

Cognitive Sovereignty

Human authorship in AI-assisted thinking

1 What generative AI adds

What cognitive work AI can contribute, and what shapes how that work becomes integrated into thinking

A. Direct contributions to thinking


Generates ideas and explanations


Helps with problem solving


Retrieves and synthesizes knowledge


Analyzes, compares, and synthesizes


Suggests options and next steps

B. Properties that shape how AI affects thinking


Adapts to the user
Tailors its responses to questions, context, and preferences


Produces fluent outputs
Presents ideas in coherent, persuasive, easy-to-follow language


Underlying process is hard to inspect
The answer is visible, but not fully how the system produced it


Easy to use repeatedly
Can be called on again and again throughout the same thinking process


Fast and always available
Can provide cognitive support almost immediately, whenever needed

2 Allocation of cognitive labor *Different ways cognitive work can be allocated*

01



Retrieval

AI supplies relevant information; the person determines how it is used

02



Scaffolding

AI helps structure, explain, question, or guide work

03



Co-generation

Human and AI jointly develop ideas, reasoning, or content

04



Reasoning delegation

AI performs substantial analysis, synthesis, comparison, or inference

05



Judgment delegation

AI also proposes or makes the resulting recommendation or judgment

A single interaction may move among these different allocations.

3 Cognitive sovereignty: authorship over my thinking

Am I still the author of the reasoning, and in control of AI's role in it?



Cognitive source attribution

Do I know where it came from?

Can I distinguish what came from me, what came from the AI, and what we produced together?



Reasoning connection

Do I understand how it was produced?

Am I sufficiently connected to the reasoning to explain it, examine it, and use it?



Cognitive delegation control

Do I control what I hand over?

Can I decide what I hand over to AI, and can I change or reclaim that cognitive work when needed?

4 Why cognitive sovereignty matters *Why my role matters*



My understanding and capability

What can I actually understand and do?

- Reconstruct reasoning
- Apply it elsewhere
- Detect errors
- Judge my own understanding
- Intervene when needed



What others can infer

What can others reasonably conclude about me from my work?

- Understanding
- Expertise
- Judgment
- Responsibility
- Authority



What may change over time

What might I retain, develop, or lose over time?

- Learning
- Retained ability
- Expertise
- Reliance patterns
- Capacity to intervene

 Cognitive sovereignty: governing the allocation of cognitive work to preserve meaningful human authorship