



CyberValley



European Commission Vice-President Vestager visits Cyber Valley

Scientists from the ecosystem are making a decisive contribution to the future of European AI

In a meeting with the European Commission's Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager, Baden-Württemberg's Minister-President Winfried Kretschmann, and the state's Science Minister Theresia Bauer, scientists welcomed the European Commission's new Digital Strategy and demanded strong support for research in the field of learning AI

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Tübingen – One day following the publication of the European Commission's White Paper on Artificial Intelligence, Margarethe Vestager, the EC's Executive Vice-President and Chair of the "Commissioners' Group on a Europe Fit for the Digital Age", on Thursday met with scientists from the Cyber Valley ecosystem in Tübingen to discuss the future of AI research in Europe. She was accompanied by Winfried Kretschmann, the Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg, as well as Theresia Bauer, the state's Science Minister.

"With Cyber Valley, Baden-Württemberg is home to one of Europe's largest research cooperations between industry and science in the field of artificial intelligence. My state government alone has invested over 100 million euros in this innovation campus. Top-level research and entrepreneurial spirit are combined here so that Baden-Württemberg can play a pioneering role in the development of intelligent solutions for industry, mobility, and medicine. Europe is facing fierce competition in the field of top-level research; attract and retaining the world's best minds is decisive. The Europe-wide ELLIS initiative with sites in Tübingen and Freiburg will be helpful in this regard," said Minister-President Kretschmann. "In an international comparison, Europe still lags behind the USA and China, particularly when it comes to the economic exploitation of artificial intelligence. To prevent this gap from widening, we need to join forces. We need a European alliance in the field of AI. And we need AI 'Made in Europe' that combines innovation with our values. It is also about our individual freedom and the question of how AI applications affect our society. These matters are essential for the acceptance of these technologies."

"We welcome Vice-President Vestager's visit and the opportunity to help drive the discussion on European AI forward," said Bernhard Schölkopf, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems, co-initiator of Cyber Valley, and co-founder of ELLIS. "With Cyber Valley and ELLIS, we are building a strong European ecosystem for basic research in the field of modern AI. To secure Europe's long-term global competitiveness and develop beneficial AI that is in line with the values of

Europe's open societies, we must establish research conditions that enable us to attract and keep the world's top minds. To do this, we need the support of European policymakers.”

ELLIS is on a clear upward trajectory. Initiated in 2018, the pan-European effort aims to promote research excellence in machine learning and related fields. In recent months, the initiative has established 11 research programs in broad-ranging AI-related fields and mobilized some 200 million euros in funding for an initial period of five years. Moreover, 17 ELLIS units have been created across Europe and in Israel, and proposals for additional units are presently under review. In the medium term, ELLIS plans to establish a network of sites and institutes analogous to the model of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), which is financed by 21 European countries and has laboratories across the continent.

Cyber Valley has also gained significant momentum in recent months. The initiative reached several major milestones in 2019, including the accession of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the launch of the new Cyber Valley Start-up Network, additional investments by Cyber Valley industrial partners Robert Bosch GmbH and Amazon in Tübingen, and the successful completion of a third round of applications to the International Max Planck Research School for Intelligent Systems (IMPRS-IS), the doctoral program established as part of the Cyber Valley initiative.

About Cyber Valley:

Cyber Valley is one of the largest research consortiums in Europe in the field of artificial intelligence, with partners from science, business, and society. Cyber Valley strengthens research and education in the fields of machine learning, computer vision and robotics, as well as connections between these scientific disciplines.

The research network was established at the end of 2016. Founding partners are the MPI-IS, the University of Stuttgart, the University of Tübingen, the State of Baden-Württemberg, and the following seven industrial partners: Amazon, the BMW Group, IAV GmbH, Daimler AG, Porsche AG, Robert Bosch GmbH and ZF Friedrichshafen AG. Together, these partners aim to strengthen the region by increasing research activities, creating an ecosystem for start-ups and technology transfer, and increasing the visibility of Baden-Württemberg as a global hotspot for AI research and development. Cyber Valley is also supported by the Christian Bürkert Foundation, the Gips-Schüle Foundation, the Vector Foundation and the Carl Zeiss Foundation.

As core elements of Cyber Valley, new research groups have been established at the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems (MPI-IS), the University of Stuttgart, and the University of Tübingen. The Cyber Valley partners and supporting foundations fund these groups. Several professorships have also been established at the universities as additional core elements of Cyber Valley. Some of these new professorships are financed by endowments. The establishment of a new doctoral program was another key element of the project: the International Max Planck Research School for Intelligent Systems.

www.cyber-valley.de

About ELLIS:

ELLIS is the association of Europe's leading scientists in machine learning, which is at the core of the research field of artificial intelligence. The aim is to create the conditions for excellent AI research in Europe, which will promote economic development and ensure that findings in the field of AI will benefit society.

With ELLIS, an AI research institute supported by several European countries is to be established in the near future. The European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), which is funded by 21 European states and has laboratories in various countries, serves as a model.

The main idea behind ELLIS is to create ideal research conditions for both established researchers and doctoral students through close networking. The ELLIS initiative was founded by Europe's leading basic researchers at the end of 2018; the ELLIS Society was founded in 2019. The first ELLIS programmes were announced in September 2019. In December 2019, the first 17 ELLIS Units were founded. These are spread across ten European countries and Israel. In Germany, there are ELLIS Units in Darmstadt, Saarbrücken, Freiburg, and Tübingen. In total, the 17 units have mobilized more than 200 million euros in research funds for the next five years. Further ELLIS units will soon be added.

<https://ellis.eu/>

Images from the Vestager visit can be downloaded at the following link:

<https://cyber-valley.de/images/vestager>

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