

# SNAPSHOT

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## Artificial Intelligence: success dependent on more creative and innovative collaboration

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Governments and companies around the world are investing heavily in Artificial Intelligence (AI), recognising its disruptive potential for businesses and the economy. Although this phenomenon is often considered an ‘*arms race*’ or a competition between nation-states to dominate the industry, this paradigm tends to overlook the value of collaboration. FTI Consulting’s AI Task Force looks at the opportunities. France and the UAE lead the way.

When France took over the G7 presidency in January, its government emphasised that AI and digital technologies will form a core part of its seven-point framework.

Consequently, AI sits at the heart of the G7 digital agenda and was a key point of discussion at the informal ministerial meeting held this month in Paris alongside the “Tech for Good” and “Viva Tech” Summits. As a sign of how important the French government views collaboration in its AI programme, the opening session of the meeting discussed “*Strengthening international cooperation on a human-centric Artificial Intelligence and its use against inequalities.*” Moreover, representatives from India, New-Zealand and Australia were also invited to attend in addition to G7 countries<sup>1</sup>

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is expensive, and success is never guaranteed. Like many emerging technologies, AI research is both capital and talent-intensive. In some sectors, adopting AI also requires a fundamental rethinking and retooling of the existing regulatory landscape. For the technology to operate in a truly global context, a certain degree of cooperation across countries is necessary in order to secure the right regulatory approach and ethical frameworks.

Consequently, the AI community is witnessing an increasing number of partnerships and alliances. These are likely to increase as both governments and private sector players look

to scale innovations and collaboratively grow their AI economies.

According to Lee Howell, an Executive at the World Economic Forum (WEF), “*Expertise from both the private and public sectors is necessary as the private sector is much more advanced in AI while the public sector is much better in leading with ethics.*”

### Better together: Examples from France and the United Arab Emirates

A good example of such collaboration is the bilateral agreement that the governments of France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) entered earlier this year.

The partnership focuses on the joint development of AI projects by tapping into the SME and start-up sector.

Such partnerships are rooted in the premise that advancements in AI are not a zero-sum game, but will have wider, and more long-term, social and economic implications.

As Mounir Mahjoubi, the former French State Secretary for Digital Affairs, recently stated, “*Between laissez-faire and authoritarianism, there is a large network to be built, with willing partners, a balanced international digital framework.*”

<sup>1</sup> G7 countries: France, Germany, United Kingdom, United States, Japan, Italy and Canada.

Both France and the UAE are good examples of how to embrace the partnership model in accelerating AI adoption.

The French government has displayed a strong willingness to cooperate with countries since the launch of its national strategy for AI in March 2018. Some of its priorities in the regional sphere include plans to establish a Franco-German AI institute and a strategic partnership with Sweden around innovation and green solutions, as part of which it recently hosted a joint dialogue on the ethics and governance of AI. However, the government has also entered a number of global collaborations with countries outside the EU.

Ten days after signing its bilateral agreement with the UAE, Mahjoubi visited South Korea and Japan to discuss various AI-related topics while inaugurating the fifth France-Korea Joint Forum on Innovative Industry. While there he signed an agreement to reinforce bilateral cooperation on AI and e-government, highlighting that both countries shared the common concern of *“putting innovation at the service of people and the planet.”*

The UAE, which was the first country to appoint a dedicated AI Minister, is engaging in several strategic partnerships with the objective of creating a global testing ground for AI innovations. These collaborative efforts include a partnership with India to form a “UAE-India AI Bridge” that is expected to generate cross-border investments in AI start-ups and a series of AI-focused roundtables with EY to foster dialogue on key AI issues, such as building the right infrastructure and developing national standards to effectively regulate the technology.

The UAE is also at the forefront of multilateral AI platforms, such as the Global Data Commons (GDC) task force, which is exploring the development of a data-sharing platform to break down the barriers that countries face in sharing, collecting and accessing data. The platform will facilitate collaboration across industries and encourage the use of AI to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Initiatives like the GDC can therefore play a critical role in setting common data standards and ensuring that stakeholders can capture the full value of this information.

## In conclusion

The collaborative efforts being led out of France and the UAE are part of a larger global trend of partnerships and alliances that the technology space is witnessing, as stakeholders

realise that they have significantly more to gain from coordinating their efforts.

Collaboration between the public and private sectors will play an important role in integrating AI into those other sectors that remain highly regulated, especially amidst a nascent AI policy environment, where regulators have a limited understanding of the technology and its applications. The Big Data Value Association (BDVA) and European Robotics Association (euRobotics) have also supported Public Private Partnership (PPP) approaches in AI to boost industrial competitiveness and develop value-driven and trustworthy AI based on fundamental rights, principles and values. There is an opportunity for governments to thus proactively seek out support and guidance from industry, academia and civil society to guide them.

Collaborative AI ecosystems based on a shared sense of responsibility can encourage a joint problem-solving approach to some of the challenges that governments and industries face in advancing AI, from creating robust data ecosystem and nurturing the necessary talent to developing ethical guidelines. Ultimately, these collaborations will provide the foundation required for AI to flourish worldwide.

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