
EU Parliament: Artificial Intelligence, European regulation receives green light. Security, respect for rights and privacy, innovation

(Strasbourg) The plenary of the European Parliament in Strasbourg has approved the EU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act, aimed at ensuring safety and compliance with fundamental rights, while boosting innovation. The regulation, agreed in negotiations with Member States in December 2023, takes a further step forward with 523 votes in favour, 46 against and 49 abstentions. The goal is “to protect fundamental rights, democracy, the rule of law and environmental sustainability from high-risk AI, while boosting innovation and establishing Europe as a leader in the field”. The regulation is expected to be finally adopted before the end of the legislature, that is to say, in April. In addition, the law needs to be formally endorsed by the Council. It will enter into force twenty days after its publication in the Official Journal, and will be fully applicable 24 months after its entry into force. The new rules ban certain AI applications that threaten citizens’ rights. These include “biometric categorisation systems based on sensitive characteristics and untargeted scraping of facial images from the internet or CCTV footage to create facial recognition databases”. Emotion recognition in the workplace and schools, social scoring, predictive policing (when it is based solely on profiling a person or assessing their characteristics), and AI systems manipulating human behaviour or exploiting people’s vulnerabilities will also be forbidden.

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