

Quick Facts: Transparency rules for AI systems

To foster a trustworthy environment in which AI can be widely used, Article 50 of the AI Act introduces transparency rules to help EU citizens recognise when they are interacting with an AI system or are exposed to AI-generated content. These transparency rules apply from 2 August 2026.

Why are transparency rules needed?



Combatting deception and misinformation



Promoting public trust

AI Transparency obligations apply in 4 cases:

Providers must design their AI systems so that individuals are informed when they are:



Interacting with an AI system



Exposed to content generated or manipulated with AI whose origin they can verify in a reliable manner

Deployers of AI systems must inform individuals when they are exposed to:



Emotion recognition and biometric categorisation



Deepfakes or text publications on matters of public interest without human review or editorial control

See the Commission Guidelines on Article 50 of the AI Act for scope, exceptions, and use cases.

What content needs to be marked?



Text



Image/video



Audio



Providers must apply a machine-readable mark to synthetic content generated or manipulated by AI and enable its detection, unless the AI system performs an assistive function for standard editing or does not substantially alter the input data or its semantics provided by the deployer.

What content needs to be clearly labelled?



Deployers must disclose deepfakes and mark text on matters of public interest with clear and perceivable labels.



Deepfakes

AI-generated or manipulated image, audio, or video content that resembles existing persons, objects, places, entities or events and would falsely appear to a person to be authentic or truthful.



Text on matters of public interest

AI-generated or manipulated text published to inform the public on matters of public interest, which did not undergo human review or editorial control.

Enforcement and penalties



Surveillance authorities

Enforcement is done by the National market surveillance authorities, the AI Office (for systems under its supervision), and the European Data Protection Supervisor (when EU institutions are providers/deployers).



Penalties

- Fines up to €15M, or up to 3% of total worldwide annual turnover for companies
- Fines up to €750k for EU institutions, bodies and agencies
- Proportionality for SMEs and SMCs



Exceptions

Grace period for marking obligation until December 2026 for generative AI systems placed on the market before 2 August 2026 (Article 50(2) AI Act, amended by AI Omnibus).

Deepfakes generated before 2 August 2026: no mandatory retroactive labelling but encouraged.

How can you comply with transparency obligations under Article 50?



Commission Guidelines on Article 50 AI Act

Clarifies who is in and out of scope and provides further guidance on how to interpret the transparency obligations in Article 50 AI Act.



Code of Practice on Transparency of AI-generated Content

A voluntary tool that providers and deployers of generative AI systems can rely on to demonstrate compliance with the marking and labelling obligations for AI-generated content.

Read the code and learn about the benefits of signing by clicking on the items below.