

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001494/26
to the Commission
Catherine Griset (PFE)
(13 April 2026)

Subject: Towards a European preference mechanism in public procurement for strategic sectors?

On 7 April 2026, French artificial intelligence (AI) company Mistral published a white paper on AI in Europe ⁽¹⁾ which recommends a form of European sovereignty, described as a ‘European preference mechanism in public procurement for strategic sectors’ (point 17).

These strategic sectors would be drawn from the list provided in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2019/452 of 19 March 2019 establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union ⁽²⁾: energy, transport, water, health, communications, media, data processing or storage, aerospace, defence, artificial intelligence, robotics, semiconductors, quantum and nuclear technologies, nanotechnologies, biotechnologies, agricultural inputs, etc.

This European preference mechanism would benefit companies that:

- have their head offices in Europe;
- conduct a significant share of their business in Europe;
- are run by European management;
- have a turnover exceeding EUR 500 million per year.

In view of the above:

1. Will the Commission respond favourably to these proposals from the largest AI company in Europe?
2. Would Treaty change be necessary to implement such a mechanism?
3. Would the Commission consider piloting this in one or two key sectors, such as defence and aerospace?

Submitted: 13.4.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(17 June 2026)

The Commission is currently preparing the revision ⁽¹⁾ of the EU rules on public procurement. The Commission is carrying out an impact assessment that will accompany the proposal in line with better regulation rules.

In preparation of it, the Commission has organised ⁽²⁾ a wide consultation of stakeholders, including public purchasers, businesses, start-ups, non-governmental organisations and academics, in line with Better Regulation principles.

The impact assessment will assess different ways to improve the EU rules on public procurement, including as regards possible European preference criteria.

Moreover, the recently adopted digital sovereignty package ⁽³⁾ introduces European preference provisions for cloud and AI.

¹ https://www.contexte.com/médias/pdf/médias-documents/2026/4/european-ai-a-playbook-to-own-it.pdf?utm_source=briefing&utm_medium=email&utm_content=26495&go-back-to-briefitem=261049.

² <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/452/oj>.

⁽¹⁾ Commission work programme for the second quarter of 2026 [Public Procurement Act (legislative, Article 114 TFEU)]: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0870>.

⁽²⁾ Factual Summary Report on the Public Consultation on the Revision of the Public Procurement Directives (https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/15492-EU-public-procurement-rules-revision/public-consultation_en).

⁽³⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-tech-sovereignty>.