

EN

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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.9.2026)

The AI Act¹ does not apply to AI systems or models developed and used exclusively for scientific research and development², nor to AI research, testing or development activities before they are placed on the market or put into service³. The Commission is developing guidelines clarifying the scope of the exclusion. While the AI Omnibus recently entered into force⁴, the Digital Omnibus⁵ further aims to support scientific research and responsible AI development in the EU.

The Commission considers AI as a strategic area for the EU's competitiveness and technological sovereignty and launched several initiatives for the development of frontier AI models and systems as strategic assets for the EU and to support AI Science and the applications of AI in scientific domains⁶. The Commission continues to support the development and uptake of AI through EU-level actions on research, innovation, digital infrastructure and skills.

The Commission recognises that AI infrastructure requires secure and affordable electricity and supports all zero- and low-carbon solutions that can help meet this need, including nuclear⁷, as reflected in the Small Modular Reactors Strategy⁸. For Member States choosing nuclear, the Commission's role is to support the conditions under which it can contribute to common European objectives, notably decarbonisation, competitiveness and security of supply.

EU AI policy also prioritises energy-efficient, sustainable data centres and their integration into the energy system⁹. Alongside clear incentives for the data centre sector to transition to a clean energy system, the proposal for the Cloud and AI Development Act¹⁰ also promotes data centres' on-site generation and storage of clean energy.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj/eng>.

² Article 2(6) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689.

³ Article 2(8) of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689. 'Such activities shall be conducted in accordance with applicable Union law. Testing in real world conditions shall not be covered by that exclusion'.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025PC0836>.

⁵ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/digital-omnibus-regulation-proposal>.

⁶ European Frontier AI Initiative, European Strategy for AI in Science, and the Resource for AI Science in Europe (RAISE).

⁷ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/nuclear-energy/nuclear-investment-needs_en.

⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52026DC0117>.

⁹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cloud-and-ai-development-act>.

¹⁰ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/proposal-cloud-and-ai-development-act-cada>.