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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.6.2026)

Data centres are vital infrastructures for the competitiveness of the EU, as they power AI and cloud computing services. New technologies for data centres can minimise their environmental impacts and generate benefits for the regions hosting them.

The proposed Cloud and AI Development Act articulates¹ a consolidated vision for cutting-edge cloud and AI technologies, including sustainable data centre technologies, and harmonises the conditions for investment in data centres across the EU, with a focus on highly sustainable and innovative data centres and data centres supporting essential public sector functions.

The Commission is working on a Data Centre Energy Efficiency Package that will build on the solutions provided for in the Energy Efficiency Directive² by introducing a rating scheme³ for the energy efficiency of data centres. The Commission will also launch a public consultation for possible minimum performance standards for data centres.

The Cloud and AI Development Act also leverages several instruments. It supports the deployment of sustainable data centres meeting high standards of energy and water efficiency, as well as contributing to grid stability, but it does not substitute national, regional or local decisions when it comes to permitting procedures.

It supports national and regional authorities in conditioning project approvals, on clear local benefits, and enables the Commission and local authorities to detect and correct imbalances early through enhanced monitoring.

Finally, the Cloud and AI Development Act also includes measures to ensure equitable and non-discriminatory access to the essential resources underpinning data centre deployment across Europe, to avoid hoarding practices by some operators.

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/proposal-cloud-and-ai-development-act-cada>.

² https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-targets-directive-and-rules/energy-efficiency-directive/energy-performance-data-centres_en#next-steps.

³ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/rating-scheme-data-centres-eu-commission-launches-call-feedback-2026-03-27_en.