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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(4.9.2026)

The Commission agrees on the need for substantial investment in critical digital technologies for the EU's competitiveness.

A clear-eyed assessment of the EU's reliance on foreign software, products, AI models and digital infrastructure is the starting point of the recent Communication on Tech Sovereignty Package¹, designed to boost the EU's capacity to develop and deploy such technologies and curb strategic dependencies that affect competitiveness.

The Strategic Roadmap for Digitalisation and AI in the Energy Sector² advocates for a digitalised, interconnected energy system increasing electrification and clean energy integration to face high energy prices. The package also calls for the urgent mobilisation of private risk capital to address the gap in high-risk financing for EU deep-tech firms and large-scale infrastructure, against investment need estimated more broadly at up to EUR 450 billion by 2036, and the injection of considerable resources into strategic technologies by other economies. In parallel, the Commission is looking to increase AI uptake in EU strategic sectors through the AI Continent Action Plan³ and the Apply AI Strategy⁴.

It is also undertaking a regulatory 'deep cleaning' as part of the Digital Simplification Package⁵. The AI Omnibus clarifies the application timelines of the AI Act⁶, and the proposal for a Digital Omnibus aims to unlock data and provide legal certainty for AI training. To gauge the cumulative impact of digital rules, the 2027 Digital Fitness Check⁷ will assess whether governance delivers a predictable, harmonised rulebook.

¹ COM(2026) 503.

² COM(2026) 501.

³ COM(2025) 165.

⁴ COM(2025) 723.

⁵ COM(2025) 837.

⁶ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act).

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/15554-Digital-fitness-check-testing-the-cumulative-impact-of-the-EUs-digital-rules_en.