

CEPS Task Force on the

Apply AI Strategy

Translating Europe's AI ambition into industrial reality

Europe is at a turning point. After a regulation period marked by the AI Act, the European Commission is now focusing on applying and scaling up AI in key domains such as science, industry and government, as called for by the Draghi report and supported by data showing the limited adoption of AI in industry and government. In January 2025, the Competitiveness Compass announced the creation of a “CERN for AI” to provide the necessary coordination and support for both fundamental and applied research. We then saw the launch of RAISE, devoted to resources for AI in science, and the Apply AI Strategy, focusing on promoting uptake in eleven sectors. All in the name of competitiveness, but also AI sovereignty.

The question is no longer whether AI will reshape Europe’s economy, it is whether Europe will lead that reshaping or watch from the sidelines. This is why CEPS is launching a dedicated Task Force to bridge the gap between policy ambition and on-the-ground reality, with in-depth analysis and direct industry engagement.

The Apply AI Strategy is ambitious, however it comes with a heavy implementation burden and, as of yet, no dedicated budget. The critical link between the Strategy and the European Competitiveness Fund remains unresolved. Without coherence, Europe risks repeating the mistakes of 2021: industrial strategies and 'transition pathways' developing in silos, disconnected from the AI, skills and Green Deal agendas. CEPS is stepping in to help ensure that does not happen, convening the expertise, the evidence and the stakeholders needed to turn strategy into practice.

WHY THIS MATTERS

THE APPLY AI STRATEGY: PROMISES AND CHALLENGES

The Apply AI Strategy has the potential to be “the right initiative at the right time”. It adopts an ecosystem approach based on coordination and support: connecting use cases with their infrastructure, data and skills needs, and fostering effective governance and collaboration across value chains. It does not provide standardised recipes across domains. Rather, it offers new tailored solutions and flagship applications, keeping a firm link with the broader EU legislative agenda, from digital connectivity to cloud sovereignty, powerful AI compute infrastructures and the investment in a common, open-source European Frontier AI model.

But it also comes with hard questions: What is the vision for the AI-powered transformation of each sector, and has there been any credible foresight exercise to define it? Would flagship applications truly meet sector-specific requirements? Simply relying on large-scale data centres and powerful GPUs will not work whenever industry needs more decentralised, edge/cloud architectures and smaller models, every sector will require a different solution. Will existing cross-cutting initiatives such as the AI Factories and Gigafactories actually serve the needs of industrial sectors? The EU data strategy has struggled to produce results: how can the EU ensure it delivers this time? And should the strategy be ‘humans first’ rather than ‘AI first’, proactively designing AI solutions that augment rather than replace workers?

Tackling these questions requires a well-coordinated multistakeholder platform where experts, industry players and civil society discuss and shape the priorities of the Apply AI strategy in the coming months, with the necessary sense of urgency. CEPS is willing to provide this platform with a view to delivering strong and actionable recommendations in the next few months.

THE TASK FORCE

THREE INITIAL TRACKS

The CEPS Applied AI Task Force brings together senior executives, policy-makers, technologists, and researchers across three strategic sectors.

<p>TRACK 01 Healthcare & Pharma <i>AI diagnostics, drug discovery & personalised medicine</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clinical decision support, diagnostics and imaging (pathology, CVD, cancer screening) – Drug discovery: target identification, compound design and repurposing – Precision medicine, personalised dosing and genomics (1+ Million Genomes) – Health data spaces and interoperability under the European Health Data Space (EHDS) – Regulatory pathways for AI medical devices under the AI Act and MDR 	<p>TRACK 02 Automotive, Mobility & Transport <i>Autonomous systems, smart mobility & supply chain intelligence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Autonomous driving, software-defined vehicles (SDVs) and the ECAVA platform – Agentic AI for manufacturing, supply chain resilience and predictive maintenance – Connected vehicle data (V2X), fleet optimisation and Ambition Cities initiative – In-vehicle software stacks, OTA updates and data sovereignty – Harmonised type-approval, AI Act compliance and cross-border testbeds 	<p>TRACK 03 Government & Public Sector <i>AI-enabled services, policy tools & public administration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Workflow automation, document processing and case management (OECD 2025: most common use case) – Citizen services: GenAI chatbots and automated applications (DIGITAL 2025–27 pilots) – Tax administration, fraud detection and risk-based auditing – Public procurement of AI (€2tn annually, 14% of GDP): greatest opportunity and binding constraint – Sovereign AI infrastructure: AI toolbox, PAIR Pathway and national language models (e.g. GPT-NL, PLLuM)
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Each track is designed to grow further. The Task Force framework can be extended to cover additional sectors from the Apply AI Strategy's full list of eleven domains, making this a long-term platform, not a one-off exercise.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

FIVE KEY ISSUE AREAS APPLIED TO EACH TRACK

Every track follows a consistent, rigorous analytical structure. This ensures comparability across sectors and allows cross-cutting insights to emerge — insights that no single sector analysis could produce alone. The evidence base for each track draws on a combination of primary research, expert interviews, and stakeholder engagement, and is presented in the sector sections of this prospectus.

1	<p>Key Use Cases per Sector</p> <p>Mapping flagship applications, assessing the ambition and maturity of existing initiatives, and identifying the highest-impact opportunities for AI deployment in each domain.</p>
2	<p>Infrastructure — Hardware & Software Requirements</p> <p>Evaluating compute needs, AI Factories and Gigafactories, cloud infrastructure, open-source tooling, and the pan-European Frontier AI model. What exists, what's missing, and who should build it.</p>
3	<p>Data Governance & AI</p> <p>Navigating the EU Data Act, Data Strategy, and sector-specific data spaces. Building the interoperability and governance frameworks that turn data assets into AI fuel.</p>
4	<p>Applications & Flagships</p> <p>Developing tailored sector solutions aligned with the EU legislative agenda. Identifying the flagship projects that can catalyse broader adoption and demonstrate European AI leadership.</p>
5	<p>Sovereignty & Roadmap to Industrial Transformation</p> <p>Defining the balance between technological sovereignty and global competitiveness. Setting the role of open source, crafting sectoral blueprints, and turning strategy into concrete implementation roadmaps.</p>

Cross-Cutting Policy Landscape

All three tracks engage with the shared EU policy environment: the AI Act, the Data Strategy and Data Act, the Cloud & AI Development Act, AI Factories and Gigafactories, the RAISE initiative, and the broader Competitiveness Compass agenda. This ensures that sector-specific insights are always grounded in the full legislative and investment context.

WHY JOIN THE TASK FORCE

IMPACT ON THE AGENDA

Participation in the CEPS Applied AI Task Force is an investment in policy impact, strategic foresight, and a network of peers shaping Europe's AI future. Members benefit from:

- **EU policy-maker environment.** CEPS operates at the heart of Brussels policy debates. Task Force members will have the opportunity to engage with policy-makers on the EU, national and regional level, with an interest in the Apply AI Strategy.
- **First-mover intelligence.** Receive draft outputs, sector analyses, and policy briefs before public release. Understand how the AI regulatory and investment landscape is evolving — before your competitors do.
- **Cross-sector peer network.** Participate in curated roundtables and working sessions with senior executives and technologists from healthcare, automotive, and public sector organisations across Europe.
- **Co-authorship of sectoral blueprints.** Members contribute to — and are credited in — the final deliverables: sector-specific AI transformation roadmaps that will inform EU policy and investment decisions.
- **Visibility and reputational positioning.** CEPS Task Force outputs are widely cited in EU institutions, media, and industry. Participation signals leadership and commitment to a competitive, sovereign European AI ecosystem.

TIMELINE

FROM STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENTATION: JUNE 2026–FEBRUARY 2027

The Task Force runs from **June 2026 to February 2027**, structured around nine sector-specific working sessions running June through December, followed by drafting and review phase, and a Final Report launch in February 2027. All sessions are hybrid, with physical attendance strongly encouraged. Chatham House Rules apply throughout.

June–December 2026 - Working Sessions: Nine sector-specific sessions spread across June to December, three per track, one per analytical pillar (Flagships, Cross-Cutting Support, Governance). Each session opens with expert presentations and moves into structured Chatham House discussion.

- **June/July:** Session 1 per track: Sectoral Flagships — use cases, existing initiatives, ambition assessment.

- **September/October:** Session 2 per track: Cross-Cutting Support — AI Factories, EDIHs, data spaces, compute infrastructure, regulatory sandboxes.
- **November/December:** Session 3 per track: Governance & Sovereignty — sectoral blueprints, sovereignty goals, implementation roadmaps.

January 2027 - Drafting & Member Review: CEPS research team drafts the Final Report and three sector policy briefs. Task Force members review and comment on draft outputs. All findings are synthesised with cross-sectoral analysis and policy recommendations for the Apply AI Alliance.

February 2027 - Final Report Launch: Public launch event for the Final Report, incorporating cross-sectoral analysis, three sector policy briefs, and concrete recommendations. Wide dissemination through CEPS publications, events and media.

Deliverables:

- Final Report with cross-sectoral analysis and recommendations
- Three sector policy briefs (Healthcare, Automotive, Government)
- An established stakeholder network connecting EDIHs, industry, and policymakers

PARTICIPATION & FUNDING

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The Task Force is open to CEPS Members and non-members alike. Organisations may participate in a single sector track or across all three. Sponsorship opportunities are also available for organisations wishing to take a leading role in shaping the Task Force's agenda and visibility. An **information session** will be held in late **April 2026**, open to all prospective participants, an opportunity to meet the CEPS team, explore the analytical framework and assess how participation can best serve your organisation's strategic priorities.

CEPS MEMBERS Fee Structure (+21% VAT)

Membership type	1 Deep-Dive	2 Deep-Dives	3 Deep-Dives (Full Task Force)
Premium Corporate Members	Free	Free	Free
Corporate Members	EUR 2,200	EUR 4,000	EUR 5,500
Association Members	EUR 2,200	EUR 4,000	EUR 5,500
Premium Institutional	Free	Free	Free
Institutional Members	EUR 1,200	EUR 2,200	EUR 3,200
Civil Society Organisations	EUR 250	EUR 300	EUR 350
Academia	Free	Free	Free

NON-MEMBERS Fee Structure (+21% VAT)

Membership type	1 Deep-Dive	2 Deep-Dives	3 Deep-Dives (Full Task Force)
Corporations & Associations	EUR 4,000	EUR 7,000	EUR 10,000
Institutions	EUR 1,500	EUR 2,800	EUR 4,000
Civil Society Organisations	EUR 400	EUR 750	EUR 1,100
Academic/Policy Observers	Free	Free	Free

CONTACT US**GET IN TOUCH AND JOIN EUROPE'S AI TRANSFORMATION**

To express interest or register, complete the CEPS registration form and get in touch with our team. We would be delighted to discuss how participation can be tailored to your organisation's strategic priorities.

Task Force Participation

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