AI

Main messages

- Discussions on the AI Act in the Council and in the Parliament are currently ongoing.
- One of the important points being dicussed [redacted]
- Another important point of discussion [redacted]
- This is part of our overall approach aiming to create innovation-friendly rules, which will encourage demand for AI solutions, create legal certainty in the single market and lay out support measures for providers.
- Harmonised standards operationalising the requirements for high-risk systems will play a key role in facilitating the implementation of the Regulation by economic players. [redacted]

Defensives

There are now discussions on whether and how general-purpose AI systems should be included in the scope of the Regulation. What is your view on this?

- Users of general-purpose AI systems can indeed fall under the scope of the AI Act if they simply customise the system for an intended purpose that is classified as high-risk. It would therefore be important for users to be able to rely on information about the design and the data used for training and testing the system. It may make sense to provide for certain obligations for providers of general purpose AI and not simply release them from any responsibility. The issue is under discussion both in the Council and in the Parliament, and we have to see what exactly is needed and reasonably possible and proportionate to require.

Background

AI Act

The EU considers it very important that artificial intelligence is developed, deployed and used in a way that benefits our citizens, societies and economies. We welcome the commitment of Microsoft to responsible AI.

The benefits of AI will only materialise through uptake, but uptake requires trust.

Therefore, through our AI package adopted in April 2021, we pursue the twin objective of supporting innovation and excellence and ensuring trust in AI.

The main pillars of this approach are the revised Coordinated Plan on AI and the first comprehensive horizontal legislative proposal for Artificial Intelligence, the AI Act.

The AI Act seeks to define the uses of AI technologies that are allowed and the conditions under which they can be deployed on the EU market.

Our goal is to support innovation while making sure that people's legitimate concerns about the protection of their safety and fundamental rights are addressed.

That is why the AI Act mainly focuses on high-risk systems. This is innovation-friendly because it addresses the real risks of the technology, while shielding systems that do not pose high risks to safety or fundamental rights from diverging national regulations.

To further support excellence and innovation, the Commission will invest at least EUR 1 billion per year in AI from the Horizon Europe and the Digital Europe programmes in the period 2021–2027.

The objective is to increase public and private investment in AI gradually to a total of EUR 20 billion per year over the course of this decade.

Negotiations with co-legislators

[redacted]

Microsoft and AI

Microsoft is one of the founding partners of the Partnership on AI (PAI) along with many other tech giants. PAI is an open platform for discussion and engagement about AI and its influences on people and society. The vision of the Partnership on AI is a future where AI empowers humanity by contributing to a more just, equitable and prosperous world.

Microsoft's stated goal is to amplify human ingenuity through AI, while preserving shared societal values and expectations based on the following six core principles that guide their approach to responsible AI:

Fairness: AI systems should treat all people fairly.

Reliability & Safety: AI systems must be designed to operate within clear parameters and undergo rigorous testing to ensure that they respond reliably and safely to unanticipated situations and do not evolve in ways that are inconsistent with original expectations. People should play a critical role in making decisions about how and when AI systems are deployed.

Privacy and security: AI systems must comply with privacy laws that regulate data collection, use and storage, and ensure that personal information is used in accordance with privacy standards and protected from theft.

Inclusiveness: AI systems should empower everyone and engage people. AI solutions must address a broad range of human needs and experiences through inclusive design practices that anticipate potential barriers in products or environments that can unintentionally exclude people.

Transparency: AI systems should be understandable. Providing contextual information about how AI systems operate so that people understand how decisions are made and can more easily identify potential bias, errors and unintended outcomes.

Accountability: People who design and deploy AI systems must be accountable for how their systems operate. Accountability norms for AI should draw on the experience and practices of other areas, such as healthcare and privacy, and be observed both during system design and in an ongoing manner as systems operate in the world.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Contacts – briefing contribution: [redacted]