EU CONSIDERING WHETHER TO ATTEND BRITAIN'S AI SUMMIT, SPOKESPERSON SAYS

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The European Union is considering whether to send officials to Britain's upcoming artificial intelligence safety summit. | Photo Credit: Reuters

The European Union is considering whether to send officials to Britain's upcoming artificial intelligence safety summit, a spokesperson told Reuters, as the bloc nears completion of wide-ranging AI legislation that is the first of its kind globally.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is set to host the summit in November bringing together governments, tech companies and academics to discuss the risks posed by the technology.

But the invitee list has been kept under wraps, with some companies declining to say whether they have been invited.

European Commission Vice President Vera Jourova has received a formal invitation to the summit, the spokesperson said, adding: "We are now reflecting on potential EU participation."

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AI has seen rapid growth in investment and consumer popularity since the release of OpenAI's ChatGPT chatbot.

While Sunak hopes to position Britain as the global leader in regulating the rapidly developing technology, the EU is close to rolling out its own AI Act, the first such legislation in the world.

Under the bloc's incoming rules, it is expected that organisations using AI systems the bloc deems high risk will have to log their activities, complete rigorous risk assessments and make some internal data available to authorities.

However, the Financial Times reported that British government officials favour a less "draconian" approach to AI regulation than the EU.

Tech expert Matt Clifford and former senior diplomat Jonathan Black have been appointed to lead preparations for the summit. Last month, Clifford told Reuters he hoped the summit would set the tone for future international debates on AI regulation.

While a number of world leaders, including U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, are expected to attend the summit, it largely remains unknown who else has been invited -- or who has accepted an invitation.

The British government was recently forced to defend its decision to invite China to the summit.

The country's finance minister Jeremy Hunt told Politico: "If you're trying to create structures that make AI something that overall is a net benefit to humanity, then you can't just ignore the second-biggest economy in the world."

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