European Council

3 November 2026

Steering Note for Leaders' discussion on Artificial Intelligence (Dublin, 13th November 2026)

Topic I: Boosting Europe's competitiveness and AI sovereignty

The global race for AI leadership is intensifying. AI is becoming increasingly important for competitiveness, productivity and growth, but its implications extend well beyond the economy, affecting national security, technological sovereignty and the global geopolitical balance. The most advanced AI models are reaching unprecedented capabilities, and technological leadership remains concentrated among a limited number of global players, whose market power can undermine fair and efficient digital markets and limit Europe's strategic autonomy.

Europe has strong foundations – world-class research, a dynamic start-up scene, skilled talent and champions that are competing at the highest level – but it faces important strategic choices. It remains heavily dependent on non-European providers across key parts of the digital value chain, from computing power and advanced AI models to other parts of the AI ecosystem, such as semiconductors, cloud infrastructure and AI software. Strengthening Europe's AI capabilities and its strategic autonomy will require substantial public and private investment to develop and scale critical technologies and infrastructure, particularly the large, high-risk investments where European investors cannot yet follow, and non-EU capital often takes over. Moreover, access to sufficient and affordable clean energy will be key. The Commission has launched a range of initiatives to establish a solid regulatory framework, to strengthen European AI capabilities and to accelerate adoption across the economy. The recent International AI Summit held in Dublin by the Irish Presidency, in partnership with the Commission, focused on the potential to apply AI for sectoral value creation and competitiveness benefits. The next Multiannual Financial Framework, namely the new European Competitiveness Fund, has the potential to play a decisive role in this context.

Europe needs to define its position in this global race: which technological capabilities must be developed in Europe, and what instruments are needed to reduce critical dependencies and bolster competitiveness, productivity and technological sovereignty.

Leaders are invited to address the following questions:

- How can Europe become a leading and sovereign player in strategic areas of the AI value chain (computing, cloud, models and chips), as well as in putting AI to work across the economy?
- How can European companies, especially SMEs, and public administrations, adopt AI at scale?
- How to mobilize public and private investment at scale to build a competitive European AI ecosystem? What role should public demand play?

Topic II: Addressing societal impacts, safety and security

As AI systems become increasingly powerful, they offer significant opportunities for scientific progress, innovation and improvements in people's lives. At the same time, their growing capabilities raise new questions about safety, security and human control.

Ensuring that AI remains safe and trustworthy will be essential to building public confidence and enabling its widespread use in society– only a technology that is trusted by citizens is a technology that lasts.

AI has the potential to profoundly transform our societies, reshaping labour markets and the nature of jobs. Its growing use makes it essential to ensure that the technological solutions are human-centric and protect individuals and their data. It is essential to protect fundamental rights, including privacy and non-discrimination, and to preserve the integrity of democratic processes, including against AI-enabled disinformation and foreign interference. AI also creates new security challenges, such as in cybersecurity, with potentially systemic implications for critical infrastructure and essential services.

Europe faces important choices about how to respond to these developments. The EU has established a comprehensive regulatory framework. However, given the global nature of AI development, effective international cooperation and convergence with trusted partner countries and international organizations on safety, standards and governance will be essential.

Leaders are invited to address the following questions:

- How should we address the potentially far-reaching societal and security impacts of AI? How to protect fundamental rights, including of children, and the integrity of public debate and elections against AI-driven manipulation, disinformation and foreign interference?
- How can Europe prepare for the impact of AI on our economies and our labour markets?
- How can Europe contribute to effective international governance and global safeguards for advanced AI, that reflect our democratic values and fundamental rights?

ANNEX: SUMMARY BIO NOTES OF INVITED SPEAKERS

Arthur Mensch is the co-founder and CEO of Paris-based AI company Mistral AI. Following a PhD in machine learning and functional magnetic resonance imaging, and postdoctoral studies in mathematics, Mr Mensch joined DeepMind Paris where he worked on Large Language Models (LLMs). In 2023, he co-founded Mistral AI, a French AI startup company and unicorn, which aims to create frontier AI models that are widely accessible.

Geoffrey Hinton is a British-Canadian computer scientist, cognitive scientist and psychologist. In 2024, Mr Hinton was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work on artificial neural networks, having previously been awarded the Turing Prize. Hinton is considered a 'Godfather of AI', having worked on developing AI at Google for many years, up to 2023.