

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002625/26
to the Commission
Erik Kaliňák (NI)
(25 June 2026)

Subject: The EU's AI dream could turn into a nightmare — without energy, the US and China will overtake us and we'll end up paying more for electricity!

Developing AI is one of the EU's top priorities. At the same time, the number of data centres is growing, and significant amounts of electricity and new investments in energy grids are required to keep them running. In some Member States, grid operators are already warning of increasing problems with connecting new capacity.

1. Does the Commission believe that Europe currently has sufficient energy and modern grids at its disposal to fulfil its AI ambitions, and that the development of AI will not drive up electricity prices for industry and households?
2. Does the Commission see a real risk that delays in the development of energy infrastructure will hinder the European AI sector and further increase the Union's dependence on technologies and services from third countries?
3. What specific measures does the Commission intend to take to ensure that data centres do not consume energy while depriving the rest of European industry and households of access to energy at competitive prices?

Submitted: 25.6.2026

Answer given by Mr Jørgensen on behalf of the European Commission
(27 August 2026)

The Commission acknowledges that data centres demand is expected to significantly grow in line with the ambition to triple their computing capacity in the next five to seven years to ensure EU technological sovereignty ⁽¹⁾.

The Cloud and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Development Act ⁽²⁾ proposed measures to accelerate deployment of sustainable cloud and data centre infrastructure.

To contribute to sustainable data centres grid integration, the European Grids package ⁽³⁾ proposed cross-sectorial network planning with involvement of stakeholders, accelerated permit-granting procedures and priority emphasis on grid efficiency in planning.

Under the Strategic Roadmap for Digitalisation and AI in the Energy Sector ⁽⁴⁾, as well as under AI Factories and the AI Gigafactories initiative ⁽⁵⁾, the Commission is working with energy and digital industries to develop a model tripartite agreement for the sustainable integration of data centres ⁽⁶⁾.

The proposal to future-proof electricity bills ⁽⁷⁾ aims at bringing down electricity costs by designing network charges that incentivise a flexible, system-friendly use of the grid and integration of generation and loads, as well as by ensuring smart and efficient electricity grids and efficient network access.

⁽¹⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-tech-sovereignty>.

⁽²⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/proposal-cloud-and-ai-development-act-cada>.

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2945.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52026DC0501>.

⁽⁵⁾ Environmental sustainability is embedded directly into the core of the AI Factories and the AI Gigafactories initiative. During the AI Gigafactories selection process, all proposals will be rigorously evaluated against strict sustainability criteria. This includes assessing a facility's overall energy and water efficiency, its commitment to utilizing renewable energy sources, and its ability to integrate into the local energy system sustainably.

For example, the LUMI EuroHPC supercomputer gets all of its electricity from 100% renewable hydroelectric power. In addition, the waste heat produced by LUMI will be utilised in the district heating network of Kajaani (the town where Lumi is located), which means that its overall carbon footprint is negative. The waste heat produced by LUMI will provide 20% of Kajaani's annual demand for district heat. Furthermore, according to the latest top 500 list, which was published ISC High Performance 2026 in Hamburg, the EuroHPC supercomputer JUPITER at Forschungszentrum Jülich remains one of the world's most powerful supercomputers, ranking fifth worldwide while it ranks first as the most energy-efficient computer in the exascale class. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/ai-factories>; https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/competitiveness-coordination-tool-projects/ai-gigafactories_en.

⁽⁶⁾ The model will lay down actions on improved information for grid planning, and data centre siting, ensure addressing of speculative grid connection requests of data centres, use of power purchase agreements by data centre operators, deliver additional generation of clean energy, deliver solutions for data centre flexibility and support the use of waste heat. The model can be subsequently adapted and piloted in Member States and regions.

⁽⁷⁾ COM(2026) 600 final.

The Commission is also working on a Data Centre Energy Efficiency Package ⁽⁸⁾ to introduce a rating scheme ⁽⁹⁾ for the energy efficiency of data centres. The Commission will also launch a public consultation for possible minimum performance standards for data centres.

⁽⁸⁾ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-targets-directive-and-rules/energy-efficiency-directive/energy-performance-data-centres_en#next-steps.

⁽⁹⁾ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/news/rating-scheme-data-centres-eu-commission-launches-call-feedback-2026-03-27_en.