



Managing the GenAI Revolution at OP Pohjola

Dr Juha Vesanto, AI tribe lead, CAIO, OP Pohjola

The Impact of AI on Economy, Finance and Supervision

November 5th, 2025

Topics

The road behind

Trials, early successes and lessons learned

Current challenges

Choosing our path, and how to make the journey

Managing the ride

What does regulation give us?

The road behind

*Trials, early successes and
lessons learned*



Our AI journey

1980's: First expert systems

2017 – 2018: Finanssiäly -program

- First "data scientists" hired, working in over 70 projects (some of which are still in use)
- Introductory workshops on data science / artificial intelligence
- Ethical principles of AI

2019 – 2020: AI development growth

- Data Scientists working in ~30 development teams
- "Introduction to Artificial Intelligence" –course in internal learning portal
- Several new launches, eg Personal Finance Management in OP Mobile

2021 – 2022: Data and analytics expansion

- Citizen Data Science –program
- Databricks tool, data science community

2023: Data productization, GenAI

- Launch of OP Data Platform for data productization
- Maju – ChatGPT for OP internal use

2024: AI governance, GenAI experimentation

- Experimentation on GenAI
- AI Act, AI governance, Responsible use of AI

2025: AI framework

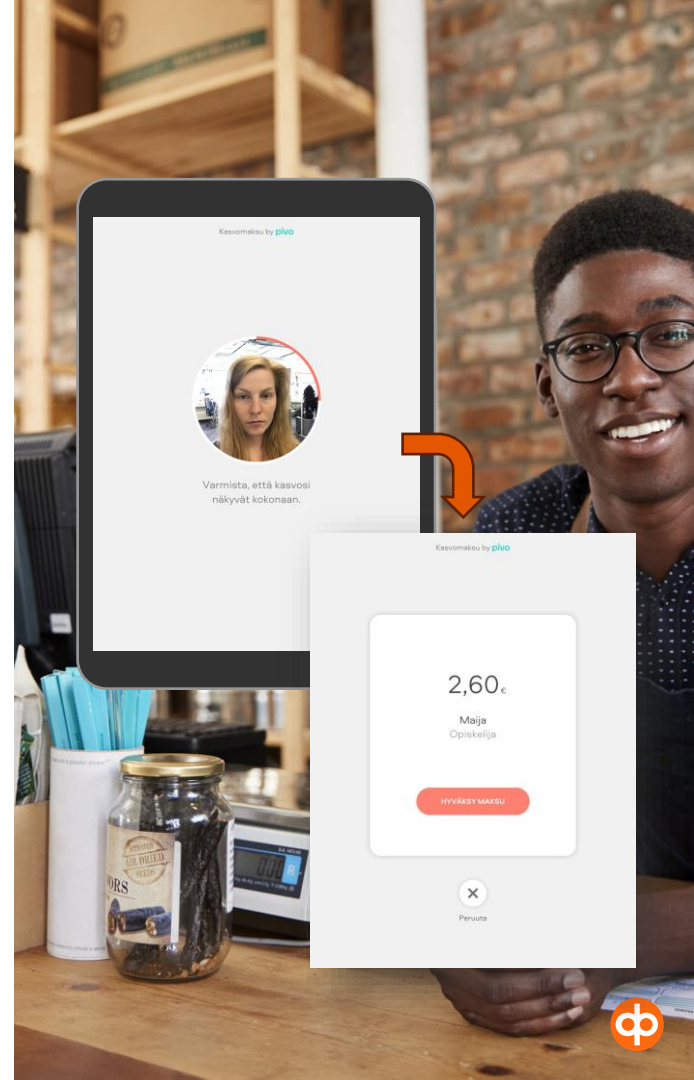
- Value capture based AI roadmap
- AI tribe, AI Ambassadors



Kasvomaksu by Pivo

Using biometric authentication and facial recognition techniques to enable cardless payments

- › An early pilot on using face as a way to authenticate and pay
 - › Pre-registration
 - › Select payment method
 - › Wait for face recognition
 - › Accept payment
- › Was in pilot use internally during 2019-2020
- › Discontinued due to GDPR related privacy concerns

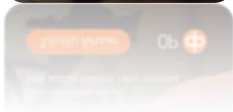
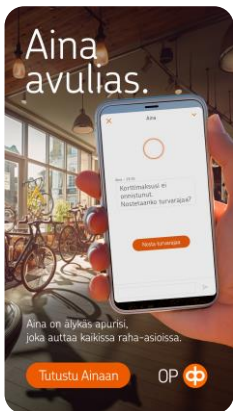


OP Aina

*Early-mover in taking
Chatbots into use in
providing financial services*

Future:
Virtual
Assistant

Personal coach,
communication
using natural
language



© OP Pohjola / OP-Public

- › Chatbot launched in 2019
 - › Dialog engine, based on Watson and BERT 1st gen
 - › Tuned by “AI Whisperers”
- › Fast answers to customer questions
 - › Answers over 12 000 questions (2024)
- › 2nd phase: Digital assistant
 - › Ability to **do** things for the customer
 - › 100+ different use cases (2024)



Opotti - 10.34

Tarkista **omista korteista**, että kortin turvarajat ovat riittävän suuret. Huomioi myös vuorokauden muut ostot ja nostot.

Ovatko turvarajat riittävät?

Kyllä, turvarajat ovat riittävät

Ei, turvarajat ovat liian pienet

Korttisi 4901 65** **** 2715 turvaraja maksuille verkossa ja sovelluksissa on 50 €/vrk.

Jotta maksusi onnistuu, suosittelen nostamaan turvarajan 500 euroon.

Valitse uusi turvaraja.

500



Muu summa

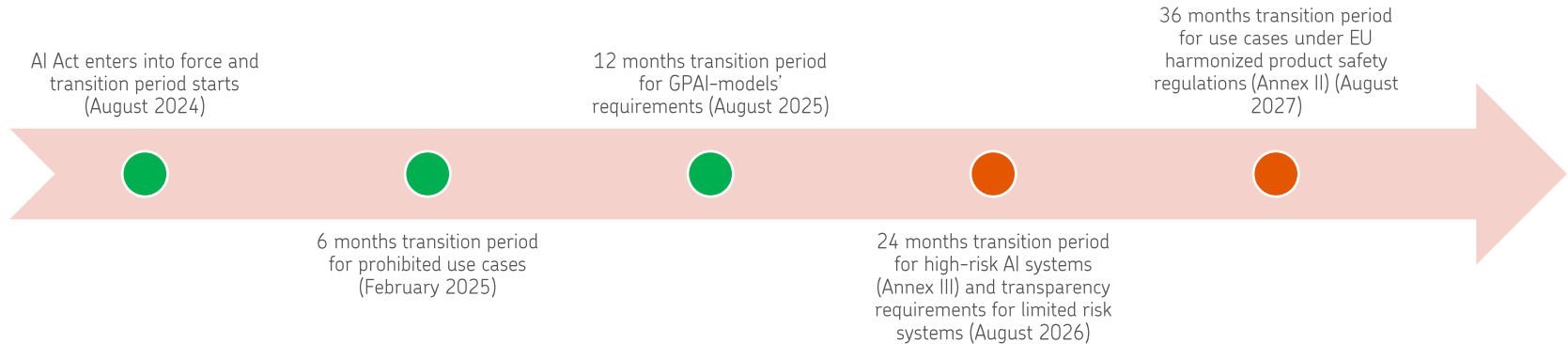


Peruuta



AI Act timeline vs OP Pohjola activities

- › 3 / 2018 OP publishes ethical principles on using AI
- › 5 / 2018 GDPR comes into effect
- › 2020-2022 AIGA project in Turku University
- › 4 / 2021 Initial proposal on AI Act
- › 1 / 2023 First AI transparency report from OP
- › 2 / 2024 Regulatory change program wrt AI Act started at OP
- › 3 / 2024 AI Act approved in EU parliament
- › 4 / 2024 Responsible AI policy renewal at OP
- › 8 / 2024 AI Act comes into effect
- › 9 / 2024 Initial version of AI inventory in place at OP



Lessons learned

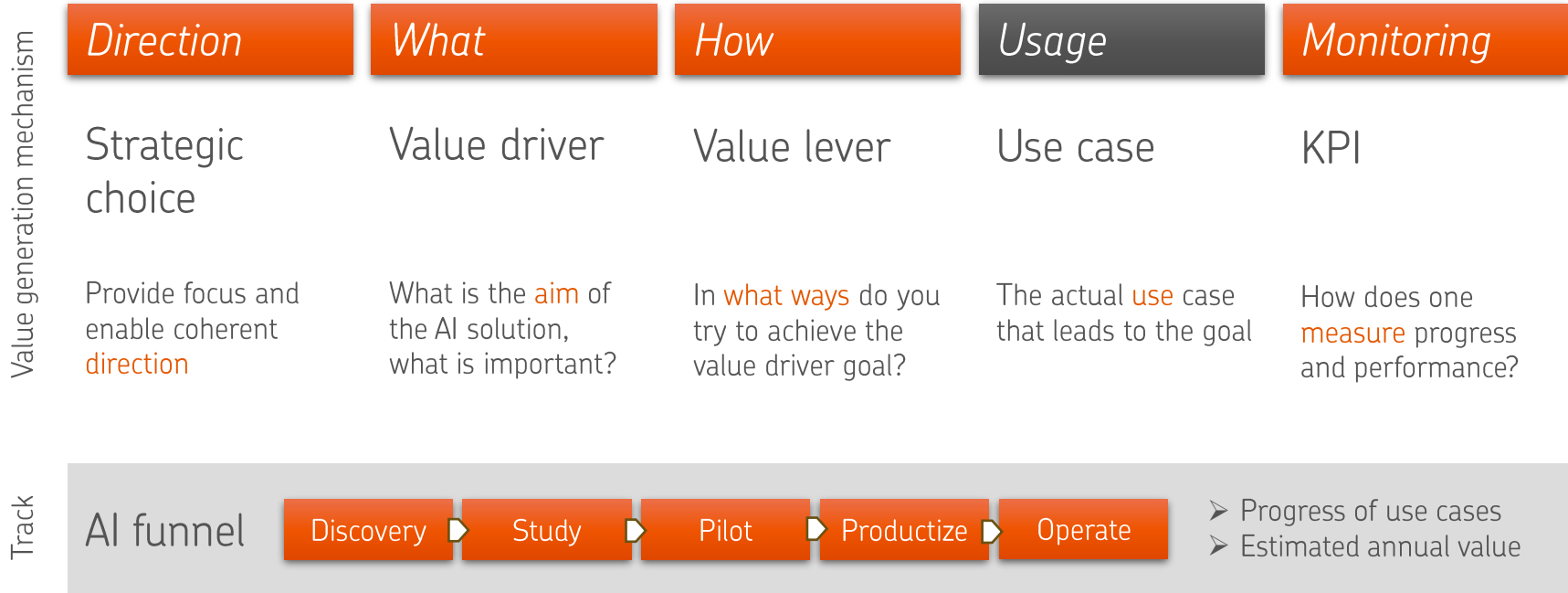
- 1 › Data protection is a key issue that needs consideration right from the beginning
- 2 › Moving early is costly – having to redo and redesign – but also gives early mover advantage
- 3 › The most successful solutions remain adaptive and rebuild their vision continuously
- 4 › While “citizen” development brings scalability, your should aim for simplicity, clarity and enforced common frameworks

Current challenges

*Choosing our path, and how to
make the journey*



Issue #1: How does AI create value?



Issue #2: Regulation & governance

OP Pohjola is a pioneer in the responsible use of artificial intelligence

Responsible AI policy: publication 2018, update 2024

Participation in the AI Governance and Auditing programme of the University of Turku (2020-22)

Participation in national cooperation on responsible artificial intelligence, e.g. AI Finland (2024-)

Implementation of the Artificial Intelligence Regulation at OP Pohjola

The regulatory change project was launched in January 2024

Your own interpretation of the regulation and its implementation, including data protection, risk management, compliance and AI experts

Currently ongoing

- Governance model for AI
- Guidance for high-risk AI systems
- Sustainability goals for AI

Regulatory change project
15.1.2024 ✓

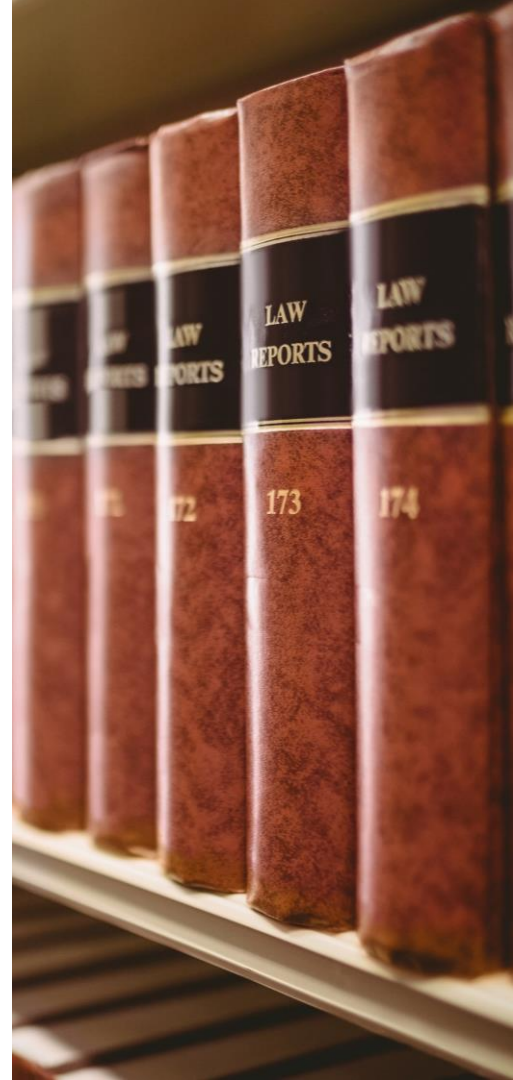
AI Act into force
2.8.2024 ✓

Prohibited use cases
2.2.2025 ✓

GPAI requirements
2.8.2025 ✓

High risk use cases
2.8.2026

Fully in force
2.8.2027



Issue #3: Explosion of usage

Technology

- › Deluge of new models, new features, new functions
- › Soon all tools will have "AI inside"

Users

- › Over $2/3$ of OP Pohjola personnel are using AI on regular basis
- › Monitoring usage?

Use cases

- › Overwhelming number of use cases (to be reviewed)
- › Assess everything, or instruct?

Agents

- › From automation to autonomous agents
- › Human-over-the-loop?



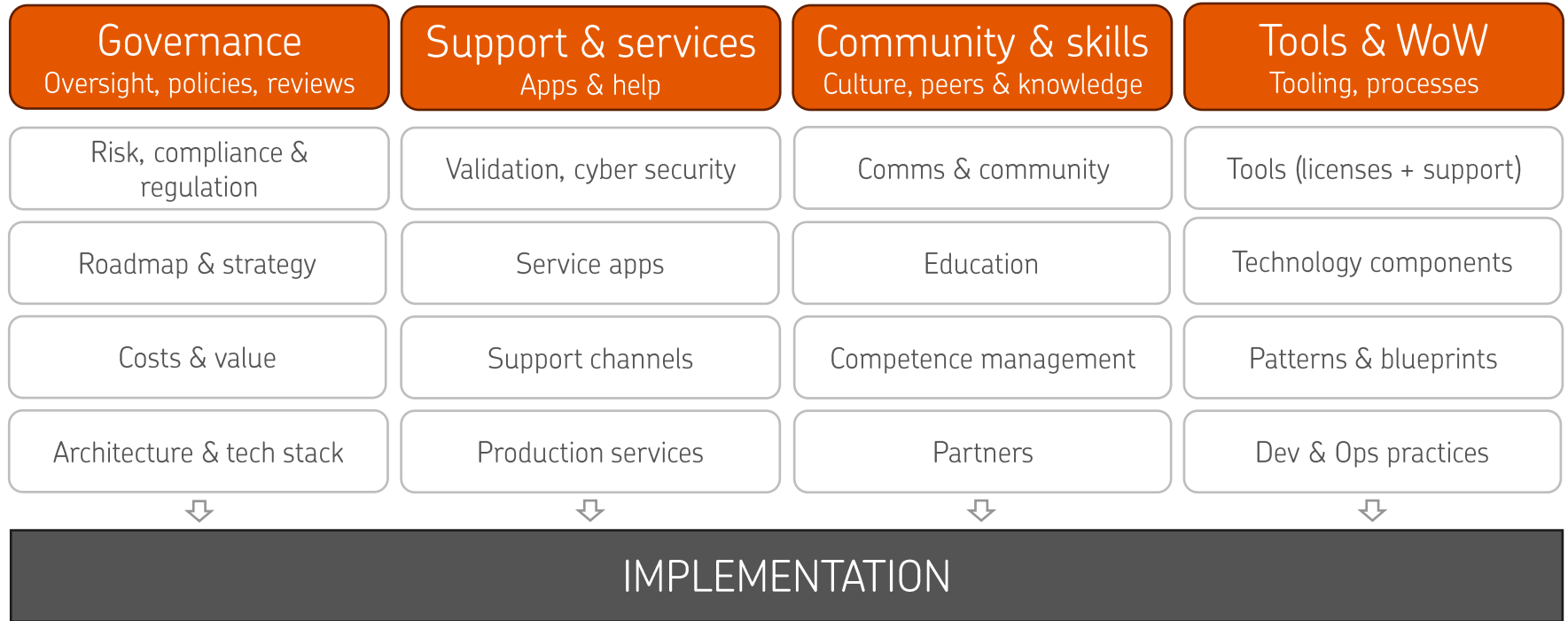
OP POHJOLA

Managing the ride

What does regulation give us?



Governance model for AI



Regulation – what did we learn from GDPR?



The bad

- › More management
- › More processes
- › More training
- › More documentation
- › More bureaucracy

The good

- It forces us to follow many **analytics best practices**
- › use case driven
 - › emphasis on monitoring quality of data
 - › cybersecurity practices

The ugly

- › Lack of legal practice
- › Unclear interpretation of legal text
- › **The danger is over-conservative interpretation**

Key to scalability: federated authority to avoid bottlenecks, creation of 'round tables' for escalation



What I like about the AI Act?

High risk use case requirements

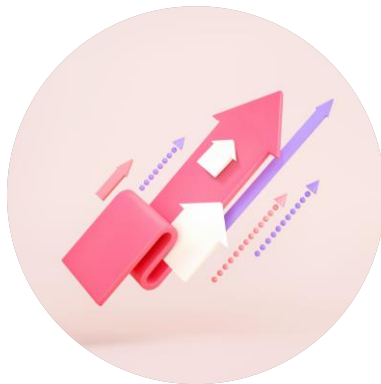
AI Act enforces high-risk AI systems to follow the **best practices of product management**

- › Careful documentation of data
- › Careful testing practices
- › Emphasis on AI model robustness
- › Minimization of health and safety risks

Summary



Being a conservative company working in a conservative sector does not mean you cannot be an **early mover**



Controlling the change needs new methods and ways of working – but the **fundamentals** are the same



Regulation has good things to offer – when we are aligned and listen carefully & thoughtfully

The background of the slide is a photograph of a crowd of people at night. The scene is illuminated with purple and blue light. Several people are visible, mostly from the chest up, with their arms raised. In the center, two people's hands are joined to form a heart shape. Other people are holding up balloons of various colors (purple, blue, yellow, orange). The overall atmosphere is celebratory and festive.

Thank you!

Juha Vesanto
juha.vesanto@op.fi