



EU AI Act (2024–2025): The First Global Framework for AI Regulation

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What Is the EU AI Act?

- First comprehensive AI law in the world
- Passed in 2024, begins full enforcement in 2025
- Regulates AI by **risk level**, not by banning AI entirely
- Goal: safe, transparent, and human-centered AI development





Why It Was Created?

The AI Act regulates artificial intelligence based on its potential risks rather than banning AI entirely. It applies to any company operating within the EU, ensuring that AI systems are safe, transparent, and respectful of human rights. By focusing on accountability, fairness, and human oversight, the Act encourages responsible innovation while protecting citizens from harm.



Why the EU AI Act Was Needed?

- AI technology is growing rapidly, raising ethical, safety, and privacy concerns. Without regulation, AI systems can unintentionally cause bias, discrimination, or spread misinformation. The EU AI Act aims to create trustworthy, human-centered AI that protects people while allowing technological innovation. It also serves as a global model, similar to how GDPR influenced privacy laws worldwide.



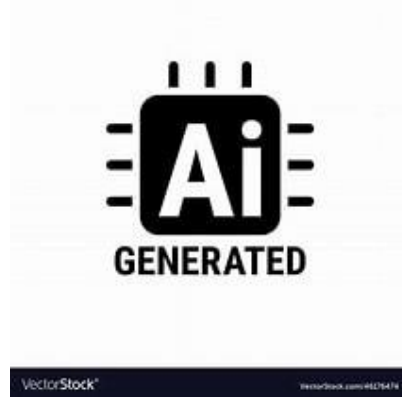
Risk Framework Overview

- The EU AI Act classifies AI systems into four levels based on potential risk. Unacceptable-risk AI is banned entirely, while high-risk AI is allowed under strict regulations. Limited-risk AI requires transparency so users know they are interacting with AI, and minimal-risk AI faces few or no restrictions. This structured approach balances the need for innovation with the protection of human rights.

Unacceptable Risk AI

- Some AI systems are considered too dangerous or harmful and are completely banned under the Act. Examples include mass surveillance using facial recognition, AI that analyzes emotions in schools or workplaces, social credit scoring, and systems designed to manipulate vulnerable populations. These types of AI are illegal across the EU to protect citizens' safety, privacy, and fundamental rights.

Limited & Minimal Risk AI



- Limited-risk AI requires transparency, meaning users must be informed they are interacting with AI. Examples include chatbots, AI-generated content, and virtual assistants. Minimal-risk AI covers everyday applications like photo filters, video-game AI, and recommendation systems, which face little or no legal restrictions. This distinction allows AI to be widely used while keeping users informed and protected.

Global Impact

- The EU AI Act does not just affect Europe. Any company that wants to operate in the EU must comply with its rules, a phenomenon known as the “Brussels Effect.” This forces global tech companies to redesign AI models, provide documentation, and test for bias. The Act is also influencing other countries, including Canada, the United States, Japan, and Australia, as they develop their own AI policies.



Benefits & Criticisms

- The EU AI Act provides several benefits. It protects citizens' rights, reduces bias and discrimination, and encourages trustworthy innovation. However, some critics argue that compliance costs may burden startups, that the definition of “high-risk AI” is still unclear, and that the law may require frequent updates as AI evolves. Overall, the Act creates a balance between innovation and safety.



A close-up image of a human hand holding a glowing, futuristic circuit board. The board is illuminated with orange and blue light, showing intricate patterns of lines and dots. The hand is wearing a dark suit sleeve. The background is dark with some bokeh light effects.

Conclusion

- In conclusion, the EU AI Act is the world's first full legal framework regulating AI based on risk, transparency, and safety. It protects society while encouraging ethical innovation and will strongly influence global AI policy for years to come. The key message is clear: innovation and safety can coexist when AI is developed responsibly.

Sources

- [european-union-artificial-intelligence-act-guide.pdf](#)
- [https://www.cliffordchance.com/content/dam/cliffordchance/PDFDocuments/the-eu-ai-act-overview.pdf?utm_source=](#)