

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001974/24
to the Commission
Eero Heinäluoma (S&D)
(7 October 2024)**

Subject: Artificial intelligence (AI) and energy consumption

Recent media articles have highlighted the significant energy consumption and increasing CO₂ emissions of AI development activities, mainly undertaken by big tech companies. At the same time, some of these companies fail to disclose in a very transparent way the exact sustainability impact of their AI development work. Indeed, in its recent sustainability report, Google makes it clear that it will not make a specific AI disclosure, while they did do so two years ago.

According to Article 95(2)(b) of the AI Act ⁽¹⁾, the EU believes that companies will voluntarily disclose the environmental sustainability impact of their AI activities. Google's recent sustainability report clearly indicates that such a voluntary disclosure requirement falls rather short. Given the EU's climate ambitions and established targets, it is hard to see how these can be reconciled with the corporate silence around CO₂ emissions and the energy consumption of AI development activities.

1. Does the Commission consider the lack of transparency from some tech companies around the sustainability impact of AI development work acceptable?
2. If not, how does the Commission plan to address this? Is it willing to strengthen sustainability disclosure requirements around AI activities, and, as in the MiCA Regulation ⁽²⁾, push to make this disclosure requirement mandatory?

Submitted: 7.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager on behalf of the European Commission
(13 November 2024)**

The Commission is aware of the challenges created by the development of artificial intelligence (AI) regarding the consumption of energy and for CO₂ emissions. That is why Article 95 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 ⁽¹⁾ (the AI Act) includes environmental sustainability among the issues that a voluntary code of conduct could address. It should be noted that these voluntary codes of conduct are not limited to AI applications presenting particularly elevated risk profiles but include any kind of AI.

Moreover, according to Article 53(1)a, read in conjunction with Annex XI Section 1(2)e, of the AI Act, providers of general-purpose AI models which are trained on large data amounts and therefore prone to high energy consumption are required to disclose the energy consumption of their models. This obligation will be further specified through the Code of Practice, for which the process has been kicked off with a first meeting on 30 September 2024.

In parallel, the Commission is launching a study, proposed by the European Parliament, to measure and foster energy efficient and low emission AI in the EU. The first results of this study can be expected in 2026.

Since the AI Act has only just entered into force and does not yet fully apply, it is too early to draw any conclusions as to the effectiveness of its provisions. However, by two years after the date of application of the AI Act, the Commission is requested to submit a report on the review of the progress on the development of standardisation deliverables on energy efficient development of general-purpose models, and four years after the entry into force the Commission shall evaluate the impact and effectiveness of voluntary codes of conduct, including as regards environmental sustainability.

¹ OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

² OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 40, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1114/oj>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>