



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Florin IORDACHE
President of the
Camera Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO – 050563 BUCHAREST*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "European Cloud Initiative – Building a competitive data and knowledge economy in Europe" {COM(2016) 178 final}.

The European Cloud Initiative (ECI) aims to develop a trusted, open environment for the scientific community for storing, sharing and re-using scientific data and results: the European Open Science Cloud. It also aims to deploy the underpinning supercomputing capacity, the fast connectivity and the high-capacity cloud solutions necessary through a European Data Infrastructure.

The ECI will, effectively, federate existing infrastructures at the European level and support and upgrade them through a robust European Data Infrastructure. Open to all researchers and research centres, the ECI will address major inhibitors to Europe's ability to exploit the wealth of data it produces and it will provide world-class data infrastructures and cloud-based services to boost research and the digital economy, as described in the Digital Single Market Strategy¹.

The Commission is pleased that the Camera Deputaților welcomes and supports its Communication on the ECI. The Communication kick-starts the process of addressing a number of issues that Camera Deputaților identifies, for instance access to and further re-use of data by researchers and businesses alike, Europe's performance in supercomputing, and the need to develop digital skills that will enable young researchers and citizens to actively participate in and shape the European knowledge-based economy.

¹ COM(2015) 192 final.

The Commission calls on Member States and on industrial, public sector and research stakeholders to coordinate their efforts to reduce fragmentation of digital infrastructures and to build the critical mass to place Europe in a world-leading position. In that context, Luxembourg, France, Italy and Spain have launched activities to set-up an “Important Project of Common European Interest” (IPCEI) on High Performance Computing (HPC) and Big Data Enabled Applications.² This initiative of the Member States promises to reduce fragmentation and to align strategies and investments.³ The Commission also welcomes the suggestion of the Camera Deputaţilor regarding energy efficiency. Towards this end, the Commission has been funding several topics under the Horizon 2020 Work Programme.⁴

The Commission fully supports Romania's efforts to improve its Digital Economy and meet its targets in the context of the Digital Single Market, an effort bearing fruits, as is clear from the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).⁵ In addition, the Commission welcomes Romania's participation as an observer in the PRACE (Partnership for Advanced Computing in Europe Research Infrastructure) Council, through ARCAS, the Romanian Association for the Promotion of Advanced Computational Methods in Scientific Research.

The Commission is committed to working together with the Member States in view of succeeding in making the European Cloud Initiative Communication a reality. To this end, the contribution of Member States and of Romania in particular, to the dialogue about the implementation of this Communication is critical.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaţilor and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Günther Oettinger
Member of the Commission*

² http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/oettinger/blog/luxembourg-launches-supercomputing-project_en

³ <http://www.eu2015lu.eu/en/actualites/articles-actualite/2015/11/17-conf-data-forum/index.html>

⁴ Indicatively, topics 'Bringing to market more energy efficient and integrated data centres' or 'Behavioural change toward energy efficiency through ICT' within the 'Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy' Work Programme of the H2020 pillar 'Societal Challenges'.

⁵ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>