

IBM and The Government of Spain Collaborate to Advance National AI Strategy and Build the World's Leading Spanish Language AI Models

Strategic collaboration will strengthen Spain's open and ethical AI initiatives to stimulate economic and technical efforts



MADRID, April 5, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- The President of the Government, Pedro Sánchez, and the Senior Vice President of IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) and Director of IBM Research, Darío Gil, met this afternoon at the Moncloa Complex, where they celebrated the new agreement reached between the Executive and IBM that will allow the development of foundational models for Artificial Intelligence, native in Spanish and co-official languages. During the meeting, which was also attended by the Minister for Digital Transformation and the Civil Service, José Luis Escrivá; the director of the Office of Economic Affairs of the Presidency of the Government, Manuel de la Rocha, and the president of IBM Spain, Portugal, Greece and Israel, Horacio Morell, they shared challenges and initiatives that are opening up in the field of artificial intelligence and supercomputing.



From left to right, Horacio Morell, General Manager IBM Spain, Portugal, Greece and Israel; Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain; Darío Gil, IBM Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research; and José Luis Escrivá, Minister for Digital Transformation and Public Function of Spain, at La Moncloa Palace in Madrid, headquarters of the Presidency of the Government of Spain.

Afterwards, the Government of Spain, through its Ministry for Digital Transformation, the Civil Service, and IBM today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote their collaboration in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI supercomputing, advance the development and practical deployment of open, ethical and responsible generative AI in Spain, and sharing the vision to create a leading suite of foundation models including both large language models (LLMs) and small language models (SLMs), proficient in the Spanish language and co-official languages.

During the meeting at La Moncloa, the President stressed that agreements such as this one demonstrate Spain's commitment to accelerate the ethical and responsible use of AI, particularly in the public sector, with great impact on productivity for many sectors of the economy and on Europe's strategic autonomy.



Darío Gil (left), IBM Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research, converses with Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, during his meeting in La Moncloa Palace in Madrid, headquarters of the Presidency of the Government of Spain.

The document was signed today in Madrid by Darío Gil, Senior Vice President and Director of IBM Research, and José Luis Escrivá, Minister for Digital Transformation and Civil Service of the Government of Spain. Tapping into IBM's open-source AI framework, communities will be able to shape and contribute to the Spanish LLM, that will also include co-official languages (Catalan, Basque, Galician and Valencian) increasing innovation, transparency and safety while ensuring a more cost-efficient yet technologically competitive position in the market. The collaboration also reflects the intention to develop AI-enhanced techniques to accelerate the discovery, development, and validation of new materials to increase the sustainability of the semiconductors value chain.

"AI positions us at the threshold of a new industrial revolution, with a very significant potential impact in terms of productivity gains for a large number of economic sectors and in providing better public services to our citizens," said the minister José Luis Escrivá. "The Government of Spain is promoting a useful and ethical development of the opportunities offered by this technology. IBM, with its experience, knowledge, and resources, is an excellent partner to accompany us in our vision."

"IBM shares this bold vision to accelerate the Government of Spain's AI strategy and to be the national AI partner for Spain," said Darío Gil, IBM SVP and Director of IBM Research. "We will leverage IBM's deep investments across the entire AI stack, from compute to models, we will enable an open community to drive the full potential of AI technologies. Together, we will work to foster the responsible use of AI to drive sustainable growth in Spain, and all Spanish speaking countries worldwide."

Spanish is the second leading spoken language in the world (6.2% of the world's population¹). One of the priority areas under

this MoU is to collaborate in a leading suite of foundation models, including both large language models (LLMs) and small language models (SLMs), proficient in the Spanish language and co-official languages. Creating models that are entirely designed in Spanish will enhance AI sustainability by reducing biases and providing competitive alternatives for the Spanish industry. These models will be refined using advanced tuning and alignment techniques, encompassing innovative methods that facilitate direct community enhancements and foster an ecosystem of AI creators and builders, utilizing assets developed through this collaboration.

Recent advances in generative AI and AI supercomputing hold tremendous promise for governments and economies who can realize the productivity gains enabled by these technologies. With this collaboration, the Government of Spain is taking decisive action to seize this opportunity with timely and transformative commitments to invest in the AI revolution.

The coordination within the government institutions in this field will facilitate both widespread use of AI across national, regional, and local economies, as well as the timely and sufficient resources needed to build competitive advantages within a rapidly evolving AI-driven commercial landscape. This includes investment in human capital (upskilling and tooling) and community-driven adoption of AI to ensure that the productivity benefits and economic gains can positively impact across the economy of Spain, from small-medium sized businesses (SMBs) to large enterprises and the public sector.

Taking this into account, the Memorandum of Understanding is based on five principles;

- Promote the development of a suite of foundation models, including both large language models (LLMs) and small language models (SLMs), proficient in the Spanish language and co-official languages.
- Collaborate on the research and development of a full stack generative AI platform, including software built on open-source frameworks and tools as well as infrastructure enabling hardware diversity.
- Promote national and regional AI strategies through a cooperative approach that promotes a responsible use of the foundation models and the associated generative AI platform. This collaborative effort aims to benefit the public sector and SMEs throughout Spain.
- Foster an ecosystem of AI creators and builders, utilizing assets developed through this collaboration, to establish Spain as a global leader in AI.
- Develop AI-enhanced techniques to accelerate the discovery, development, and validation of new materials to advance the sustainability of the semiconductor industry value chain.

An additional priority described under this memorandum is to collaborate on the research and development of AI technology for supercomputing applications.

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References:

¹ https://www.exteriores.gob.es/en/Comunicacion/Noticias/Paginas/Noticias/20231030_MINISTERIO06.aspx

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