



Europe's Digital Decade: Commission sets the course towards a digitally empowered Europe by 2030

Brussels, 9 March 2021

Today the Commission presents a vision, targets and avenues for a successful digital transformation of Europe by 2030. This is also critical to achieve the transition towards a climate neutral, circular and resilient economy. The EU's ambition is to be digitally sovereign in an open and interconnected world, and to pursue digital policies that empower people and businesses to seize a human centred, sustainable and more prosperous digital future. This includes addressing vulnerabilities and dependencies as well as accelerating investment.

Today's Communication follows [President von der Leyen's call](#) to make the next years Europe's 'Digital Decade'; responds to the [European Council's call](#) for a 'Digital Compass'; and builds on the Commission's [digital strategy](#) of February 2020. The Communication proposes to agree on a set of digital principles, to rapidly launch important multi-country projects, and to prepare a legislative proposal setting out a robust governance framework, to monitor progress – the Digital Compass.

Europe's Digital Compass

The Commission proposes a **Digital Compass** to translate the EU's digital ambitions for 2030 into concrete terms. They evolve around four cardinal points:

- 1) **Digitally skilled citizens and highly skilled digital professionals**; By 2030, at least 80% of all adults should have basic digital skills, and there should be 20 million employed ICT specialists in the EU – while more women should take up such jobs;
- 2) **Secure, performant and sustainable digital infrastructures**; By 2030, all EU households should have gigabit connectivity and all populated areas should be covered by 5G; the production of cutting-edge and sustainable semiconductors in Europe should be 20% of world production; 10,000 climate neutral highly secure edge nodes should be deployed in the EU; and Europe should have its first quantum computer;
- 3) **Digital transformation of businesses**; By 2030, three out of four companies should use cloud computing services, big data and Artificial Intelligence; more than 90% SMEs should reach at least basic level of digital intensity; and the number of EU unicorns should double;
- 4) **Digitalisation of public services**; By 2030, all key public services should be available online; all citizens will have access to their e-medical records; and 80% citizens should use an eID solution.

The Compass sets out a robust joint governance structure with Member States based on a monitoring system with annual reporting in the form of traffic lights. The targets will be enshrined in a Policy Programme to be agreed with the European Parliament and the Council.

Multi-country projects

To better address gaps in the EU's critical capacities, the Commission will facilitate the rapid launch of **multi-country projects**, combining investments from the EU budget, Member States and industry, building on the Recovery and Resilience Facility and other EU funding. In their Recovery and Resilience Plans, Member States are committed to dedicate at least 20% to the digital priority. Possible multi-country projects include a pan-European interconnected data processing infrastructure; the design and deployment of the next generation of low power trusted processors; or connected public administrations.

Digital Rights and Principles for Europeans

EU rights and values are at the heart of the EU's human centred way on digital. They should be fully reflected in the online space as they are in the real world. This is why the Commission proposes to develop **a framework of digital principles**, such as access to high quality connectivity, to sufficient digital skills, to public services, to fair and non-discriminatory online services – and more generally, to ensure that the same rights that apply offline can be fully exercised online. These principles would

be discussed in a wide societal debate and could be enshrined in a **solemn, inter-institutional declaration** between the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission. It would build on and complement the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#). Finally, the Commission proposes to monitor in an annual Eurobarometer whether Europeans feel that their digital rights are respected.

A digital Europe in the world

The digital transformation poses **global challenges**. The EU will work to promote its positive and human-centred digital agenda within international organisations and through strong international digital partnerships. Combining EU internal investments with the significant funding available under the new external cooperation instruments will allow the EU to work with partners around the world in achieving common global objectives. The Commission has already proposed to set up a new [EU-US Trade and Technology Council](#). Today's Communication highlights the importance of investing in improved connectivity with the EU's external partners, for example through the creation of a Digital Connectivity Fund.

Members of the College said:

Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** said: *"Europe has a lifetime opportunity to build back better. With the new multi-annual budget and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, we have mobilised unprecedented resources to invest in the digital transition. The pandemic has exposed how crucial digital technologies and skills are to work, study and engage – and where we need to get better. We must now make this Europe's Digital Decade so that all citizens and businesses can access the very best the digital world can offer. Today's Digital Compass gives us a clear view of how to get there."*

Executive Vice-President for 'A Europe Fit for the Digital Age' Margrethe **Vestager** said: *"Today's paper is the start of an inclusive process. Together with the European Parliament, the Member States and other stakeholders, we will work for Europe to become the prosperous, confident and open partner that we want to be in the world. And make sure that all of us fully benefit from the welfare brought by an inclusive digital society."*

Commissioner for the Internal Market Thierry **Breton** said: *"As a continent, Europe has to ensure that its citizens and businesses have access to a choice of state-of-the-art technologies that will make their life better, safer, and even greener – provided they also have the skills to use them. In the post pandemic world, this is how we will shape together a resilient and digitally sovereign Europe. This is Europe's Digital Decade."*

Background

Digital technologies have been critical to maintaining economic and social life throughout the coronavirus crisis. They will be the key differentiating factor in a successful transition to a sustainable, post-pandemic economy and society. European businesses and citizens can benefit from greater digital opportunities, fostering resilience and mitigating dependencies at every level, from industrial sectors to individual technologies. The European approach to the digital transformation is also a key factor underpinning the EU's global influence.

In her 2020 [State of the Union address](#), Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** called for Europe to demonstrate greater digital leadership with a common vision for 2030, based on clear goals and principles such as universal connectivity and the respect of the right to privacy and freedom of speech. In its [conclusions](#) of October 2020, the European Council invited the Commission to present a comprehensive Digital Compass which sets out the EU's ambitions for 2030.

The level of EU financing available under the [Recovery and Resilience Facility](#) will permit the unprecedented scale and intensity of cooperation among Member States that is necessary to achieve a successful digital transformation. A 20% digital expenditure target has been set for each national plan, accompanying the digital component of the 2021-2027 [European budget](#).

For More Information

[Europe's Digital Decade – Questions and Answers](#)

[Europe's Digital Decade – Factpage](#)

[Communication "2030 Digital Compass: the European Way for the Digital Decade"](#)

[Europe's Digital Compass – Policy page](#)

[Shaping Europe's Digital Future](#)

Press contacts:

[Johannes BHRKE](#) (+32 2 295 86 15)

[Charles MANOURY](#) (+32 2 291 33 91)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

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