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IViR LECTURE SERIES

The AI State – Why we need to save the rule of law from “effectiveness”

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REC A5.24



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The establishment of a "Government Efficiency" department, led by the world's richest man, and operating outside legal constraints—rapidly dismissing public servants, cutting subsidies, and halting state payments—exemplifies a growing erosion of the rule of law. This move reinforces a dominant global narrative: that artificial intelligence (AI) is synonymous with innovation and efficiency, necessitating its expanded role in public administration.

This vision redefines governance by replacing civil servants, rule-based procedures, and substantive decision-making with AI-driven automation. Big Tech firms, which control AI applications, not only profit from states' dependence on their technology but also monopolize expertise, positioning themselves as indispensable advisors. The concentration of technological knowledge thus becomes a concentration of political power.

Regulatory efforts struggle to keep pace. Even before mounting U.S. pressure, the European Commission had withdrawn key legislative measures, including AI liability rules. The fate of the AI Regulation in 2025 remains uncertain. Meanwhile, calls for "more Elon Musk" in Germany reflect a growing push to dismantle bureaucratic safeguards in the name of efficiency.

To preserve democratic institutions, robust legal and technical safeguards are imperative. Without them, AI will not only replace human decision-making but also dismantle the very structures designed to ensure justice, accountability, and the rule of law.

In our interdisciplinary collaboration we discuss these developments from a normative critical point of view, combining technical, ethical and legal aspects.

Practical details:

Date: 16 May 2025.

Time: 15:30 - 16:45.

Place: REC A5.24, Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam & online via Zoom.

More info and registration:

www.ivir.nl/events/

