

EU AI Act: What UK Businesses Need to Do Before August 2026

The EU AI Act's high-risk obligations take effect on 2 August 2026. The Act applies to any UK business whose AI systems affect EU individuals — Brexit does not create an exemption.¹ Fines for non-compliance reach up to €35 million or 7% of global annual turnover.²

KEY FACTS

- 78% of firms have not moved beyond awareness-stage readiness¹
- 83% have no AI system inventory
- 74% lack a designated governance owner
- Fines: up to €35M or 7% of global turnover

Does This Apply to You?

You are in scope if you:^{2,3}

- Sell AI-powered products or services to EU customers
- Use AI to make decisions that affect EU citizens (employment, credit, insurance, customer profiling)
- Deploy AI in any of the 8 high-risk categories under Annex III

What You Need to Do

1. Inventory all AI systems in your organisation (including embedded AI in SaaS tools)
2. Classify each system by risk tier (prohibited, high-risk, limited risk, minimal risk)
3. For high-risk systems: build risk management documentation, data governance records, human oversight mechanisms, and conformity assessments
4. Appoint a governance lead with authority to oversee AI compliance
5. Review all AI vendor contracts for compliance provisions

The Timeline



Defensible AI helps UK businesses achieve EU AI Act compliance through human-centred governance design.

Book a free 30-minute AI Readiness Assessment: james@upkurve.com

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1. Vision Compliance EU AI Act Readiness Report, April 2026

2. RMOK Legal — EU AI Act Compliance Guide, April 2026: <https://www.rmoklegal.com/guides/eu-ai-act-compliance-uk>

3. SnapGRC — EU AI Act: What UK Businesses Need to Know: <https://snapgrc.com/knowledge-base/article/eu-ai-act-what-uk-businesses-need-to-know-in-2026/>