# Europe embraces ‘sovereign AI’ in bid to curb reliance on US tech giants



Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang’s concept of ‘sovereign AI’ is gaining traction across Europe as the continent pushes to strengthen its technological autonomy. Sovereign AI refers to a nation’s ability to develop and operate artificial intelligence systems using its own infrastructure, data, workforce and networks—preserving local languages, cultures and values. Huang has promoted the idea since 2023, advocating for AI systems that are both technologically advanced and culturally inclusive, while complying with data protection laws.

European leaders, keen to reduce dependence on US technology firms, are investing heavily to build domestic AI capacity. The European Union recently announced a $20 billion initiative to construct four “AI gigafactories,” intended to catalyse the continent’s AI ecosystem. Nvidia has pledged chip support for the programme and is collaborating with local partners.

A key example is Nvidia’s partnership with French startup Mistral, which will use 18,000 of Nvidia’s Blackwell GPUs to power a new data centre near Paris. The initiative supports foundation models tuned to European dialects and cultural contexts. Similar projects are advancing in Germany, where Nvidia and Deutsche Telekom are building an industrial AI cloud, and in other countries including Italy, Spain, Finland and the UK.

The UK has also moved swiftly. Prime Minister Keir Starmer recently unveiled a £1 billion plan to expand national computing power twentyfold. The investment supports infrastructure growth, AI research centres and sovereign AI forums involving firms such as BAE Systems and BT.

Challenges remain. Europe faces high energy costs, engineering shortages and bureaucratic delays that could hinder progress. Estimates suggest it will take up to $300 billion to match AI capabilities in the US and China. Still, Huang is confident, calling AI “the essential infrastructure of our time” and urging European leaders to act boldly. He warned that over-cautious regulation could leave the region behind global AI frontrunners.

Huang’s vision includes supervised governance, where AI systems oversee one another to reduce misuse and ensure ethical outcomes. The model addresses concerns around surveillance, misinformation, job displacement and algorithmic bias.

During his European tour, Huang met leaders including French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz. Macron described AI infrastructure as central to national sovereignty, while Merz called the initiative vital for Germany’s digital and economic resilience.

Nvidia’s push, coupled with growing European investment, signals a turning point. The region is actively building sovereign AI systems designed to protect its data, culture and technological independence. For those invested in advancing AI in the UK and Europe, this marks a decisive step towards a more inclusive and self-reliant digital future.

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## Bibliography

1. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/global-trends/what-is-nvidia-ceo-jensen-huangs-push-for-sovereign-ai-that-has-struck-a-chord-with-european-leaders/articleshow/121909680.cms> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/nvidias-pitch-sovereign-ai-resonates-with-eu-leaders-2025-06-16/> - Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang's advocacy for 'sovereign AI'—the idea that each nation should develop its own AI systems to reflect and preserve its unique language, culture, and knowledge—is gaining momentum in Europe. During a recent tour of major European capitals, Huang unveiled several new partnerships and projects, emphasizing the continent's underdeveloped AI infrastructure and its reliance on U.S. tech giants like Microsoft, Amazon, and Google. EU leaders, wary of this dependency, are responding with substantial investments. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer pledged £1 billion to boost national computing power, while French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz emphasized AI's importance to national sovereignty. Nvidia and French startup Mistral plan to build a European AI data center using Nvidia's GPUs. The European Union also announced a $20 billion initiative to build four AI gigafactories. Despite challenges such as high energy costs and funding limitations compared to U.S. hyperscalers, there is growing momentum for Europe to foster its own AI champions. Nvidia aims to ensure its chips remain integral to this sovereign AI buildout, balancing local independence with its technological leadership.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/1a6b50633db24c22b584597142a564ac> - Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, speaking at VivaTech in Paris, hailed artificial intelligence (AI) as 'the greatest equalizer' capable of democratizing access to technology by reducing computing costs. Despite concerns over AI centralizing power among wealthy corporations, Huang emphasized that Nvidia aims to spread AI's benefits globally, announcing major infrastructure projects across Europe. In France, Nvidia is deploying 18,000 Blackwell chips with Mistral AI, while other initiatives span Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, and the UK, including collaborations with BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Perplexity. These moves demonstrate Nvidia's growing presence as a leading force in global AI development. Huang warned that Europe's cautious approach to AI regulation risks leaving it behind in the innovation race dominated by the U.S. and China. He advocated for 'sovereign AI'—national systems aligned with local values and data control—to ensure autonomy from foreign tech giants. Emphasizing AI governance, Huang proposed layered oversight with multiple AIs supervising each other to prevent misuse. Despite concerns about job losses and surveillance, Huang believes that carefully designed AI systems can manage their own risks. His European tour, including meetings with government leaders like French President Emmanuel Macron, underscores AI’s emerging role as a strategic national priority.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/36cb69e3-822b-4e3b-bb6d-04b617ca78ab> - Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang announced that Europe’s ongoing shortage of computing power for artificial intelligence (AI) will be resolved soon, as the continent accelerates efforts to catch up with the US and China in AI development. Speaking at the VivaTech conference in Paris, Huang revealed plans for at least 200 AI data centres throughout Europe over the next few years, leading to a projected tenfold increase in data centre capacity. This expansion includes five major 'gigafactories' equipped with Nvidia's advanced graphics processing units (GPUs). A key element in this effort is Nvidia’s expanded partnership with French AI start-up Mistral AI, which plans to deploy 18,000 of Nvidia’s latest Blackwell GPUs in a new facility near Paris, marking a significant step for European technological autonomy. The initiative coincides with broader investments by European cloud providers, such as Nscale and Nebius, to build GPU-rich infrastructure. However, significant hurdles remain, including energy availability, engineering workforce, and planning delays. McKinsey estimates that up to $300 billion in investment will be necessary to scale Europe’s AI capacity and meet surging demand. Despite the challenges, Huang expressed confidence that Europe’s AI and GPU shortages will soon be mitigated by homegrown infrastructure efforts.
5. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/deutsche-telekom-nvidia-build-ai-cloud-industry-germany-2025-06-13/> - Deutsche Telekom and Nvidia have announced a partnership to establish an industrial artificial intelligence (AI) cloud in Germany, aimed at supporting European manufacturers. Scheduled for completion by 2026, this will be the first AI cloud of its kind in Europe. The initiative was revealed jointly by the companies and follows a meeting between Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz. As part of the collaboration, Nvidia will contribute 10,000 chips to power the AI infrastructure, while Deutsche Telekom will handle the data centers, infrastructure, operations, sales, security, and AI solutions. Chancellor Merz endorsed the initiative, emphasizing its strategic importance for enhancing Germany’s digital sovereignty and economic future. This project marks a significant step toward strengthening Europe's position in the global AI and technology landscape.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/cc04adfb-81b2-477f-b85c-ce042e8f83a8> - At the London Tech Week, Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang highlighted the UK's lack of sufficient digital infrastructure despite its strong AI research talent and significant private investment, ranking third globally behind the US and China. In response, UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer announced a £1 billion investment to expand the nation’s AI computing capabilities, aiming to increase compute power twentyfold and transition the country into an AI leader. The funding will bolster the UK AI Research Resource launched in 2023 and support wider adoption of AI, including training for all civil servants. Nvidia also announced several UK initiatives, including a new AI Technology Centre in Bristol and the formation of the UK Sovereign AI Industry Forum in collaboration with firms like BAE Systems and BT. Additionally, AI cloud companies Nscale and Nebius will launch facilities using thousands of Nvidia’s chips. Despite this momentum, UK AI investments remain significantly lower than those of the US and China. Plans are in motion to close this gap, including a long-term goal of expanding government computing capacity to match 100,000 Nvidia GPUs by 2030.
7. <https://www.thetelegraph.com/news/world/article/nvidia-chief-calls-ai-the-greatest-20372527.php> - In France, the company is deploying 18,000 of its new Blackwell chips with startup Mistral AI. In Germany, it’s building an industrial AI cloud to support manufacturers. Similar rollouts are underway in Italy, Spain, Finland and the U.K., including a new AI lab in Britain. Other announcements include a partnership with AI startup Perplexity to bring sovereign AI models to European publishers and telecoms, a new cloud platform with Mistral AI, and work with BMW and Mercedes-Benz to train AI-powered robots for use in auto plants. The announcements reflect how central AI infrastructure has become to global strategy, and how Nvidia — the world’s most valuable chipmaker — is positioning itself as the engine behind it. At the center of the debate is Huang’s concept of the AI factory: not a plant that makes goods, but a vast data center that creates intelligence. These facilities train language models, simulate new drugs, detect cancer in scans, and more. Asked if such systems risk creating a “technological priesthood” — hoarding computing power and stymying the bottom-up innovation that fueled the tech industry for the past 50 years — Huang pushed back. Europe, long praised for its leadership on digital rights, now finds itself at a crossroads. As Brussels pushes forward with world-first AI regulations, some warn that over-caution could cost the bloc its place in the global race. With the U.S. and China surging ahead and most major AI firms based elsewhere, the risk isn’t just falling behind — it’s becoming irrelevant. Huang has a different vision: sovereign AI. Not isolation, but autonomy — building national AI systems aligned with local values, independent of foreign tech giants. "The data belongs to you," Huang said. "It belongs to your people, your country... your culture, your history, your common sense." But fears over AI misuse remain potent — from surveillance and deepfake propaganda to job losses and algorithmic discrimination. Huang doesn’t deny the risks. But he insists the technology can be kept in check — by itself. "In the future, the AI that is doing the task is going to be surrounded by 70 or 80 other AIs that are supervising it, observing it, guarding it, ensuring that it doesn’t go off the rails." The VivaTech event was part of Huang’s broader European tour. He had already appeared at London Tech Week and is scheduled to visit Germany. In Paris, he joined French President Emmanuel Macron and Mistral AI CEO Arthur Mensch to reinforce his message that AI is now a national priority.