CONNECT UNIVERSITY SESSION -

THE STATE OF THE DIGITAL DECADE 2023

KEY MESSAGES, CHALLENGES AND WAYS FORWARD
TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER, 10:00 – 12:00 CET

Contents

"The journey towards the full achievement of the Digital Decade targets is still long. Now is the time to take every measure to bridge the gap and ensure that the full digital transition is reached by 2030, without leaving anyone behind. The first reports serve as a useful guide on what needs to be done."

Věra Jourová, Vice-President for Values and Transparency - 27/09/2023

"The message from our first Digital Decade report is clear: we need to accelerate our efforts to reach our targets by 2030. Now is the moment to work together to put Europe at the forefront of the digital transition. This is the meaning of the recommendations that we issue today to Member States."

Thierry Breton, Commissioner for Internal Market - 27/09/2023

The Digital Decade Policy Programme

The EU's **Digital Decade**, sets objectives and targets for the digitalisation of public services and businesses, setting up digital infrastructures such as 5G and supercomputers and ensuring that EU citizens are equipped with the necessary skills to navigate the digital environment with confidence.

The [main targets](#) are organised around **general objectives** such as shaping a human centred digital space based on fundamental rights, fostering competitiveness, sovereignty and resilience, addressing digital divides or contributing to greening, as well as **four cardinal points**:

> 1. A digitally skilled population and highly skilled digital professionals;
>
> 2. Secure, resilient and sustainable digital infrastructures;
>
> 3. Digital transformation of businesses;
>
> 4. Digitalisation of public services.

The Digital Decade Policy Programme (DDPP) 2030, adopted by the EU in 2022, will ensure that these targets are reached by Member States and that the EU's Digital Decade will be an era of pioneering transitions towards a safer and more sustainable world.

[In force since the 9th of January 2023](#), it is one of the main priorities of the present Commission. It includes a vision, concrete objectives and targets as well as a governance mechanism that will ensure their achievement by 2030.

This will be boosted by funding from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, as 26% of RRF allocations are invested in digital.

The European Digital Rights and Principles

The Commission wants to ensure people are empowered to fully enjoy the opportunities that the Digital Decade brings. So, it proposed a set of **[European digital rights and principles](#)** that reflect EU values and promote a sustainable, human-centric vision for the digital transformation.

The [declaration](#) was signed by the Presidents of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council, reflecting the shared political commitment of the EU and its Member States to promote and implement the rights and principles in all areas of digital life.

The European digital rights and principles will complement existing rights, such as data protection, ePrivacy, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. They will build on the experience of the European Pillar of Social Rights and they will provide guidance for the EU and Member States as they adapt to the digital transformation.

Multi-Country Projects and the European Digital Infrastructure Consortiums (EDICs)

The DDPP also establishes a framework for large-scale projects in key digital areas, also called **Multi-Country Projects (MCPs),** that require a combination of national, EU and private investments. In this respect, a new legal instrument was put in place to facilitate their implementation: the **European Digital Infrastructure Consortium (EDICs).** It complements already existing instruments, such as Joint Undertakings (JUs) or Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs). EDICS are meant to be more flexible, quick in their set up and able to procure services and infrastructures, because they have legal personality. Their statutes can be adapted to their specific task in contributing to the achievement of specific MCPs that in turn bring us closer to the targets set in the DDPP.

The State of the Digital Decade Report

The first annual [report on the "State of the Digital Decade"](#) was published on 27th September. It presents a 'comprehensive' outlook on EU's digital transformation and identified areas where progress is still insufficient.

The work behind it started last year, with a built cooperation and trust with Member States to make the report reflect as much as possible a shared diagnosis of the situation and of the actions that should be taken.

It includes a state of play of the EU's digital transformation. More specifically:

- A stock-taking on challenges and on the EU's national progress towards the Digital Decade targets and objectives, and on MCPs;
- Thematic analyses, specifically focusing on big digital trends in 2023, leadership and sovereignty, digital citizenship, green transition, the international element, and working together within the EU through MCPs;
- Country chapters which describe the digitalisation and contribution of each Member State to the collective digital decade objectives.
- An analysis of significant gaps and shortages, and recommended actions to address them.

In terms of substance, the report sends a strong message – a wake-up call – to Member States and beyond – on the urgency to **act collectively** to take a head start in the new wave of the digital revolution. It encompasses key strategic areas – leadership and sovereignty, the empowerment of people and society as well as the twinning of the digital and green

transformation including for verticals (i.e., industry, transport, energy). It also addresses the magnitude of investments and the policy adjustments needed to walk the talk on identified strategic areas for EU's digital transformation. It contributes to better grasp how and where Member States together with the Commission have to focus and join effort to realise the EU's positive vision of change.
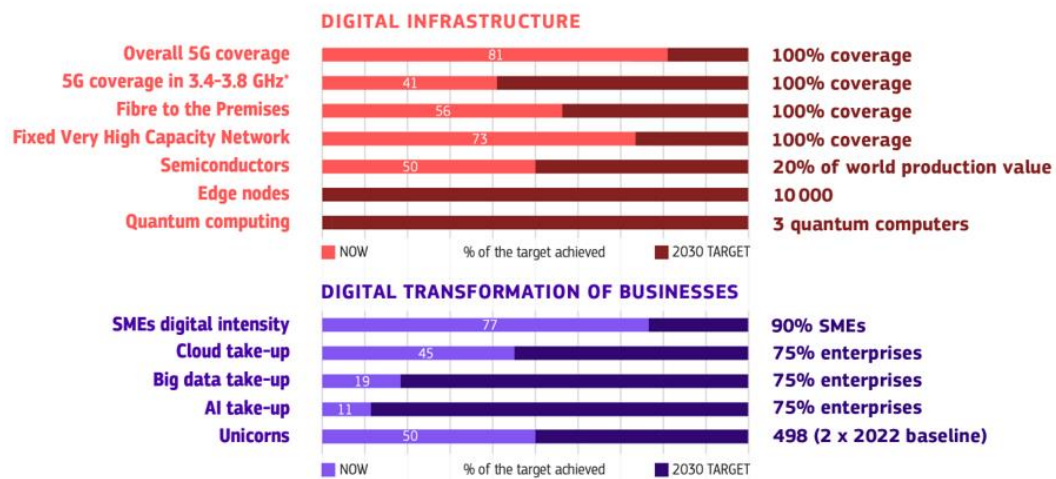
The Report in short

A SOVEREIGN AND COMPETITIVE EUROPE

Digital infrastructures, in particular connectivity, and the digitalisation of businesses are the backbone towards a sovereign, competitive, and resilient European Union.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

We need to accelerate and deepen our collective efforts to bring forward our digital transition. Three elements are needed: cooperation between Member States, the adoption of policy measures such as the Gigabit Infrastructure Act, and investments.

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

	NOW	2030 TARGET
Overall 5G coverage	81	100% coverage
5G coverage in 3.4-3.8 GHz*	41	100% coverage
Fibre to the Premises	56	100% coverage
Fixed Very High Capacity Network	73	100% coverage
Semiconductors	50	20% of world production value
Edge nodes		10 000
Quantum computing		3 quantum computers

NOW ■ % of the target achieved ■ 2030 TARGET

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF BUSINESSES

	NOW	2030 TARGET
SMEs digital intensity	77	90% SMEs
Cloud take-up	45	75% enterprises
Big data take-up	19	75% enterprises
AI take-up	11	75% enterprises
Unicorns	50	498 (2 x 2022 baseline)

NOW ■ % of the target achieved ■ 2030 TARGET

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Providing funding of more than € 112 billion from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the EU Regional Development Fund, Connecting Europe Facility, DIGITAL Europe

Setting a policy framework to address long-term challenges and reduce take-up costs

Attracting investments, through the EU Chips Act, large-scale projects, and European Digital Innovation Hubs

WHAT SHOULD WE DO MORE?

Effectively increase investment in digital R&I across sectors (reaching 3% GDP) and invest in critical infrastructures and technologies

Address the € 200 billion gap for gigabit connectivity

Nurture the European ecosystem of digital startups, across the board and in particular in the quantum field

Support Europe's capacity in building advanced semiconductors and edge nodes

Adopt policy measures and earmark resources to support the adoption of trustworthy and sovereign AI-enabled technologies by European companies

Participation in international cooperation according to Europe's strategic interests
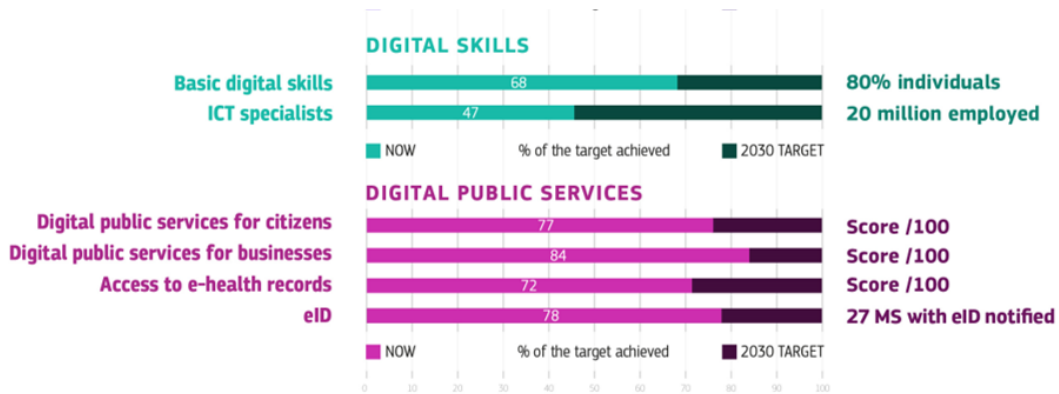
European Commission

A HUMAN-CENTRED DIGITAL TRANSITION BASED ON EU VALUES

Ensuring that citizens are empowered and protected online and have adequate digital skills to fully benefit from the digital transformation, such as from digital public services, is at the base of the European Union's vision for an online world that is sustainable, safe, and inclusive for all.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Digital skills need to be put at the centre of the EU and Member States' actions through ambitious reforms to educate, attract and retain talents. To ensure that digital public services are accessible to all, we need to do more to provide everyone with the tools to benefit from the digital future we envision.

DIGITAL SKILLS

Basic digital skills	68	**80% individuals**
ICT specialists	47	**20 million employed**

■ NOW　　　% of the target achieved　　■ 2030 TARGET

DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICES

Digital public services for citizens	77	**Score /100**
Digital public services for businesses	84	**Score /100**
Access to e-health records	72	**Score /100**
eID	78	**27 MS with eID notified**

■ NOW　　　% of the target achieved　　■ 2030 TARGET

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Providing funding adding up to more than € 267,8 billion from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, DIGITAL Europe, Erasmus+ and the European Social Fund Plus

Setting a common framework for the interoperability and cross-border availability of public services and eID

Promoting training, upskilling, and reskilling schemes to cultivate digital skills

Share and replicate good practices in Member States

WHAT SHOULD WE DO MORE?

Invest in learning initiatives to tackle the mismatch between digital skills training offering and the market needs

Take action to attract and retain ICT specialists

Step up investment and regulatory measures to develop secure, sovereign and interoperable digital solutions for online public services

Set up and implement the EU Digital Identity Wallet through pilot projects

Build on the European Green Deal and Temporary Crisis and Transition Framework to foster the transition towards a net-zero economy for digital solutions

Enhance cooperation and joint investments in the areas relevant for the twin transitions, such as mobility and logistics data, or local digital twins

EU VALUES

We promote regulations that create a human-centred, inclusive, and open digital environment, as set out in the Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles.

Digital Services Act	Artificial Intelligence Act	Code of Practice on Disinformation	Communication on Virtual Worlds	EU Media Freedom Act	Better Internet For Kids

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability of digital infrastructure and technologies, including their supply chains, is at the centre of the Digital Decade.

Sustainable Infrastructure	Reuse of Products	More Info on the Environmental Impact of Products	Research for a Science-Based Assessment of Net Impact of Digitalisation

MULTI-COUNTRY PROJECTS

Cooperation through large-scale projects among different Member States is the key to achieve our digital targets in areas like:

Common Data Infrastructure and Services	Low-Power Processors	Pan-European deployment of 5G corridors	High-Performance Computing	Secure Quantum Infrastructure and Network of Cybersecurity Centres
Digital Public Administration	Blockchain	Digital Innovation Hubs	High-Tech Partnerships for Digital Skills	Skills and Training in Cybersecurity

The national Digital Decade strategic roadmaps

By 9 October Member States shall submit their national Digital Decade strategic roadmaps to the Commission. They shall be consistent with, and contribute to achieving at Union level, the objectives and digital targets of the DDPP.

In their roadmaps, Member States shall set out:

- the main implemented, adopted and planned policies, measures and actions contributing to the objectives and digital targets;
- national projected trajectories contributing to relevant digital targets measurable at national level;
- the impact expected to be made on each digital target as a result of the implemented, adopted and planned policies, measures and actions;
- the timing for implementation of the adopted and planned policies, measures and actions as well as an estimate of the timing when those policies, measures and actions are expected to produce an impact on the achievement of the digital targets.

The State of the Digital Decade report is also an important input for Member States at a time when they prepare their strategic national roadmap outlining actions, policies and measures they will take to achieve the digital decade objectives and targets, including planned regulatory measures and investments.

Why this workshop?

Following the publication of the first annual report on the State of the Digital Decade, we are organising an open and hybrid workshop of about 2 hours on Tuesday 14 November, to discuss in detail the main findings of the report and to reflect on the possible ways to move forward from this wake-up call.

More specifically, this workshop aims to inform the audience about the existence of the report, to discuss its main aspects and to gather feedback from digital transformation experts (European companies, consultancies and organisations) on suggestions for EU actions and priorities for the future.

Draft Agenda

10:00 – 10:20 – PART I: Introducing the State of the Digital Decade Report

10:00 – 10:10 – Introduction by **Ms. Kamila Kloc** (Director Digital Decade and Connectivity, DG CONNECT, European Commission)

10:10- 10:20 – Keynote by Mr. **Matías González Martín** (Secretary General for Telecommunications, Spanish Ministry for Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation)

10:20 – 10:35 – PART II: What are the main takeaways of the State of the Digital Decade Report?

Mr. Eric Peters (Deputy Head of Unit, Digital Decade Coordination Unit, DG CONNECT, European Commission)

10:35 – 10:40 – short break

10:40 – 11:45 – PART III: Panel discussion – moderated by **Ms. Lavinia Bianchi** (Communication Officer, Investments in High-Capacity Networks Unit, DG CONNECT, European Commission)

Main questions for discussion:

- What is for you the key added value of the first Report in the State of the Digital Decade?
- What are possible opportunities and challenges we should be paying attention to?
- What are the ingredients for ensuring that the next steps will deliver progress towards the Digital Decade objectives?

Proposed panellists

- **Ms. Solveigh Hieronimus** (Senior Partner, McKinsey)
- **Ms. Sophie Woodville** (Digital Policy Officer, Bordeaux Metropolitan Area)
- **Mr. Brendan Rowan** (Coordinator of the DEP project LeADS)
- **Mr. Izabel Jenelnic** (CTO, Infobip)
- **Mr. Alessandro Gropelli** (Deputy Director General, ETNO)

11:45 – 12:00 – Conclusion – by **Mr. Eric Peters** (Deputy Head of Unit, Digital Decade Coordination Unit, DG CONNECT, European Commission)