

Europacable Position Paper: Enhancing Data Centre Interconnects is crucial for Europe's Digital Sovereignty

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Europacable, the voice of Europe's cable system manufacturers, urges EU policymakers to recognise and strengthen Data Centre Interconnectivity (DCI) as a strategic pillar of Europe's digital, AI, and cloud ambitions. Only by doing so, will Europe achieve its digital sovereignty. As Europe faces unprecedented growth in data demand, AI computing, and cloud services, DCI must be treated as critical infrastructure.

Europacable calls on the EU co-legislators to:

1. Recognise Data Centre Interconnections as Strategic Critical Infrastructure and to boost investments for “Made in Europe for Europe” components.

Europe's AI sovereignty necessitates targeted investments in DCI that should be prioritised and recognised as “strategic critical infrastructure”. At the same time, the EU shall reduce dependencies on non-trusted non-EU suppliers and promote a “Buy European clause” for European DCI components in public procurement when building its future DCI networks.

- ⇒ **Define DCI as “Strategic Critical Digital Infrastructure” in the Cloud and AI Development Act and prioritise DCI for public funding**
- ⇒ **Establish a “Buy European” preference for cables as DCI components**

2. Build Sustainable and Resilient High-Density Fiber Infrastructure for Low-Latency DCI.

High-quality fibre optic networks are the most energy-efficient solution to support scalability while contributing to Europe's climate goals. Responding to current geopolitical challenges, DCI needs to be highly resilient to safeguards Europe's data exchanges. EU's policymakers must facilitate a massive scaling of high density, low latency fibre optic network capacity between and into data centres.

- ⇒ **Sustainability and resilience requirements need to be an intrinsic part of all legislatives and regulatory frameworks related to DCI buildout**
- ⇒ **Only high-density, low-latency, high-quality DCI will build future-proof networks**

3. Streamline Permitting and promote Skills to Accelerate DCI Deployment.

As mentioned in the Gigabit Infrastructure Act, lengthy permitting processes remain a key bottleneck for network deployment. Europacable recommends that the Cloud and AI Development Act supports DCI through permit streamlining and focus on skills training to match Europe's future needs.

- ⇒ **Create regulatory support for physical infrastructure deployment through streamlined permitting processes and facilitate skills development**

Europacable remains at the disposal of EU institutions to further elaborate these proposals. We urge that the upcoming legislative proposals include these recommendations to ensure Europe's data centres, and their high-speed fibre interconnections, form a resilient, competitive, and sustainable network for Europe.