# How the EU is driving AI innovation forward

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Head of Sector – Generative AI for Europe
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“I want Europe to become an AI continent – the best place in the world for developing trustworthy and advanced AI”

Executive Vice President **Henna Virkunnen**

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# 2024 Innovation Package: from AI Factories to GENAI4EU

**EUR 2 bn**

STARTUPS

UNIVERSITIES

About 6300 AI Startups in the European Union

About 300 are generative AI Startups

**EUR 500 million in applications GenAI4EU initiative**

**→ UNLOCKING INDUSTRIAL-SCALE AI**

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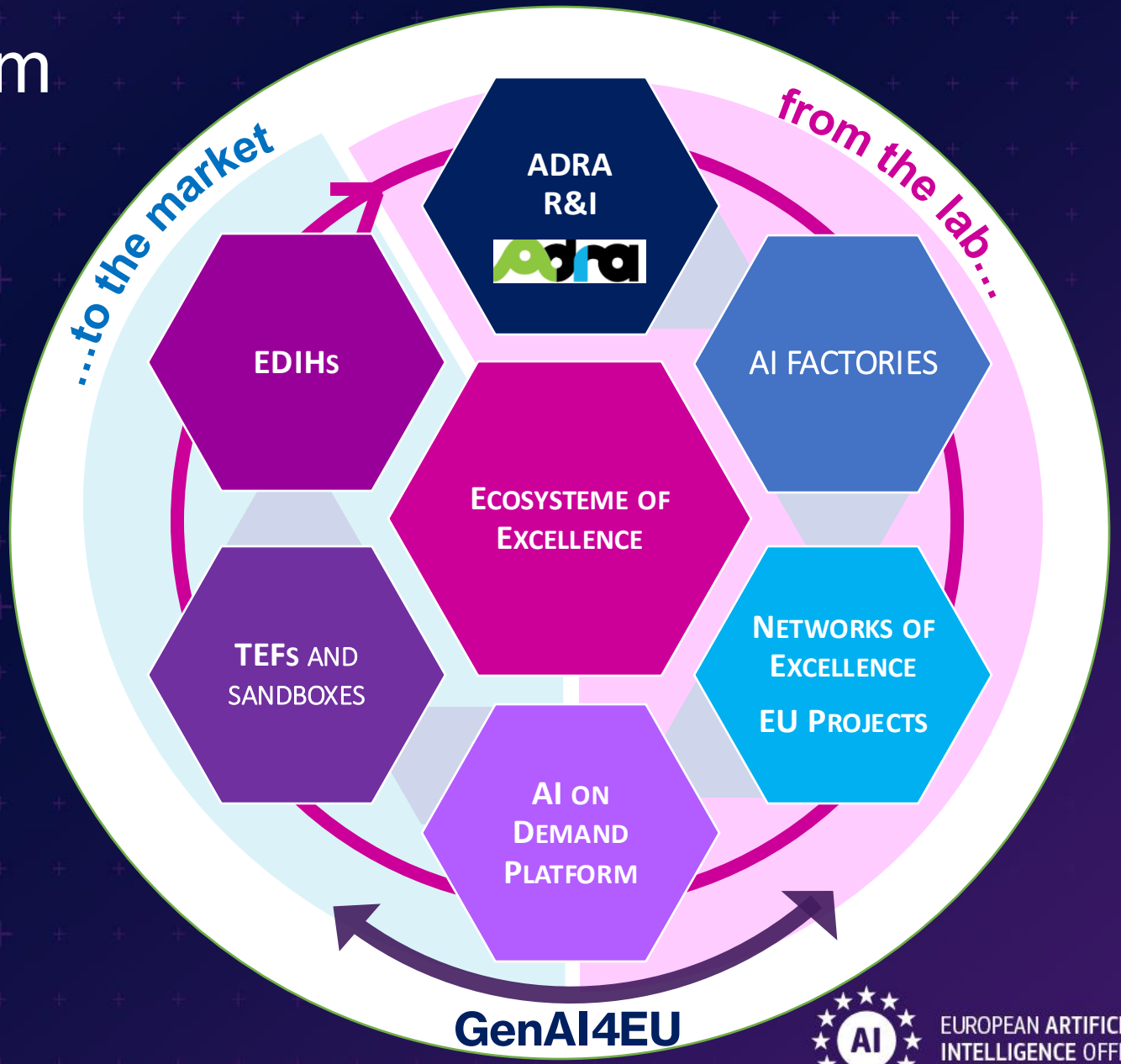
# AI support ecosystem

ECOSYSTEM OF TRUST

AI ACT

AI OFFICE

AI BOARD OF MS

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# Testing and Experimentation Facilities

TEFs are large-scale sites that help move AI from the **LAB...** **...to the MARKET**

- Testing AI in real-world environments
- Ensuring AI is trustworthy for market use
- Facilities include ***nodes*** and ***satellites***
- Share best practices across Europe

4 TEF projects launched Jan 1, 2023, funded by the Digital Europe Programme.

**Sectors:** Agri-Food, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Smart Cities

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# AI Regulatory Sandboxes

- ✓ Improve legal certainty for compliance with the AI Act.
- ✓ Promote best practices sharing with authorities.
- ✓ Boost innovation and competitiveness.
- ✓ Evidence-based regulatory learning.
- ✓ Accelerate EU market access for AI systems, especially for SMEs and start-ups.

**2023** **2024** **2026**

**pilots begin ⟶ insights gathering ⟶ mandatory establishment**

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# The central European AI on Demand Platform

Networking European AI Initiatives and Scaling-up to SMEs & Industrial Sectors

**European AI Initiatives & Infrastructure**

- TEFs & EDIHs
- Dataspaces by SIMPL
- AI Factories

**European AI Research:**

- Researcher
- Labs & Universities
- EU projects
- Experts

**AI on Demand Platform**

- Operational European AI-Hub
- European values Trustworthiness & Compliance
- Co-innovation platform
- EU Ecosystem

**European Industry:**

- SMEs
- Start-ups
- AI developers and consultants
- Industrial key sectors
- Public admin/sector
- System integrators

**AI Compliance**

- European AI Act
- TrustworthyAI

**AI for IT Operations** As-a-Service

**User Support** FAQ & Ticketing

**Market-place**

**Development and IT Operations** AI-Builder

**Interactive Landscape Tool**

**GenAI/RAG Solution**

**HPC** As-a-Service

**European LLM** As-a-Service

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# European Digital Innovation Hubs

**Services:**

- ✓ Access to technical expertise (*test before you invest*).
- ✓ Innovation advice, funding guidance and skills training.
- ✓ Local services in local languages.
- ✓ Best practices shared across Europe

EDIHs are one-stop shops helping companies use digital technologies to improve competitiveness.

**State of Implementation:**

- Over 200 hubs funded
- \+ ~100 hubs: Seal of Excellence

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# AI Factories

# Unlocking Industrial AI Factories

- Bringing together **computing power**, **data**, and **talent**
- Providing European **startups**, **industries**, and **researchers** with massive computational resources
- Creating opportunities for **AI startups** and **SMEs** to **thrive** in key EU industrial sectors

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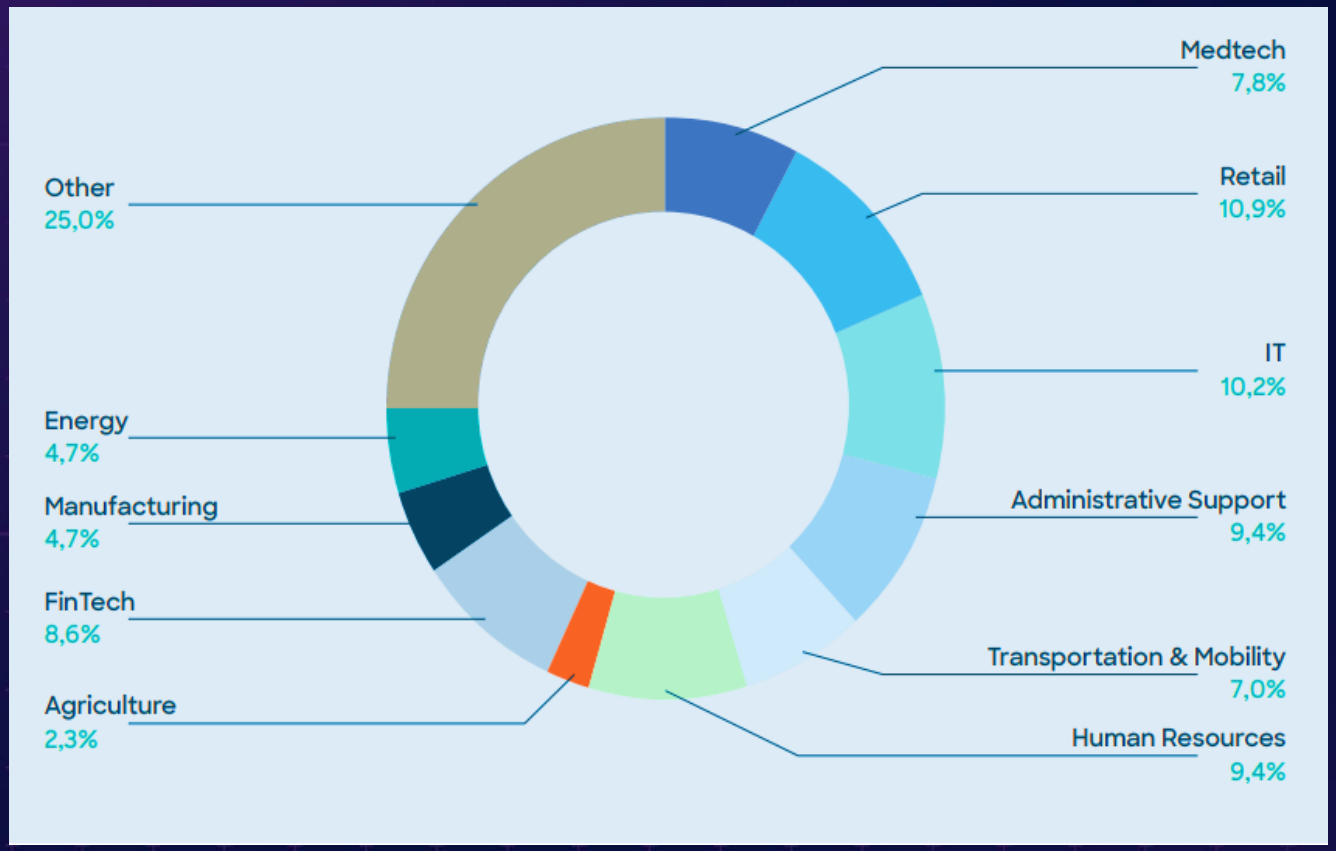
# The GenAI Startup Landscape in the EU




- 6300+ AI startups in Europe ➔ **669 (10%) in GenAI**
- 1/3rd of the GenAI startups are **developing GenAI models**
- Good coverage of **strategic EU industrial sectors**
- Main challenges reported by GenAI startups:
  (1) **insufficient funding**
  (2) fear of **regulatory burdens**
  (3) limited access to **computing power, talent, data**

➢ **More than half of GenAI startups would benefit from accessing HPC**

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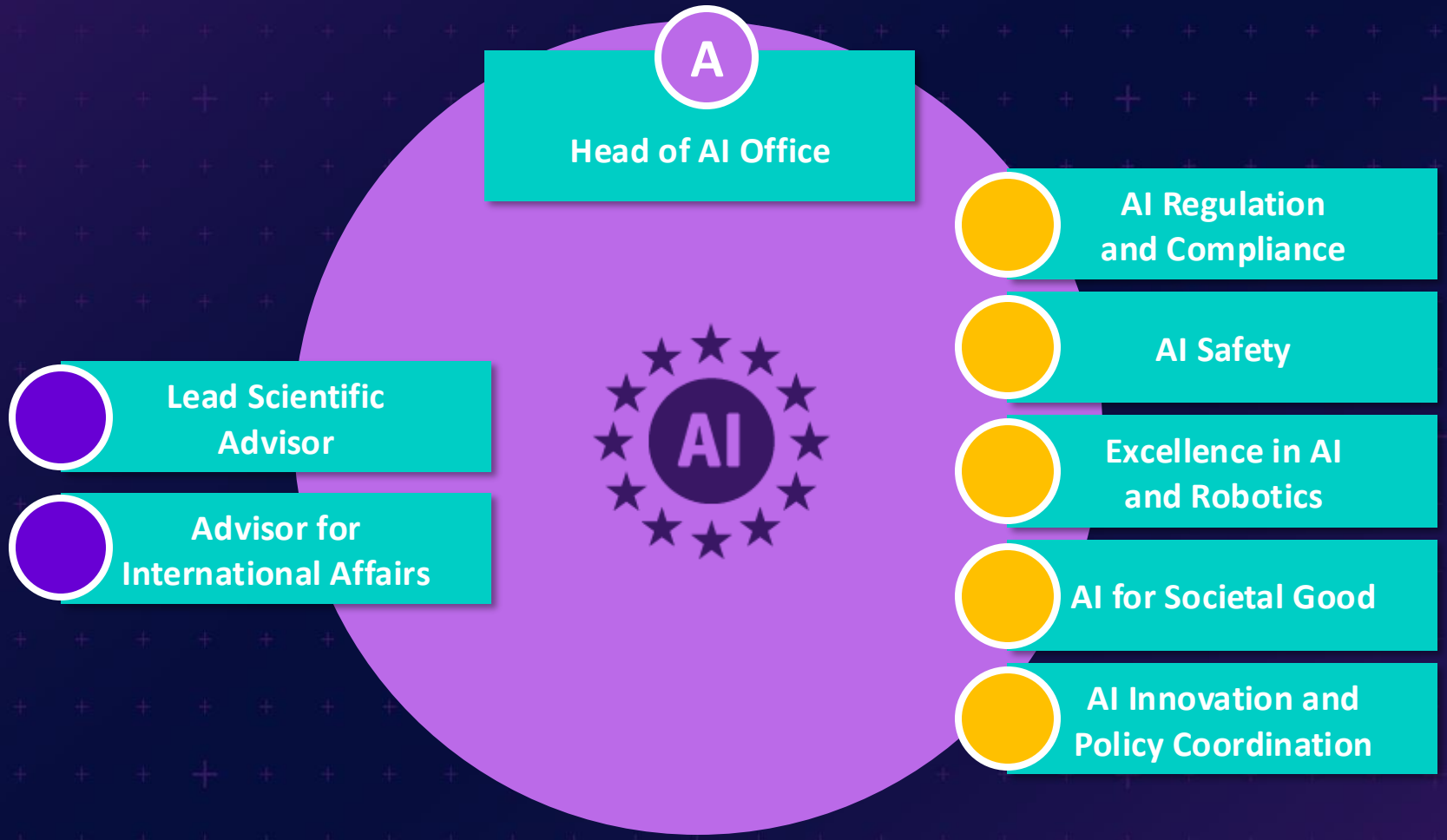
European Commission

# Structure of the AI Office




AI Board
with Member States to coordinate at EU level

Scientific Panel supports with technical advice

Advisory Forum supports with input from stakeholders

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# Next steps towards making Europe an AI continent:

- Rollout of GenAI4EU – Horizon Europe WP25
- AI factories from Q1/Q2 2025
- Apply AI Strategy
- Cloud and AI Development Act

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