

Rating scheme for data centres

Call for feedback

Brussels, April 2026

In short: The rating scheme for data centres should include targeted indicators and labels reflecting on-site electricity storage and storage duration. This change is essential to better capture data centres' ability to contribute to the grid and system resilience, and to support any future policy measure in that sense.

Current policy choices will help determine whether data centres become a net benefit to the European electricity system, not only through their own efficiency performance, but also through the way they interact with the grid and their resilience.

The International Energy Agency estimates that EU data centres will become **one of Europe's largest electricity consumers**, passing from 70 TWh in 2024 to 115 TWh in 2030, mostly driven by AI. In addition, data centres are **already competing with other assets in grid connection queues**, including renewable energy generators and energy storage projects aimed at reducing grid congestion and providing grid flexibility. At the same time, the Commission's Joint Research Centre **expects EU flexibility requirements to rise** from 11% of electricity demand in 2021 to 24% in 2030 as renewable integration deepens.

In that context, the Union rating scheme should also show whether the data centre can **help support a cleaner, more flexible and more resilient electricity system**. However, the current draft only sets a single grid-related label, a yes/no indication of electrical grid functions, that is useful but insufficient to provide an appropriate picture of the data centres' actual ability to contribute to system resilience.

For that reason, we propose adding **two simple and implementable storage-related indicators** to the reporting scheme, together with the **corresponding values on the electronic label**. These additions would strengthen the common Union rating scheme by making visible two characteristics that are directly relevant to clean flexibility, resilience, and the broader system value of data centres.

These amendments are crucial to provide indicators **necessary for any future policy measures aimed at supporting sustainable data centres'** contribution to grid resilience.

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1. Requested changes

- add one KPI on usable stored electrical energy available for discharge from on-site energy storage;
- add one KPI on storage duration, expressed in hours;
- add the corresponding two informational items on the electronic label;
- strengthen the review clause so future revisions explicitly examine clean flexibility, the use of on-site energy storage and storage duration.

2. Why are these changes needed

- They support this package's broader sustainability objective by ensuring that the scheme captures not only how efficiently a data centre uses energy and water internally, but also whether it is equipped to contribute to a cleaner and more resilient electricity system.
- They make the rating scheme more relevant to grid-friendly operation by showing whether a site has on-site storage and the duration for which that storage can supply electricity.
- They create a more useful basis for future policy development, because a scheme that does not capture storage presence and duration cannot easily support later measures aimed at promoting clean flexibility and resilience in data centres.
- They are proportionate and implementable, because they add two targeted indicators and corresponding label values that fit the structure of the current draft while improving its ability to reflect clean flexibility, resilience and the wider system value of data centres.

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3. Proposed amendments

Amendment	Location	Proposed wording	Justification
Indicator reflecting energy storage (New indicator)	Annex III of the draft, under point (2)(a) amending Annex II, point 1 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1364. Insert after point (g).	(ga) Usable energy available for discharge from on-site energy storage (in kWh) means the total usable electrical energy available for discharge from on-site energy storage.	Adds a simple indicator showing whether a data centre has meaningful on-site electricity storage, relevant to clean flexibility, resilience and wider system value.
Indicator reflecting energy storage duration (New indicator)	Annex III of the draft, under point (2)(a) amending Annex II, point 1 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1364. Insert after new point (ga).	(gb) Output duration of on-site energy storage (in hours) means the duration for which the on-site energy storage can continuously supply electricity at rated discharge power, calculated by dividing the usable energy available for discharge from on-site energy storage by the rated discharge power of that storage. Where several on-site energy storage assets are installed, the output duration shall be calculated using the sum of the usable energy available for discharge and the sum of the rated discharge power of those assets.	Ensures the scheme captures not only the presence of storage, but also the duration for which that storage can supply electricity.
Label item reflecting energy storage (New label)	Annex II, point 2 of the draft. Insert after point (XV) and renumber the current point (XVI) accordingly.	(XVa) the usable energy available for discharge from on-site energy storage (value from Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1364, Annex II, point 1(ga));	Ensures the storage indicator is visible in the public-facing Union rating scheme, not only in backend reporting.
Label item reflecting energy storage duration (New label)	Annex II, point 2 of the draft. Insert after new point (XVa).	(XVb) the output duration of on-site energy storage (value from Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1364, Annex II, point 1(gb)).	Makes visible a characteristic directly relevant to clean flexibility, resilience and wider interaction with the electricity system.
Review clause	Amendment to Article 6(a) of the draft Delegated Regulation.	“(a) address additional sustainability, climate and environmental aspects, including clean flexibility, the use of on-site energy storage and storage duration;”	Ensures future revisions of the scheme will consider storage-related aspects as reporting practice and technology evolve.

Rationale

Taken together, these amendments would add two storage-related KPIs to the reporting scheme and the corresponding values to the electronic label, thereby enabling the common Union rating scheme both to capture and to display the presence of on-site electricity storage and its duration. These characteristics reflect data centres’ resilience, their ability to contribute to clean flexibility and grid-supportive operation, and they provide a more complete assessment of sustainability than facility-efficiency metrics alone.

Accordingly, the implementation of these changes is also crucial to inform policymakers’ decisions and to support future data-driven measures aimed at addressing data centres’ energy resilience and contribution to the grid.

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4. FBE perspective: Data centres cannot be sustainable without long-duration energy storage

The role of energy storage and long-duration solutions must not be overlooked in the results of this consultation, as they play a primary role in the sustainability of data centres. Accordingly, storage-related indicators must be in place for the European Commission to later have the option to take relevant measures on the basis of Article 12(5) of the Energy Efficiency Directive.

Long-duration energy storage matters for data centres

Energy storage is not a peripheral issue for data centres: it goes to the heart of what will determine whether data centre growth is system-friendly or system-straining.

Energy storage, and in particular long-duration energy storage, addresses the wider system challenge created by the growth of large electricity loads in a power system that must simultaneously decarbonise, integrate more renewable generation and remain secure. In that context, the key question is not only how much electricity a data centre consumes, but also whether it can operate in a way that strengthens resilience over longer periods, reduces dependence on fossil backup and supports a more robust interaction with the grid.

Supporting flow batteries in data centres is a strategic measure for Europe

Flow batteries are particularly relevant for long-duration applications in data centres, while aligning with the latest EU efforts towards energy security and independence:

- **Suitable for microgrids and long-term backup:** Energy and power capacity can be scaled separately in flow batteries, making them suitable for backup power, microgrids, and renewable integration.
- **Limited fire risks:** Most commercial flow battery systems also use aqueous non-flammable electrolytes, which are less prone to thermal runaway risks than other storage technologies.
- **An answer to AI data centres' needs:** The relevance of flow batteries becomes even stronger as AI-oriented data centres expand. AI facilities create power swings of tens of megawatts in seconds, placing greater stress on power systems than traditional data centres' loads, and creating a need for sustained support and repeated cycling. Flow battery architecture addresses this challenge with 4 to 48+ hours of duration and unlimited cycles with no storage capacity degradation for the life of the battery.
- **Strategic independence:** Unlike battery technologies whose cell manufacturing is highly concentrated in China, flow batteries can support a more diversified supply base, because they do not depend on a single cell-manufacturing model and can rely on a wider range of chemistries and materials (e.g. vanadium, zinc, iron, bromine, and organic-based systems). Key materials used in flow batteries can be sourced or processed across multiple regions, including in Europe.
- **Strengthening EU industry:** While China accounts for more than 80% of global lithium-ion battery cell manufacturing, Europe retains flow battery manufacturing capacity and a strong supply chain.

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Indicators for data centres will impact their sustainability and key industries

Other global powers are already looking at how large data-centre loads affect the grid and what measures are needed to make them more system-compatible, while also treating data centres as a potential lead market for strengthening domestic production of strategic technologies.

In this context, the European Commission's work on data centres' sustainability should not just be about the efficiency of the sites. It must be about making data centres beneficial to the grid, but also about making them fit into our ambitions to achieve energy security, independence, and the related efforts to retain strategic technology manufacturing in the EU.

Since the establishment of the reporting scheme and the rating scheme is linked to future minimum performance standards for data centres (EED Article 12(5)), the indicators chosen now will shape how those system-relevant characteristics are assessed later.

In conclusion, choices on indicators and future minimum performance standards for data centres will determine whether the EU succeeds or fails at turning data centres into an asset for the grid and for the EU's wider strategic energy objectives. Energy storage and related duration indicators must be considered among them.

Illustrative reference:

- TerraFlow Energy, LDUPS case study for AI data centres: <https://terraflowenergy.com/ldups/>

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