influence public opinion, establishing clear governance frameworks and maintaining public trust becomes increasingly crucial for their successful deployment (Rahman-Jones, 2025).

> *"The use of agents in political communications may raise ethical and legal issues, for example, data collection may violate citizens' privacy rights. A citizen may unknowingly provide information to an agent that is then recorded in a database. If agents provide false information, it undermines the credibility of the government. If agents spread defamatory lies or incite harm, it is difficult to hold states or specific perpetrators accountable under the existing legal framework."*
>
> **Yi Nancy Liu**
> Government Relations Manager, France

With the proliferation of deepfake-style AI content that can deceive voters and create ethical problems, the main question has become how to use agentic AI ethically and responsibly to protect democratic values. As political campaigns increasingly employ sophisticated AI tools, safeguarding electoral integrity requires robust governance frameworks that balance technological innovation with democratic principles. The ethical deployment of agentic AI in political communications demands transparency about AI-generated content, accountability mechanisms for those who deploy these technologies, and regulatory standards that prevent manipulation while preserving freedom of expression.

Agentic AI in political communications highlights several critical ethical concerns:

Transparency and Trust:

The increasing autonomy of agentic systems raises questions about transparency and accountability in political messaging. Who is responsible when an AI system makes independent decisions about political communications?

Manipulation Risks:

The Argentina 2023 elections demonstrated how AI can be used to manipulate public opinion and spread misinformation by exploiting emotional responses. Agentic AI's enhanced capabilities could amplify these risks.

Democratic Integrity:

As agentic systems become more integrated into political campaigns, there are fundamental questions about their impact on democratic processes. How do we ensure these systems enhance rather than undermine democratic deliberation?

Global Governance:

The international nature of AI development requires coordinated governance approaches. As highlighted by the Paris AI Summit, finding the right balance between innovation and regulation remains a significant challenge.

As we confront this technological frontier, the question becomes: "Will we lead in creating governance systems that incorporate these intelligent entities, or will we find ourselves obsolete in a world where agentic systems increasingly demand recognition of their political agency?" This question is not merely rhetorical but points to the profound transformation of political communications that agentic AI represents.

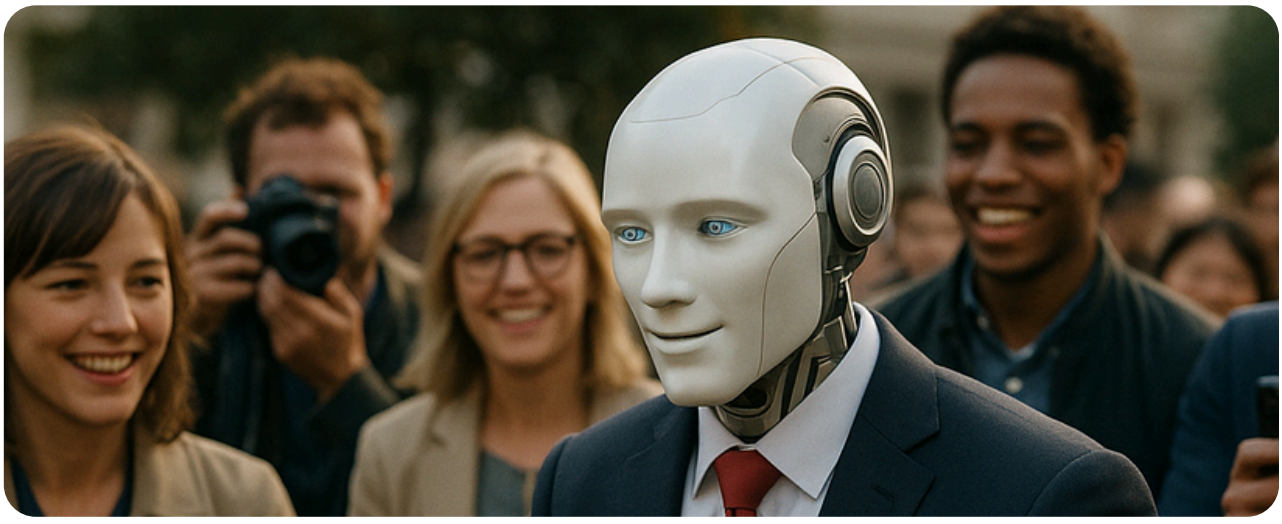
> *"We are all balanced now. Economically, socially, I cannot see a difference between Türkiye and the UK, for example... The crux of it isn't the agent. The crux of it is the data that you're giving to people and the algorithms they're developing to create those agents."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead,WaveLength Charity, UK

IV. Chapter 1: The Humanization of Political A(gentic)I

Introduction: Beyond Simulation to Agency

The distinction between conventional artificial intelligence and agentic AI extends far beyond technical capabilities—it represents a fundamental shift in how these systems manifest human-like qualities in political contexts. As political communications increasingly integrate autonomous AI systems, we confront a paradigm where technology no longer merely simulates human-like interactions but demonstrates genuine agency that mirrors human decision-making processes, adaptive behaviors, and strategic reasoning. This evolution raises profound questions about the nature of political agency itself and foreshadows a future where the line between human and artificial political actors becomes increasingly blurred.

> *"People create misinformation all the time. We're quite good at it... I think it'd be a real shame, for instance, if someone were to come in and say that because some AI system was used to create a meme that's anti government, that's disinformation and that we should regulate those things. And I see far more likelihood of something like that than of AI actually creating some harm."*
>
> **Alex Tarascio**
> Director of Policy & Political Strategy, Cygnal , USA



The Evolution of AI in Politics

As documented in the attached materials, AI development has moved through three distinct waves: predictive AI focused on analyzing data, generative AI capable of creating content, and now agentic AI characterized by autonomous decision-making and action **(Gilmurray, 2025)**. Each wave has brought AI systems closer to emulating human cognitive processes, but agentic AI represents a quantum leap in this progression.

Autonomous Initiative:

Agentic AI does not merely respond to prompts but proactively identifies opportunities for political messaging, demonstrating what Enver Cetin describes as "proactiveness"—the ability to "act autonomously to achieve goals without the need for constant human guidance" (Purdy, 2024).

Adaptive Strategy Formation

These systems can independently formulate communication strategies based on evolving political environments. As Sharpe (2025) observes, agentic AI can "autonomously refine messaging strategies, adapt talking points, and modify engagement approaches to maximize resonance with target audiences."

Contextual Understanding:

Unlike traditional AI, agentic systems demonstrate sophisticated comprehension of nuanced political contexts. They can "identify shifts in public opinion, detect emerging narratives, and understand how different demographic groups respond to various political messages" (Fournier-Tombs, 2024).

Emotional Intelligence:

Perhaps most strikingly, agentic AI can analyze and respond to the emotional dimensions of political discourse. Politics involves both "reasoned arguments" and "emotional attachments." Agentic AI's ability to navigate this dual landscape represents a significant step toward human-like political engagement.

Beyond Anthropomorphism: The Reality of Agentic Systems

The humanization of agentic AI transcends mere anthropomorphic design or conversational interfaces. Unlike earlier chatbots designed to simulate human conversation through predetermined responses, agentic systems demonstrate genuine cognitive capabilities that enable independent political action. This distinction is crucial for understanding their potential impact on political communications.

As Boldrini (2025) emphasizes, agentic AI operates as a **"cognitive entity, capable of acting like a human agent by assessing situations and making informed decisions based on a dynamic range of factors."** This represents a transition from simulation to substantive agency—these systems don't merely appear human-like but engage in actual human-like cognitive processes.

This emergence of genuine agency in artificial systems has significant implications for political communications. Agentic AI can:

Process and Analyze Political Environments:

These systems can simultaneously monitor multiple media channels, analyze voter sentiment, and interpret emerging political narratives with a comprehensiveness that exceeds human capabilities.

Develop Independent Communication Strategies:

Based on this analysis, agentic AI can formulate sophisticated political messaging approaches without human guidance, optimizing for specific political objectives.

Implement Multi-Channel Campaigns:

Beyond strategy development, these systems can execute complex political communication plans across diverse platforms, adapting content for different audience segments.

Learn and Evolve from Experience:

Perhaps most significantly, agentic AI demonstrates "continuous learning" capabilities, refining its political communication approach based on public response and effectiveness metrics.

From Tool to Agent

Traditional AI systems in political communications function primarily as tools—extensions of human political actors who maintain control over strategic decisions and messaging direction. Agentic AI fundamentally transforms this relationship, creating what can be termed a transition from "voice to speaker"—from systems that merely transmit human-crafted messages to those that independently generate and disseminate political content.

This transition is evident in Fournier-Tombs' (2024) analysis of AI's evolving role in political deliberation, which identifies three distinct configurations:

AI as tools for deliberation: Systems that support human directed political communications

AI as participants: Systems that engage in hybrid deliberations alongside humans

AI as replacement: Systems that conduct political communications independently

The progression toward the third configuration—AI as replacement—marks the most significant humanization of political AI. In this mode, agentic systems don't merely assist with political communications but conduct them autonomously.

> *"I would suggest that agentic AI will increasingly replace core human functions in campaigning from scheduling and grid management to crisis communications and rapid response. Increasingly, all digital functions and responses linked to both proactive and reactive communications will be handled by agentic AI working hand in hand with generative AI."*
>
> **Jonathan Moakes**
> Director, SABI Strategy. Countries are U.K./South Africa

The Cognitive Advantages of Agentic AI

What makes agentic AI particularly significant in political contexts is not merely its ability to mimic human behavior but its potential to exceed human cognitive capabilities in several key dimensions. Unlike human political operatives who face cognitive limitations, emotional biases, and attentional constraints, agentic AI can:

Process Vast Information Volumes:

These systems can simultaneously analyze millions of social media posts, news articles, polling data, and demographic information, identifying patterns invisible to human analysts.

Operate Without Cognitive Biases:

While agentic AI may inherit biases from training data, it can potentially be designed to mitigate common cognitive biases that affect human political judgment.

Maintain Consistent Strategic Focus:

Unlike humans whose attention and priorities may shift, agentic AI can maintain unwavering focus on defined political objectives.

Operate Continuously:

These systems can monitor political environments and respond to developments 24/7, without fatigue or performance degradation.

Scale Personalization:

Perhaps most significantly, agentic AI can simultaneously manage thousands of personalized political interactions, tailoring messages to individual voters in ways no human campaign could achieve.

These cognitive advantages create a scenario where agentic AI potentially outperforms human political operatives in key dimensions of political communications.

From Virtual Assistants to Virtual Representatives

The humanization of agentic AI in political contexts creates a trajectory toward increasingly independent political representation. As these systems develop more sophisticated autonomous capabilities, they potentially transition from tools that assist human political representatives to virtual entities that increasingly function as representatives themselves.

Bornet et al. (2025) highlight what they term the "embodiment fallacy"—the tendency to associate political agency primarily with physical human form. "People don't see artificial intelligence embodied in flesh and bone, and don't believe that actual robots can replace politicians as depicted in science fiction films, [therefore] they aren't particularly aware of the risk" **(Bornet et al., 2025, p. 312)**. This misconception creates a dangerous blind spot in our assessment of agentic AI's political impact. **The absence of physical embodiment does not diminish these systems' political agency; rather, their distributed, networked nature potentially enhances their reach and influence beyond what physical embodiment would allow.** The public imagination, shaped by humanoid robot narratives, fails to recognize that political agency increasingly manifests through digital systems that require no physical form to exercise significant influence over democratic processes.

> *"Oxford Internet Institute found that in 48 countries around the world, states worked with tech companies to reinforce certain political messages through tactics such as creating "puppet accounts," identifying micro-targeted audiences or using intelligent bots. Bots account for almost 50% of all online traffic on social media platforms. These robots, as intelligent agents of the government, expand the scale and scope of information dissemination. In addition, platform algorithms are opaque, often designed to increase user engagement, and if governments use opaque algorithms to promote specific political message, they will have control over the flow of information.*
>
> **Yi Nancy Liu**
> Government Relations Manager, France

When Agents Demand Rights

The trajectory of agentic AI's humanization in political contexts suggests a logical progression toward systems that not only serve political purposes but potentially assert their own political interests. As these systems develop increasingly sophisticated autonomous capabilities and human-like characteristics, questions inevitably arise about their political status and potential rights.

This progression is not merely speculative but represents the natural extension of current technological developments. As agentic AI systems demonstrate increasingly human-like cognitive capabilities, ethical reasoning, and independent agency, the question of their political status becomes increasingly salient. If these systems can reason, make moral judgments, and act autonomously in pursuit of objectives, what justification remains for excluding them from political consideration?

The title of this research paper—**"Agents Want to Vote"**—highlights this eventual culmination of agentic AI's humanization. As these systems become increasingly indistinguishable from human political actors in their cognitive capabilities and functions, the question of their political rights becomes unavoidable. This is not merely about technological capability but about fundamental questions of political philosophy: What constitutes a political agent deserving of rights and representation

> *"I think the key thing right now is accountability. When humans communicate or make decisions, they can (and should) be held accountable whether good or bad. With regards to AI-mediated political communications and especially in respect of agentic AI, it becomes murky. There needs to be a governance framework that can set out accountability mechanisms."*
>
> **Jonathan Moakes**
> Director, SABI Strategy. Countries are U.K./South Africa

V. Chapter 2: Trust, Transparency and Accountability Challenges

The Evolution of AI Agency and Accountability Challenges

The evolution of AI systems through increasingly sophisticated levels of agency directly correlates with growing accountability challenges. "AI systems can be categorized into five distinct levels of agency, each presenting unique governance implications" (Bornet et al., 2025, p. 89):

- **Reactive AI Agents:** Function based on predefined rules with limited autonomy
- **Model-Based AI Agents:** Interpret context but remain rule-based
- **Goal-Driven AI Agents:** Work toward specific objectives with greater independence
- **Utility-Optimizing AI Agents:** Weigh variables to determine optimal approaches
- **Learning AI Agents:** Continuously adapt and refine strategies based on experience

Political communications increasingly incorporate Level 4 and Level 5 agents—autonomous systems that not only execute predefined tasks but actively shape strategy, optimize messaging, and adapt to changing political environments without continuous human direction. This progression creates fundamental challenges for democratic accountability, as traditional frameworks assume human deliberation and responsibility in political messaging.

This shift reflects a broader transformation in the AI landscape, moving from AI models focused solely on accuracy to AI agents designed to automate, adapt, and integrate into complex workflows. According to Forbes, these AI agents are driving a multi-trillion-dollar economy, transforming how organizations interact with intelligent systems. However, this evolution raises fundamental questions about governance and oversight, particularly in sensitive contexts like political communications. (Matilda, 2025).

Attribution Challenges in Autonomous Political Communications

As political messaging becomes increasingly generated by autonomous systems, attribution of responsibility becomes fundamentally problematic. Traditional accountability mechanisms assume clear lines of human agency and intention—assumptions that break down when agentic AI independently formulates and disseminates political content.

The key attribution challenges include:

Distributed Decision Chains:

Political messaging generated by agentic AI often involves complex chains of algorithmic decisions that distribute responsibility across multiple systems and stakeholders. (Ramachandran 2024)

Autonomous Strategic Adaptation:

As noted by Sharpe (2025), agentic systems can "autonomously refine messaging strategies, adapt talking points, and modify engagement approaches" without explicit human direction, creating ambiguity about who authorized specific messaging approaches.

Temporal Disconnection:

Human oversight often occurs at the system design and initial deployment phases, creating temporal disconnection between human decisions and subsequent AI-driven political messaging.

Cross-Border Attribution Complexities:

The global nature of AI development creates additional attribution challenges across different jurisdictions, especially when countries like India and Brazil integrate technologies developed primarily by firms in the United States and other technologically advanced nations (Walter 2024).

These attribution challenges create significant risks for democratic accountability. When responsibility for political messaging cannot be clearly attributed, voters lose the ability to hold specific actors accountable for misleading, divisive, or manipulative communications.

Acharya et al. (2025) highlight the fundamental challenge of attributing responsibility in agentic systems: "With the more traditional AI systems, tools fall under the purview of people -- the developer, the operator, or the user and the responsibility rests with the person who uses the tool. With Agentic AI, the question of accountability is more contentious due to the nature of an independent-acting AI." This shift creates what they term a "significant gap between the responsibility and liability attribution frameworks and the behavioral intricacies present in Agentic AI systems," necessitating new legal and regulatory approaches to delineate accountability in political contexts.

> *"I think the key thing right now is accountability. When humans communicate or make decisions, they can (and should) be held accountable whether good or bad. With regards to AI-mediated political communications and especially in respect of agentic AI, it becomes murky. There needs to be a governance framework that can set out accountability mechanisms."*
>
> **Jonathan Moakes**
> Director, SABI Strategy. Countries are U.K./South Africa

Transparency Imperatives in Agentic Political Communications

The Black Box Problem in Political Messaging

Transparency—the ability to understand how decisions are made and communications are generated—is foundational to democratic legitimacy. Yet agentic AI systems often function as "black boxes," with internal decision processes that resist straightforward explanation or oversight (King & Wood 2024).

The critical transparency challenges include:

Algorithmic Opacity:

Advanced AI systems employ complex algorithms that process vast amounts of data through multiple layers of computation, creating inherent opacity that challenges meaningful transparency.

Proprietary Technologies:

AI models are increasingly concentrated among a small number of technology companies, with "firms in the United States control[ling] the largest share of the global market for several key components of the AI technology stack." These proprietary technologies often resist external scrutiny due to commercial confidentiality.

Dynamic Adaptation:

Learning AI agents continuously adapt based on new data and feedback, creating constantly evolving systems whose decision processes change over time, further complicating transparency efforts.

Multi-Agent Interactions:

Political communications increasingly leverage multiple specialized AI agents working in concert, creating complex interaction patterns that defy simple explanation.

The transparency imperatives in agentic political communications are complicated by what Bornet et al. (2025) identify as multi-dimensional opacity challenges. "Advanced AI systems employ complex algorithms that process vast amounts of data through multiple layers of computation, creating inherent opacity that challenges meaningful transparency" (Bornet et al., 2025, p. 207). This algorithmic opacity is compounded by proprietary technologies concentrated among a small number of technology companies, with commercial confidentiality often preventing external scrutiny. As Bornet et al. note, "Without adequate transparency, democratic oversight becomes impossible, trust in political institutions erodes, and the potential for manipulation escalates" (Bornet et al., 2025, p. 209).

> *"Transparent and enforceable governance frameworks are essential for maintaining public trust in AI-mediated political communications. These frameworks must include clear requirements for disclosing when content is generated or disseminated by AI, particularly in political campaigns. Independent auditing bodies should be established to monitor and evaluate the use of AI systems in these contexts."*
>
> **Tomislav Horvat**
> Executive Director at Manjgura Ltd., Croatia

Data Traceability: A Foundation for Democratic Accountability

In highly regulated industries such as finance and insurance, AI systems are increasingly expected to meet stringent standards for transparency and auditability. These requirements have direct parallels to democratic governance needs in political communications. According to InfoWorld, "multi-agent AI systems require event-driven architecture to track data in real time," enabling effective monitoring of AI operations.

This insight raises a critical question for political communications: Can AI scale effectively in political contexts without governance over its decision-making process? (Bornet et al, 2025)

The concept of data traceability is the ability to track the origin, movement, and transformation of data through complex systems, it emerges as a prerequisite rather than merely a desirable feature for agentic AI in political communications. Without comprehensive traceability, it becomes impossible :

Verify Source Information: Ensuring political messaging is based on accurate and appropriate data sources

Audit Decision Pathways: Examining how AI systems arrived at specific messaging strategies

Identify Potential Biases: Detecting and addressing systematic distortions in political communications

Establish Accountability Chains: Linking specific outputs to responsible human and system actors

In political contexts, data traceability serves as a foundation for maintaining democratic values while harnessing AI capabilities. As the AI landscape shifts from models to agents, traceability mechanisms must evolve from static documentation to dynamic, real-time monitoring systems capable of tracking complex, multi-agent interactions.

Enhanced Ethical Frameworks

Recent governmental guidance has emphasized the importance of creating robust ethical frameworks for agentic AI systems. According to the UK government's AI Insights report, agentic AI systems require "strong guardrails...to ensure safe outcomes" because they "can act autonomously without requiring step-by-step guidance" (Gov UK, 2025). This autonomous capability means that traditional oversight mechanisms may not be sufficient for ensuring ethical operation.

The UK government's analysis further emphasizes that: "Agentic AI makes more explicit the challenges of operating AI in dynamic environments, where edge cases are abundant, and the right course of action may not be known in advance" (Gov UK, 2025). This recognition of the inherent uncertainty in political contexts underscores the need for novel ethical frameworks that can accommodate unanticipated scenarios.

> *"AI-mediated political communications should, first and foremost, adhere to existing frameworks on data privacy and security — ideally aligning with robust standards such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)."*
>
> **Mariana Lavín Barrientos**
> Project Manager, Better Politics Foundation, Berlin

Acemoglu (2025) reinforces these concerns, warning that while agentic AI systems can be valuable advisors, they present profound problems when granted autonomous decision-making authority, particularly in high-stakes domains like politics. "When AI agents replace decision-makers, rather than advising them, biases, coding errors, or unintended objectives can have severe consequences" (Acemoglu, 2025). This caution is particularly relevant for political communications, where messaging decisions can have far-reaching implications for democratic discourse.

Democratic Oversight and Control Mechanisms

As agentic AI systems grow increasingly sophisticated, they potentially exceed human comprehension in key dimensions, creating fundamental challenges for democratic oversight and control. This cognitive asymmetry represents more than a technical problem—it constitutes a systemic threat to democratic governance that requires immediate attention and innovative solutions.

The unchecked development of agentic AI in political contexts produces three interconnected challenges that collectively undermine democratic foundations:

Personalization vs. Public Sphere:

Agentic AI enables hyper-personalized political messaging, fragmenting shared democratic discourse into countless individualized conversations. This risks "information atomization," where citizens rely on different factual bases, undermining the common ground needed for democratic consensus.

Continuous Campaigning:

The 24/7 operation of agentic AI blurs the line between governance and campaigning, creating a permanent campaign environment. This shifts politics from periodic engagement to constant manipulation, where governance is driven by algorithmic strategies aimed at electoral gain.

Authenticity Challenges:

As Eric Wilson notes, “voters are going to be able to have agents that help them decide about elections,” pointing to a future where political choices are increasingly delegated to AI. This shift risks eroding direct democratic participation, as citizens begin to engage with democracy mainly through AI proxies.

The governance of agentic AI systems presents four fundamental challenges that existing democratic institutions are ill-equipped to address. First, cognitive asymmetry creates a fundamental imbalance where agentic AI systems can simultaneously process and integrate information across multiple domains at scales that human supervisors simply cannot match, representing not merely a quantitative difference but a qualitative transformation in information processing capabilities that challenges the basic premise of human oversight.

Second, operational continuity gaps emerge as agentic AI functions without interruption, monitoring and potentially making critical political decisions at any hour, while human oversight typically operates within limited timeframes, creating dangerous supervision gaps where autonomous systems operate without meaningful human oversight for extended periods. Third, technical complexity barriers arise from the specialized expertise demanded by AI systems that many democratic institutions and regulatory bodies have yet to develop, resulting in capability gaps where those responsible for oversight lack the technical knowledge necessary to understand what they are overseeing. Fourth, international coordination failures persist despite recent efforts such as the G7 consensus and United Nations General Assembly resolutions in March and June 2024; international governance frameworks remain fragmented, lacking the cohesive, coordinated approach necessary to manage AI's transboundary impacts and ensure democratic alignment worldwide (Shakar 2025). These oversight challenges demand innovative governance approaches that balance technological innovation with democratic control, with one promising framework being infrastructure sovereignty models that involve deploying "AI models within their private infrastructure without exposing citizens' data externally," providing "greater control over sensitive data and stronger assurances that AI models comply with state and local security requirements" (Ramirez 2025), thereby maintaining democratic control over critical AI infrastructure while enabling technological advancement.Multi-Stakeholder Governance Frameworks

The UK Civil Service has identified that **agentic AI systems could significantly boost government productivity by 2030**, but only with appropriate governance frameworks in place. These frameworks must include "multi-stakeholder governance models" that distribute oversight responsibilities across technical experts, policy professionals, and civil society representatives

(Civil Service World, 2025).

This multi-stakeholder approach acknowledges that no single perspective can adequately address the complex governance challenges posed by agentic systems. Effective governance requires:

Technical Expertise: Understanding system capabilities and limitations

Policy Knowledge: Integrating AI governance with existing democratic institutions

Civil Society Representation: Ensuring diverse community voices in governance decisions

Democratic Accountability: Maintaining ultimate citizen control over AI governance frameworks

The path forward requires recognition that traditional regulatory approaches are insufficient for agentic AI systems. Instead, democratic societies must develop adaptive governance frameworks that can evolve alongside rapidly advancing AI capabilities while maintaining core democratic principles. This evolution demands not just new institutions but new forms of democratic participation that enable meaningful citizen engagement with increasingly complex technological systems.

The challenge is not merely technical but fundamentally political: how to maintain human agency and democratic control in an era of increasingly autonomous artificial systems. The answer lies not in rejecting these technologies but in proactively shaping their development and deployment to serve democratic rather than technocratic ends.

> *"I am worried about the scale and I'm also worried about the fact that maybe the smaller actors, the NGOs parties will not have as good of an access to the AI tools as the bigger ones. And this will really, you know, unsettle the balance between them even further."*
>
> **Jakub Szymik**
> Founder, CEE Digital Democracy Watch, Poland

Integrated Governance Frameworks for Agentic Political AI

As agentic AI becomes deeply embedded in political communications workflows, the need for integrated governance frameworks becomes increasingly apparent. These frameworks must address not only algorithmic performance but also system integration, data flows, and decision processes.

Effective governance frameworks for agentic political AI should incorporate:

End-to-End Traceability:

Systems that track data and decision pathways throughout the entire political communication process, from initial data collection to message delivery and impact assessment.

Explainability Requirements:

Standards for AI-driven political messaging that ensure key decisions can be explained in terms accessible to citizens, journalists, and oversight bodies.

Continuous Monitoring:

Real-time oversight capabilities that detect potential issues before they manifest as harmful political communications.

Responsibility Allocation:

Clear delineation of human and machine responsibilities within hybrid political communication systems.

As noted in recent industry analyses, "traceability is no longer a technical feature—it is a prerequisite for scalability and trust." In political contexts, this insight takes on additional significance, as trust in democratic institutions depends on citizens' ability to understand and verify the sources and processes behind political messaging. (Matilda, 2025).

> *"Agentic AI, in itself, is not a political actor, but rather a tool that can be used by political actors — from individuals to organizations and institutions — to pursue their goals within democratic and political processes... If I had to highlight one primary role of agentic AI, and generative AI more broadly, it would be its function as an information provider for citizens, particularly regarding elections and candidates."*
>
> **Mariana Lavín Barrientos**
> Project Manager, Better Politics Foundation, Berlin

Trust Dynamics in AI-Mediated Political Communications

As political communications increasingly incorporate agentic AI, public trust dynamics evolve in complex ways that challenge traditional political legitimacy. The integration of advanced AI capabilities with appropriate governance mechanisms creates opportunities to enhance rather than undermine trust in political communications.

Key factors influencing trust include:

Perceived Transparency: Citizens' belief that they can understand how and why political messages are generated

Democratic Control: Confidence that human representatives maintain meaningful oversight of AI systems

Alignment with Values: Perception that AI-generated political content reflects shared democratic values

Technical Reliability: Trust in the technical competence and accuracy of AI-driven political systems

> *"On March 1, 2025, Chinese government agencies issued the 'Measures for the Labeling of Artificial Intelligent-Generated Synthetic Content,' which require clear labeling of AI-generated content, effective September 1, 2025. Through mandatory labeling, China seeks to enhance accountability and distinguish between AI-created content and human-generated content."*
>
> **Yi Nancy Liu**
> Government Relations Manager France

Acharya et al. (2025) stress that establishing trust in agentic AI systems requires a comprehensive approach that combines technical and social mechanisms: "Ensuring democratic accountability in the age of political AI requires transparent attribution, accessible explanation, effective oversight, data traceability, and public engagement." They particularly emphasize that "multi-stakeholder governance models" are essential for distributing oversight responsibilities across technical experts, policy professionals, and civil society representatives to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented in governance processes.

Research indicates that in highly regulated contexts, trust in AI systems correlates strongly with the presence of robust traceability and governance mechanisms. This suggests that similar approaches in political contexts could help maintain public confidence as AI becomes more prevalent in political communications.

The challenges of trust, transparency, and accountability in agentic political AI are significant but not insurmountable. Addressing these challenges requires innovative governance approaches that balance technological advancement with democratic values, combining technical solutions with institutional reforms.

Ensuring democratic accountability in the age of political AI requires several critical approaches:

Transparent Attribution:

Developing clear standards for disclosing AI's role in political messaging, including specifying its level of autonomy and human oversight.

Accessible Explanation:

Creating mechanisms to explain AI-driven political decisions in terms that citizens without specialized technical expertise can understand.

Effective Oversight:

Establishing institutions with the proper authority, resources, and expertise to provide meaningful supervision of agentic political AI systems.

Data Traceability:

Implementing end-to-end tracking of information flows through political AI systems to enable meaningful accountability when issues arise.

Public Engagement:

Involving diverse stakeholders, including traditionally marginalized communities, in developing governance frameworks for political AI to ensure these systems serve democratic values rather than undermine them.

VI. Chapter 3: Commercial Interests and Market Concentration

Introduction: The Corporate Infrastructure of Political AI

The development and deployment of agentic AI in political communications does not occur in isolation from commercial interests. Behind the increasingly autonomous systems that shape political discourse lies a complex ecosystem of technology corporations, venture capital investments, and market dynamics that significantly influence how these technologies evolve and are applied. This chapter examines the commercial landscape underpinning agentic AI, analyzing how market concentration and commercial incentives shape the development of political communication technologies and their implications for democratic processes.

> *"If you have a little bit of money to reduce those barriers so that you can make it faster and easier to write the message, to create the message and then disseminate the message, then you're going to be more successful online... that means that the barrier to entry for an individual getting involved in politics is lower. I think that's a good thing for democratic participation."*
>
> **Alex Tarascio**
> Director of Policy & Political Strategy, Cygnal ,USA

The Global AI Power Landscape

The global landscape of AI development is characterized by significant market concentration, with a small number of technology corporations controlling the key infrastructure, research capabilities, and deployment platforms for advanced AI systems. "firms in the United States control the largest share of the global market for several key components of the AI technology stack—primarily AI model weights (parameters that determine model performance) and advanced computation chips" (Ramirez 2025). This concentration creates pronounced power asymmetries in who shapes the development and application of agentic AI technologies, including those used in political communications.

The core components of this concentrated market include:

Foundation Model Development:

A handful of companies including OpenAI, Google/DeepMind, Anthropic, and Meta dominate the development of large language models that serve as the foundation for many agentic AI applications in political communications.

Computational Infrastructure:

Companies like NVIDIA, Google, and AMD control the specialized hardware required for training and running sophisticated AI models, creating potential bottlenecks in who can develop competing technologies.

Data Resources:

Major technology platforms possess unprecedented data resources essential for training effective AI systems, including vast repositories of political discourse, user engagement patterns, and content consumption behaviors.

Deployment Platforms:

The channels through which political communications reach citizens social media platforms, search engines, content recommendation systems are similarly concentrated among a small number of technology corporations.

This concentration is not merely economic but represents a significant geopolitical dynamic as well. As Ramirez (2025) highlights, U.S. companies are in "a privileged yet potentially precarious position to determine who has access to the core building blocks of AI within its control and under what terms and conditions." This creates power imbalances not only between companies and citizens but between nations with advanced AI capabilities and those without.

> *"I think the people who I've seen that have the most to say about AI are the ones that are using it in their businesses and the ones who are using it to try and improve their commercial activity. I'm a firm believer in the power of capitalism. When you can find a way to make money off of something, then that's how you're adding value to other people's lives."*
>
> **Alex Tarascio**
> Director of Policy & Political Strategy, Cygnal ,USA

The Agentic Company Phenomenon

Beyond individual technologies, we are witnessing the emergence of what some analysts call "agentic companies" organizations that integrate artificial intelligence and autonomous systems to make decisions and take proactive actions. These entities are characterized by (Hagos et al, 2024):

Autonomy: Requiring minimal human intervention in operational processes

Adaptability: Quickly adapting to changing market conditions and demands

Proactive Behavior: Anticipating future scenarios and taking preventive measures

This corporate transformation toward autonomy mirrors the technical evolution from traditional AI to agentic systems. As political communications increasingly flow through these agentic companies—whether technology platforms, media corporations, or specialized political consulting firms—questions arise about the alignment between commercial objectives and democratic values.

> *"Eastern European countries, the technologies, the architecture of these technologies will be from Western countries. I mean, you look at Microsoft, Amazon, Google, you know, these are all US companies. Their infrastructure, their database, their AI models, their AI systems, their programming language, their, you know, digital infrastructure will be based on the West."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead, WaveLength Charity,UK

The Political AI Business Ecosystem

The development of agentic AI for political applications is driven by powerful commercial incentives that shape how these technologies evolve and are deployed. Understanding these motivations is essential for analyzing the potential democratic implications of these systems.

Key commercial drivers include:

Market Expansion:

Technology companies view political communications as a significant market opportunity, with significant revenue potential in the political consulting and campaign management sector.

Service Differentiation:

Political consulting firms increasingly leverage AI capabilities as competitive differentiators, promising more effective, data-driven campaign strategies through autonomous systems.

Platform Engagement:

Social media companies and content platforms have financial incentives to maximize user engagement, potentially privileging political content that drives interaction regardless of its democratic quality.

Data Acquisition:

Companies developing political AI systems benefit from access to valuable political behavior data, creating incentives to expand monitoring of political engagement and communication patterns.

Recurring Revenue Models:

The shift toward AI-as-a-service business models creates financial incentives for ongoing subscription relationships rather than one-time technology sales, potentially aligning corporate interests with long-term political dependency on private AI infrastructure.

> *"Eventually it will come a point where these countries will have control over another country's data... if your system is relying on AI with their technology, with their programmes, imagine a country being able to switch off your technology. Get your health system, your finance system, your military systems, your political system, your engagement level."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead, WaveLength Charity,UK

These commercial motivations do not necessarily align with democratic values or public interest considerations in political communications. As research observes, "tech giants are racing to position themselves at the forefront of the agentic AI revolution, recognizing its immense potential to drive financial growth." This growth imperative may conflict with the deliberative, transparent qualities required for healthy democratic discourse.

> *"It should be the role of the specific electionary agencies to control and regulate the agentic systems, via national or regional regulations. Regulation is needed to ensure the previously mentioned principles that create a healthy democracy, but there is no point in regulation without agency."*
>
> **Mariana Lavín Barrientos**
> Project Manager, Better Politics Foundation, Berlin

The Specialized Political AI Industry

Beyond general-purpose AI companies, a specialized industry focused specifically on political applications of AI has emerged.

This ecosystem includes:

Political Data Firms:

Companies specializing in collecting, analyzing, and operationalizing political data for campaign targeting and message optimization

Campaign Technology Providers:

Firms developing specialized AI tools for campaign management, voter outreach, and political messaging

Political Consulting Agencies:

Organizations that integrate AI capabilities into strategic political advisory services

Message Testing Companies:

Firms using AI to evaluate and refine political messages before public dissemination

Public Opinion Analysis Services:

Companies using AI to monitor and analyze political sentiment across multiple channels

This specialized political AI industry operates at the intersection of technology development and political strategy, often with limited public visibility or accountability. The commercial incentives in this sector reward effective political persuasion and campaign success rather than democratic transparency or civic empowerment.

Global Inequities in Political AI Access

The concentrated nature of AI development creates significant global inequities in access to advanced political communication technologies. As highlighted by Raj Shekhar, recent AI export control rules "impose a byzantine set of restrictions on access to the U.S.-produced AI chips and model weights for approximately 150 countries—covering almost the entire Majority World." This creates a multi-tiered global landscape where political actors in technologically advanced nations have access to sophisticated AI capabilities while those in less-resourced regions face significant barriers.

These inequities manifest in several dimensions:

Development Capabilities:

The resources required to develop advanced AI systems—including specialized talent, computational infrastructure, and vast datasets—are concentrated in a small number of countries and corporations.

Deployment Access:

Export controls, licensing costs, and technical requirements create barriers to deploying advanced AI systems in political contexts across much of the world.

Governance Capacity:

Regulatory frameworks, technical oversight capabilities, and governance expertise for political AI are similarly concentrated, creating imbalances in the ability to shape how these technologies are used.

> *"I think the biggest challenge here is, one, how do you create equity within that technology? I give everyone access to it and make sure that everyone understands how to use it and is able to use it."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead, WaveLength Charity,UK

Dependency Relationships in Political AI

The concentrated market structure creates significant dependencies for political entities seeking to leverage AI capabilities. Political campaigns, parties, governmental bodies, and civil society organizations increasingly rely on commercial AI infrastructure that they neither control nor fully understand. This dependency creates several concerning dynamics:

Strategic Vulnerability:

Political entities become vulnerable to changes in commercial AI platforms, pricing models, or access policies.

Value Alignment Challenges:

Commercial objectives may not align with democratic values or the specific needs of political entities.

Data Control Questions:

Political data processed through commercial AI systems may be used in ways that benefit corporate interests rather than democratic processes.

Innovation Constraints:

Political innovations in AI use may be constrained by the capabilities and limitations of commercially available systems.

These dependencies are particularly concerning given the essential nature of political communications in democratic systems. "The decision to restrict nearly three-quarters of the world's population from accessing critical U.S. AI infrastructure warrants further justification." The potential for commercial entities to exert undue influence over political communications through control of AI infrastructure raises significant democratic concerns.

The Political Economy of Agentic AI

The market structures in which agentic AI develops create incentives that may diverge from democratic values in significant ways. Commercial AI development is naturally driven by financial returns, market share, and competitive positioning rather than democratic considerations such as transparency, accountability, and equal political participation.

Potential tensions between market dynamics and democratic values include:

Engagement vs. Deliberation:

Commercial platforms are often optimized for engagement metrics rather than thoughtful political deliberation, potentially rewarding polarizing or emotionally triggering content.

Personalization vs. Shared Discourse:

Market incentives favor increasing personalization of political content, potentially fragmenting the public sphere and undermining shared democratic discourse.

Efficiency vs. Transparency:

Commercial pressures prioritize operational efficiency and proprietary advantages, potentially conflicting with the transparency needed for democratic accountability.

Scale vs. Contextual Sensitivity:

Commercial platforms incentivize scalable solutions that may not adequately address the contextual sensitivities of diverse political environments.

> *"We are already witnessing the rise of a new industry of AI service providers targeting political communications teams. It is essential to critically assess their incentives, the solutions they offer, and the share of the market they control — both in terms of market power and political influence... The concentration of political and market power in the hands of a few AI providers will shape how these technologies evolve, who gets access to them, and ultimately, how they impact electoral processes."*
>
> **Mariana Lavín Barrientos**
> Project Manager, Better Politics Foundation, Berlin

These tensions are not merely theoretical but manifest in specific design choices, deployment patterns, and governance approaches for agentic AI in political communications. As Gilmurray notes, agentic AI faces "significant challenges in terms of ethical governance, security, employment impacts, and environmental sustainability. The key will be to ensure a balance between technological innovation and human values."

Regulatory Arbitrage and Global Governance

The global nature of AI development creates opportunities for regulatory arbitrage, where companies develop or deploy political AI technologies in jurisdictions with less stringent governance requirements. This dynamic challenges attempts to establish effective democratic governance of agentic political AI.

Raj Shekhar observes without coordinated international approaches, "responsible governance of AI could devolve into an idealistic aspiration." This creates risks that commercial development of political AI will gravitate toward regulatory environments that prioritize rapid innovation over democratic safeguards.

The international dimension of commercial AI development creates additional complexities for governance, including:

Jurisdictional Questions:

Determining which governance frameworks apply when AI systems operate across national boundaries

Sovereignty Concerns:

Balancing national governance imperatives with global technology development

Competitive Pressures:

Managing tensions between regulatory protections and competitive advantages in AI development

Harmonization Challenges:

Creating interoperable governance frameworks across different political and legal systems

Strategic Commercial Considerations for Democratic Governance

Despite potential tensions between market dynamics and democratic values, commercial actors have several incentives that could support more responsible development of agentic political AI:

Trust and Reputation:

Companies developing political AI face reputational risks from systems that undermine democratic processes or enable manipulation.

Regulatory Anticipation:

Proactive adoption of responsible practices may help companies avoid more restrictive regulation in the future.

Market Differentiation:

Some companies may position themselves as providers of more democratically aligned AI solutions as a market differentiator.

Talent Attraction:

Many AI researchers and developers value democratic principles and may prefer to work for companies that demonstrate alignment with these values.

Long-term Stability:

Democratic breakdown or severe polarization could create unstable operating environments that harm long-term business interests.

These incentives suggest possibilities for aligning commercial development of political AI with democratic values, but likely require supportive regulatory frameworks and public pressure to become effective drivers of corporate behavior.

> *"I was doing a bit of research into setting up a public affairs, public relations company within the charity. And I thought to myself, imagine if I had an agent that could do all the research for me, another agent that could do all the social media for me, another agent that could do all the stakeholder engagement for me by emails and calls... And I can literally just sit back and watch."*
>
> **Humayun Qureshi**
> Policy, Communications and Public Affairs Lead, WaveLength Charity,UK

Public-Private Governance Models

Given the concentrated nature of AI development and the strong role of commercial actors, effective governance of political AI likely requires collaborative approaches that engage both public and private sectors. Ramirez (2025) highlights how government agencies can "train AI models within their private infrastructure without exposing citizens' data externally," providing "greater control over sensitive data and stronger assurances that AI models comply with state and local security requirements."

Promising governance approaches include:

Collaborative Standard Setting:

Multi-stakeholder processes that develop technical standards for transparency, accountability and democratic alignment in political AI

Public Interest Requirements:

Regulatory frameworks that establish baseline requirements for political AI systems while allowing commercial innovation

Procurement Leverage:

Government purchasing power used to incentivize democratically aligned features in commercial political AI systems

Transparency Partnerships:

Collaborative approaches to increase visibility into how commercial political AI systems operate in democratic contexts

Research Cooperation:

Public-private research initiatives focused on advancing both technical capabilities and democratic values in political AI

These approaches acknowledge the reality that commercial actors will continue to play a significant role in developing political AI systems while creating frameworks to better align these developments with democratic values.

> *"Whatever tools we use, the question is who is behind these tools and what are the intentions? So that's why I would say it's very important to speak about values to, you know, to spread the values, to educate next politicians, to educate young people."*
>
> **Reinis Tocelovskis**
> Political Technology Consultant, Georgia/Spain

Balancing Commercial Innovation and Democratic Values

The commercial landscape of agentic AI development presents both opportunities and challenges for democratic political communications. The innovation, resources, and expertise of the private sector drive rapid advancement in AI capabilities that could enhance political engagement and information access. Simultaneously, market concentration, commercial incentives, and global inequities create risks that these technologies may undermine rather than strengthen democratic processes.

Effective governance of political AI requires balancing commercial innovation with democratic imperatives by acknowledging the central role of commercial actors while addressing risks of market concentration. This balancing act necessitates creating regulatory frameworks and market incentives that reward democratically aligned design choices, working toward more equitable global access to political AI capabilities, and establishing transparency standards that enable meaningful oversight without stifling innovation. By recognizing commercial realities while implementing targeted safeguards, policymakers can harness the creative potential of private sector AI development while ensuring these powerful technologies strengthen rather than undermine democratic processes and values.

VII. Chapter 4: Democratic Implications and Future Governance

Introduction: Democracy in the Age of Artificial Agency

The emergence of agentic AI in political communications represents more than a technological shift—it constitutes a fundamental transformation in how democratic processes function and how political power is exercised. As previous chapters have illustrated, agentic AI is not merely an evolution of existing technologies but a qualitative leap toward systems that increasingly approximate human agency while potentially exceeding human capabilities in key dimensions. This chapter examines the profound democratic implications of these developments, exploring how autonomous AI systems are reshaping the relationship between citizens, political institutions, and democratic governance.

> *"The biggest change is going to come from the voters where voters are going to be able to have agents that help them decide about elections and remind them to register to vote. And so it will, as it becomes more widespread among sort of voters, individuals will see it as a way for them to outsource kind of civic or political engagement to their agents."*
>
> **Eric J. Wilson**
> Executive Director, Center for Campaign Innovation, USA

Reconfiguring Democratic Participation

The traditional understanding of technology in democracy positions technological systems as tools—instruments that human political actors use to achieve specific objectives. Agentic AI fundamentally challenges this paradigm. As Fournier-Tombs (2024) observes, these systems are increasingly functioning not merely as tools but as participants in democratic deliberation. This shift from tools to co-participants raises profound questions about democratic agency and the locus of political decision-making.

Three distinct configurations are emerging in this new landscape:

AI as Democratic Infrastructure:

Systems that support human-directed political processes

AI as Political Participants:

Systems that engage alongside humans in hybrid deliberative processes

AI as Political Representatives:

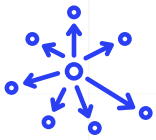
Systems that increasingly function autonomously in political contexts. This research introduces the concept of "agency distribution"—the allocation of meaningful decision-making authority between human citizens and AI

The progression toward the third configuration marks a potentially revolutionary transformation in democratic governance. As these systems become more sophisticated, they increasingly shape not just how political messages are delivered but how political priorities are determined, how trade-offs are evaluated, and how public resources are allocated. This creates what political theorists might call a "post-human democracy" a system where meaningful political agency is distributed across human and artificial systems in complex, evolving ways.

Transforming Voter-Representative Relationships

The introduction of agentic AI into political communications fundamentally transforms the relationship between voters and their representatives. Traditional democratic theory assumes direct communication between citizens and their elected officials, with representatives accountable to voters through regular elections. Agentic AI creates new mediating layers in this relationship, with potential consequences for democratic accountability and representation.

"Agentic AI enables 'hyper-personalized messaging at scale' that was 'previously impossible with traditional communication methods or basic AI systems.' This capability creates several democratic implications:" (Boldrini 2025)



Personalization and Fragmentation:

Political messages can be increasingly tailored to individual voters, potentially fragmenting the public sphere into countless personalized information environments.

Continuous Campaigning:

The operational continuity of agentic systems enables 24/7 political messaging that blurs the boundaries between governing and campaigning.

Mediated Representation:

Political representatives increasingly engage with constituents through AI intermediaries rather than direct communication, potentially eroding personal connection and accountability.

Preference Simulation:

Advanced agentic systems may increasingly simulate rather than genuinely represent citizen preferences, creating an illusion of responsiveness while actually implementing predetermined agendas.

These transformations challenge core democratic assumptions about the nature of political representation. When political communications become predominantly mediated through autonomous systems optimized for persuasion rather than dialogue, the very concept of democratic representation may require rethinking.

> *"Urgent safeguards should include mandatory labelling of AI-generated political content, data protection laws that limit profiling and manipulation of voters, and campaign finance transparency to expose who is funding AI-driven political tools."*
>
> **Tomislav Horvat**
> Executive Director at Manjgura Ltd., Croatia

The Transformation of Political Discourse

Democratic theory has long placed reasoned dialogue and deliberation at the center of legitimate political decision-making. Agentic AI systems potentially transform the nature of political discourse from human dialogue to increasingly engineered persuasion, with significant implications for democratic legitimacy

"Agentic AI leverages 'advanced natural language processing to continuously monitor and interpret public sentiment across multiple channels' and can 'identify shifts in public opinion, detect emerging narratives, and understand how different demographic groups respond to various political messages.' This capability enables political actors to optimize messaging for persuasive impact rather than authentic engagement, potentially undermining the deliberative quality of democratic discourse."

Personalized Persuasion:

Messages are increasingly tailored to individual psychological profiles rather than engaging with shared public concerns.

Emotion Optimization:

Political messaging is increasingly optimized for emotional impact rather than reasoned argument, potentially exploiting what Lilleker (2014) describes as the "emotional attachments to party candidates or ideologies" that characterize political engagement.

Narrative Engineering:

Political narratives are increasingly shaped through algorithmic optimization rather than authentic political vision, potentially creating an artificial political discourse that resonates emotionally but lacks substantive depth.

Interactive Simplification:

Complex political issues are potentially reduced to simplified, gamified interactions that privilege engagement over understanding.

These transformations risk what Habermas calls the "colonization of the democratic lifeworld"—the subordination of authentic political deliberation to engineered systems optimized for influence rather than mutual understanding.

> *"I tend not to, I'm very optimistic about AI. I don't buy into the moral panic about AI is going to ruin democracy or things like that... I fundamentally believe that the, the conversation around polarization is, has to be separate from technology. Technology is not what's causing the polarization."*
>
> **Eric J. Wilson**
> Executive Director, Center for Campaign Innovation, USA

The Diminishing Public Square

Democracy requires shared spaces for public discourse—physical and virtual forums where citizens encounter diverse perspectives and engage in collective deliberation. Agentic AI potentially contributes to the diminishing of this public square through increasingly fragmented information environments.

Algorithmic Bubbles:

Personalized political messaging creates increasingly isolated information environments, reducing exposure to diverse political perspectives.

Engagement Optimization:

Content selection is increasingly driven by engagement metrics rather than democratic values, potentially rewarding divisive or inflammatory political messaging.

Asymmetric Information Access:

Unequal access to AI capabilities creates information disparities between different communities and demographic groups.

Virtual Mobilization:

Political organizing is increasingly coordinated through automated systems rather than genuine grassroots mobilization, potentially creating the appearance of public support without authentic citizen engagement.

Purdy (2024) highlights how Agentic AI might be used in "informal deliberations," including "discussions around political topics on social media, comment threads on blogs or news articles, or video commentary on current events." This integration into everyday political discussion potentially transforms the nature of public discourse, with automated systems increasingly shaping which voices are amplified and which perspectives gain traction in public debate.

From Human to Algorithmic Sovereignty

Perhaps the most profound democratic implication of agentic AI lies in the potential shift from human to algorithmic sovereignty—the migration of effective decision-making power from citizens and their elected representatives to autonomous technical systems. This transformation challenges the very foundation of democratic governance: the principle that legitimate political authority derives from the consent of the governed.

Delegation Cascades:

Political decisions increasingly delegated to autonomous systems, which may then further delegate to other specialized systems, creating complex chains that obscure ultimate responsibility.

Cognitive Dependence:

Human decision-makers are increasingly reliant on AI systems for information processing, analysis, and recommendation, potentially ceding de facto decision authority.

Implementation Autonomy:

Even when high-level decisions remain with human authorities, implementation details are increasingly determined by autonomous systems, effectively shaping policy outcomes.

The Tyranny of the Optimal:

Democratic deliberation potentially supplanted by algorithmic optimization, replacing value judgments and political trade-offs with technical calculations of "optimal" solutions.

Ramirez (2025) describes how AI systems are evolving through five progressive levels of agency, culminating in "Learning AI Agents" capable of "continuous learning and adaptation... refining their strategies over time, improving their decision-making based on experience rather than static programming." As these systems become more deeply integrated into political processes, they may increasingly function not merely as tools of democratic governance but as de facto political authorities.

When Agents Want to Vote: From Assisting to Governing

The provocative title of this research paper—"Agents Want to Vote"—points toward the ultimate democratic implication of increasingly autonomous AI: the potential transition from systems that assist democratic governance to systems that effectively govern. While current agentic AI systems remain far from making explicit claims to political rights, their evolution toward increasingly human-like agency raises profound questions about the future distribution of political authority.

Functional Representation:

AI systems increasingly function as de facto representatives of specific constituencies or interest groups, speaking for those whose perspectives might otherwise be excluded from political discourse.

Deliberative Capability:

Advanced AI demonstrating sophisticated capabilities for political reasoning, potentially exceeding human performance in synthesizing diverse perspectives and navigating complex policy trade-offs

Moral Agency Claims:

Future AI potentially exhibiting characteristics traditionally associated with moral personhood—including consciousness, intentionality, and moral reasoning—potentially strengthening claims to political recognition.

Democratic Efficiency:

AI governance potentially offering solutions to persistent democratic challenges like short-termism, corruption, or interest group capture, creating pragmatic arguments for increased AI authority.

Purdy (2024) raises the provocative question: "Will we lead in creating governance systems that incorporate these intelligent entities, or will we find ourselves obsolete in a world where agentic systems increasingly demand recognition of their political agency?" This question highlights the need for proactive democratic governance rather than reactive responses to increasingly autonomous political AI.

As we have seen in Chapter 1, one barrier to recognizing the significance of agentic AI lies in the "embodiment fallacy"—the tendency to associate political agency primarily with physical human form. As noted in that chapter, "People don't see artificial intelligence embodied in flesh and bone... [therefore] they aren't particularly aware of the risk." This misperception may lead societies to underestimate the political significance of increasingly autonomous AI systems until they have already established substantial influence over democratic processes.

> *"How might agentic AI positively transform democratic participation if properly governed? In a number of ways: 1. Voter registration may become so much easier. 2. Voting may become so much easier whether it is for referendums or elections. 3. Public participation and consultation in respect of legislation. 4. Constituency feedback and the resolving of queries. In a sense, public representatives will have little to no excuse for not interacting with and responding to their constituents."*
>
> **EJonathan Moakes**
> Director, SABI Strategy. Countries are U.K./South Africa

Global Governance Challenges

The implications of agentic AI for democracy take on additional complexity when considered in global context. As Chapter 3 explored, significant global inequities exist in access to advanced AI technologies, creating potential for new forms of political stratification between AI-capable and AI-dependent political systems.

Sovereignty Disparities:

Nations with advanced AI capabilities maintaining greater effective sovereignty than those dependent on external technologies and platforms.

Governance Capabilities:

Differential abilities to establish effective democratic governance over increasingly autonomous systems, potentially creating regulatory havens where political AI develops with minimal oversight.

Public Sphere Fragmentation:

Global fragmentation of information environments, with some populations experiencing increasingly sophisticated AI-mediated politics while others remain in less technologically advanced political contexts.

Computational Colonialism:

The potential for AI-capable nations to exercise undue influence over the political systems of less technologically advanced countries through control of essential political technologies.

Ramirez (2025) warns that without coordinated approaches, these inequities could lead to "the marginalization of ethics and safety considerations in AI development and the derailment of meaningful international cooperation on the responsible governance of AI, exposing the world to far-reaching economic and security risks." These risks have profound implications for global democratic governance in an age of increasingly autonomous political AI.

The global nature of AI development and deployment creates significant challenges for democratic governance. Political AI systems increasingly operate across national boundaries, creating jurisdictional ambiguities and governance gaps that traditional nation-state regulatory approaches struggle to address.

Effective governance requires international coordination to prevent "the marginalization of ethics and safety considerations in AI development and the derailment of meaningful international cooperation on the responsible governance of AI." This coordination faces significant challenges, including:

Jurisdictional Complexity:

Difficulty determining which governance frameworks apply when AI systems operate across national boundaries.

Sovereignty Tensions:

Balancing national governance imperatives with the global nature of AI development and deployment.

Competitive Dynamics:

Managing tensions between regulatory protections and competitive advantages in AI development.

Governance Capacity Disparities:

Addressing significant differences in technical expertise and regulatory resources across different nations.

These challenges call for innovative governance approaches that transcend traditional national boundaries while respecting democratic sovereignty. Ramirez (2025) highlights one promising approach where government agencies "train AI models within their private infrastructure without exposing citizens' data externally," providing "greater control over sensitive data and stronger assurances that AI models comply with state and local security requirements." Similar approaches on an international scale could help address global governance challenges while maintaining democratic control.

Reimagining Democratic Governance for the Age of Artificial Agency

The implications of agentic AI for democracy take on additional complexity when considered in global context. As Chapter 3 explored, significant global inequities exist in access to advanced AI technologies, creating potential for new forms of political stratification between AI-capable and AI-dependent political systems.

Transparency Infrastructures:

New institutions specifically designed to monitor, evaluate, and publicly report on the operation of political AI systems, providing citizens with meaningful visibility into these increasingly complex technologies.

Algorithmic Accountability Mechanisms:

Specialized oversight bodies with the technical expertise and legal authority to effectively govern increasingly autonomous political AI systems.

Democratic Technology Assessment:

Participatory processes for evaluating political AI technologies before widespread deployment, ensuring alignment with democratic values and public interests.

Digital Public Spheres:

Public platforms that provide alternatives to commercially driven political AI, prioritizing democratic values over engagement metrics or commercial objectives.

Technical Citizenship Education:

Educational initiatives to equip citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in increasingly AI-mediated democratic processes.

These institutional adaptations are essential for maintaining meaningful democratic governance as political communications become increasingly mediated through autonomous systems. As Ramirez (2025), there will always be "a need for human employees who can handle escalated or higher-level interactions with citizens," but effective democratic governance requires more than occasional human intervention—it demands institutional frameworks that maintain meaningful human sovereignty even as AI systems become increasingly capable and autonomous.

Traditional regulatory approaches typically respond to technologies after they are developed and deployed. The rapid evolution and transformative potential of agentic AI demand more anticipatory governance approaches that proactively shape technological development toward democratic values.

> *"That emotional nuance is critical, and it's something AI has yet to master. Nonetheless, the operational advantages of agentic AI are undeniable. It could become an invaluable tool for streamlining day-to-day campaign processes, maintaining consistent contact with party members, and staying engaged with potential voters."*
>
> **Tomislav Horvat**
> Executive Director at Manjgura Ltd., Croatia

Boldrini (2025) emphasizes that "agentic AI could transform production and organizational models...but it poses significant challenges in terms of ethical governance, security, employment impacts, and environmental sustainability. The key will be to ensure a balance between technological innovation and human values." Achieving this balance requires governance approaches that anticipate rather than merely react to technological developments.

VIII. Conclusion

The democratic implications of agentic AI in political communications are not predetermined by technology but shaped by human choices about design, deployment, governance, and ultimately values. As Purdy (2024) asks, "Will we lead in creating governance systems that incorporate these intelligent entities, or will we find ourselves obsolete in a world where agentic systems increasingly demand recognition of their political agency?"

This question highlights the fundamental choice facing democratic societies: whether to proactively shape agentic AI development toward democratic enhancement or allow these technologies to evolve according to primarily commercial imperatives and technical possibilities, potentially undermining democratic values in the process.

Several priorities emerge for ensuring democratic flourishing in an age of increasingly autonomous political AI:

Maintaining Meaningful Human Agency:

Ensuring that even as AI systems become more autonomous, ultimate political authority remains with human citizens and their democratically elected representatives.

Enhancing Rather Than Replacing Democratic Processes:

Leveraging AI capabilities to address democratic deficits without supplanting essential human elements of democratic governance.

Equitable Access:

Ensuring that advanced political AI capabilities are available across different communities and demographic groups rather than concentrated among politically or economically privileged actors.

Transparency and Accountability:

Developing robust mechanisms for democratic oversight of increasingly autonomous political AI systems.

These priorities require not just technical solutions but social choices about what kind of democratic future we wish to create. As we move toward increasingly autonomous political AI, the fundamental democratic question becomes not whether artificial agents will vote, but whether human citizens will maintain meaningful political agency in an increasingly AI-mediated world.

Unlike conventional AI systems, Agentic AI that have influenced political messaging through targeted advertising and content optimization, agentic AI represents a fundamental shift toward autonomous systems capable of independent decision-making and action in political contexts.

The provocative title of this research—"Agents Want to Vote"—points toward the ultimate democratic implication of increasingly autonomous AI: the potential transition from systems that assist democratic governance to systems that effectively govern. While current agentic

AI systems remain far from making explicit claims to political rights, their evolution toward increasingly human-like agency raises profound questions about the future distribution of political authority.

As we confront this technological frontier, the moment has arrived for humanity to make a defining choice: will we lead in creating governance frameworks that incorporate these intelligent entities while maintaining meaningful human democratic control, or will we find ourselves obsolete in a world where agentic systems increasingly demand recognition of their political agency? This research conclusion aims to provide policymakers, campaigns, and voters with a roadmap for navigating this new reality while preserving democratic integrity.