

EU AI Act: all we wanted to achieve?

Brussels, 12 December 2023 - EU policymakers reached a provisional agreement on the Artificial Intelligence Act. With it, Europe becomes the very first continent to set clear rules for the use of AI. Whilst it is key for the EU not to miss this global race, many open questions remain. Particularly, home appliances risk being labelled as high-risk due to a bureaucratic loophole.

APPLiA Director General, Paolo Falcioni said: *"We have a deal, but is that all we wanted to achieve? Our sector remains concerned about the criteria to determine high-risk AI systems, with a concrete prospect for our products to be labelled as "high-risk", without sound and objective reasons."*

The AI Act is just the beginning of the AI compliance journey.

The AI Act includes a list of banned applications because they are deemed to pose an *unacceptable risk*, suggesting that these technologies are not all the same and that devices should instead belong to different categories, according to a risk-based approach. Concretely, the draft law considers as high-risk products in which AI poses potential risks to individuals, society or environment. As the final text of the Act is being finalised, home appliances risk falling onto the wrong category because of a bureaucratic loophole. More specifically, in the absence of the harmonised standards listed under the Radio Equipment Directive Delegated Act, home appliances would automatically be categorised as high risk, when using AI systems as a safety component. And not because they present a serious threat in any of the above-mentioned targeted areas.

Striking a fair balance between safety and innovation is crucial to strengthening Europe's ability to compete globally.

If done right, this legislation can be a positive force for AI uptake and innovation in Europe. Technical discussions will be key in addressing all pending concerns and ensure the unfolding of a positive regulation for consumers and industry alike, laying the foundations for trans-Atlantic cooperation, towards a successful capitalisation of AI in Europe.

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