



# AI Policy & Regulation | Micro Briefing

## Territory Focus: European Union



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### AI Policy & Regulation

In July 2024, the European Union officially published the AI Act (Regulation (EU) 2024/1689), marking the completion of a significant legislative process that began in 2021. The AI Act introduces the first comprehensive legal framework globally for regulating artificial intelligence. It establishes harmonized rules for placing AI systems on the EU market, applicable not only within the EU but also to any third-country providers or deployers offering AI systems within the EU.

The Act employs a risk-based approach, categorizing AI systems according to their potential impact. It prohibits certain AI systems deemed to pose unacceptable risks, while setting strict requirements for high-risk AI systems, including transparency obligations and conformity assessments. The regulation also emphasizes the importance of harmonized transparency rules to ensure that AI systems used within the EU align with EU values and standards.



### Engagement and Initiatives in AI Governance

The European Union (EU) aims to lead in global AI governance, actively participating in international initiatives that shape ethical and regulatory frameworks. As a signatory to the OECD's AI Principles, the EU supports the development of trustworthy AI that aligns with human rights and democratic values. The EU also played a key role in the 2023 U.K. AI Summit and endorsed the Hiroshima Process International Guiding Principles for Advanced AI Systems.

Within Europe, the EU has coordinated AI policy through the Coordinated Plan on AI, first introduced in 2018 and updated in 2021. This plan monitors AI strategy progress across 23 EU countries, Norway, and Switzerland. In January 2024, the EU further strengthened its AI governance by establishing the EU AI Office, responsible for developing and enforcing AI policies, including the newly enacted AI Act. The EU has also adopted UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, emphasizing its commitment to ethical AI development.

### Useful resources

- [EU's approach and timeline for AI development](#)
- [Eu Artificial Intelligence Act](#)
- [EU AI Office](#)

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