

# **EuroHPC initiative for start-ups to boost European leadership in trustworthy Artificial Intelligence**

2024/0016(CNS) - 19/06/2024 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** to amend Regulation (EU) 2021/1173 as regards a European High Performance Computing (EuroHPC) initiative for start-ups to boost European leadership in trustworthy Artificial Intelligence.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Council Regulation (EU) 2024/1732 amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1173 as regards a EuroHPC initiative for start-ups in order to boost European leadership in trustworthy artificial intelligence.

**BACKGROUND:** Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on harmonised rules on artificial intelligence (the ‘AI Act’) aims to improve the functioning of the internal market by laying down a uniform legal framework in particular for the development, marketing and use of artificial intelligence (‘AI’) in conformity with Union values.

Since 2021, when Council Regulation (EU) 2021/1173 was adopted, the field of AI has seen enormous technical progress and become a highly strategic and contested domain globally. The Union is at the forefront of efforts to support responsible research and innovation in trustworthy and ethical AI, while setting guardrails and developing effective governance.

On 13 September 2023, as part of a comprehensive approach to support responsible research and innovation in AI, the Commission announced a new strategic initiative to make the Union’s high-performance computing capacity available to innovative European startups in trustworthy AI in order to train their models. That initiative complements work on setting guardrails for AI through the AI Act, establishing governance structures and supporting innovation through the Coordinated Plan on Artificial Intelligence.

Given that the Union’s most powerful world-class supercomputing capacity is located in the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking’s facilities, it is those facilities that should be made available in order for the Union’s initiative to become a reality. It is accordingly necessary to add a seventh objective to the existing six objectives of the Joint Undertaking, concerning the contribution made by its supercomputers to the new AI initiative of the Union.

**CONTENT:** the amendment to Council Regulation (EU) 2021/1173 will enable the Joint Undertaking to perform activities in the domains of acquiring and operating AI-dedicated supercomputers or partitions of supercomputers to enable fast machine learning and training of large AI foundation models. The changes would enable the Joint Undertaking to offer tailored computing power and services to nurture large-scale AI training and development and uptake in the Union, which is not feasible under the current regulation.

## ***Acquisition and ownership of AI-optimised supercomputers***

The Joint Undertaking will acquire AI-optimised supercomputers and shall own them.

## ***Financial contribution***

Hosting entities can receive a Union financial contribution that covers up to 50% of the acquisition costs of AI-super-computers and up to 50% of their operating costs (including AI-oriented super-computing service costs). The ownership of the AI-optimised supercomputers can be transferred to the hosting entities five years after the machine has passed an acceptance test.

### ***Use of EuroHPC supercomputers***

The regulation states that the AI-optimised supercomputers and EuroHPC supercomputers upgraded for AI capabilities will be used primarily for the development, testing, evaluation and validation of large scale, general purpose AI training models and emerging AI applications, as well as for the further development of AI solutions in the Union requiring High Performance Computing and the execution of large-scale AI algorithms for the resolution of science problems.

### ***One-stop shop***

For the AI-optimised supercomputers, the hosting entity will create a one-stop shop for users, including startups, small and medium-sized enterprises and scientific users, to facilitate access to its support services. The EuroHPC Governing Board will define special access conditions for the AI-super-computers, taking into account the specific needs of the AI startup ecosystem and the research and innovation ecosystem.

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