Invest on supercomputers to protect our data economies

Brussels, 26-05-2021

"This public-private partnership will give the European Union the means to compete on an equal footing with our global partners. It aims to equip our industry with the highest performing machines available on the planet," said MEP Maria da Graça Carvalho, the EPP Group spokeswoman on supercomputers.

Today, the European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE), in the European Parliament, will vote on a public-private partnership that aims to boost the European Union's capabilities to accelerate the digital transformation High Performance Computing (EuroHPC). This partnership is valued at 8 billion euros.

"All of these efforts shall also be aligned with the goals of the EU digital and green transitions and the machines must use the most advanced technologies for energy-efficiency and low energy consumption," added da Graça Carvalho.

This public-private partnership stems from the EU's research program, Horizon Europe. It aims to equip the EU better on data processing and to reinforce the research and innovation aspect of supercomputing technologies. The partnership will also help foster the necessary skills to access the infrastructure and give birth to a world-class ecosystem in Europe.

"The success of this initiative depends, to a great extent, on the involvement, access and awareness that it manages to generate among the interested parties," says the MEP. "This means that we must ensure that all users, including SMEs and startups, have access to the infrastructure and services, as well as to scientific and commercial data repositories."

To achieve this, MEPs made sure that "openness, transparency and simplification" of procedures were the main guiding principles in this partnership. In the report, there are also synergies and complementarities with all relevant programs and funds, namely; regional funds, the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism, InvestEU and European Investment Bank initiatives , as well as all other funding programmes under Horizon Europe.

Maria da Graça Carvalho's report emphasizes the importance of creating a "true ecosystem of excellence" in digital, encompassing research and innovation activities, development and manufacture of low consumption hardware systems, such as microprocessors and quantum computing, and a strong investment in skills and knowledge, especially with regard to the gender perspective, considering the current gaps, and in education and public awareness.

Finally, the report lays out the necessary steps so that the European Union can take advantage of the full potential of this infrastructure. The report is divided into six main lines of action: Improved Access, Openness, Synergies, Alignment with EU priorities, Industrial Leadership and Knowledge and Awareness.

The vote on this report is expected to be announced either this afternoon or on Thursday morning.