

## Webinar DG CNECT – Thursday 3 October – 10h30 – 12h00

### Digital Decade Report 2024: Setting the scene for the new EU's digital policy agenda

*The Digital Decade and EU priorities through 2030*

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#### Objectives

- This webinar will seek to update the progress made towards the **vision of the Digital Decade through 2030** in the context notably of **President Von der Leyen's EU priorities for 2024-2029**
- A discussion will also aim to show the essence of **how the Digital Decade's 2024 Report aligns with the momentum raised by this year's proposals, input and conversations around e.g., the Draghi and Letta Reports**

#### Background note

[The Digital Decade Policy Programme \(DDPP\) 2030](#), adopted by the EU in 2022, is now the **mainstream EU digital strategy**: it reflects European Democracies' commitment to work together towards a more successful digital transformation synergising with the green transition. As reminded by the EU Council Conclusions of May 21st, and recently with the **Political Guidelines announced by President Von der Leyen**, the EU is committed to ensuring a secure, safe, inclusive and sustainable digital transformation, based on technological leadership, competitiveness and on a human-centric approach.

**In the context of EU priorities for the next mandate, which include competitiveness and economic security, reaching the DDPP targets and objectives is even more critical now, and must continue to strongly align with the EU's priorities for the next mandate.**

Geopolitical, geoeconomic and technological challenges demand unprecedented, stronger collective action and cooperation between the EU and its Member States, and all stakeholders involved – including our industry. Member States have a critical role to contribute to the necessary consensus. The DDPP is now an essential instrument to coordinate these efforts and implement these priorities: It relies on **close cooperation** with Member States and stakeholders at European, national, regional and local levels to ensure collective progress for the EU's digital transformation.

**The Draghi Report published in September** doubled down on this need for a common vision and reinforced cooperation at EU level including to reinforce cooperation based on common vision, a robust governance and concrete instruments (funding, multi-country projects).

More specifically, [the DDPP's second State of the Digital Decade Report](#) (SDD24), published in July 2024 and the **Draghi Report** align significantly on the vision of Europe's future competitiveness. Similarly, the Letta Report had set a strategy for Europe to become a “creator and a maker of new technologies”, in line with the Digital Decade's objective of resilience and technological sovereignty.

Over the past two decades, the EU's position in the global race for digital technologies, services, and infrastructure has significantly weakened. Digital technology plays a crucial role in reclaiming and enhancing the EU's global competitiveness. To achieve this, the Second State of the Digital Decade Report and stakeholders' reactions to its publication have emphasised the urgent need for ambitious efforts to meet **key EU targets** in areas such as skills development, connectivity, semiconductors, and AI/cloud computing. Equally, there are calls for a strengthened focus on **sovereignty** and **resilience**, aiming to reduce Europe's reliance on non-EU providers in an increasingly tense geopolitical landscape. The Draghi Report notably references the SDD24 throughout, and specifically a number of **Digital Decade** goals and objectives (e.g., in connectivity, edge nodes, basic digital skills, and the European Digital Infrastructure Consortia (EDICs)), echoing several of its key recommendations.

Future action is recommended, in particular regarding the need to **substantially increase public and private investments** in digital networks and technologies (**EUR 150 billion annually**, out of a total of 800 billion in the Draghi Report).

The Second State of the Digital Decade Report calls for a number of steps to be made, thereby also aligning with EU priorities for the next mandate, as well as with recommendations gathered in stakeholders' calls and reports: Improvements to the EU regulatory framework, to the governance of the EU's digital transformation, the role of digitalisation in advancing the EU's decarbonisation efforts, technological synergies between civil and defence industries, innovation in breakthrough technologies, leverage of procurement in the AI and cloud sectors, and issues related to the telecoms sector.

The Draghi Report's proposed **EU Digital Action Plan, integrated into the new Competitiveness Framework**, also offers interesting insights that could be used in the roadmap for the upcoming **Digital Decade Review planned for 2026**. This includes setting measurable objectives for advanced connectivity (e.g., fast broadband, standalone 5G, and 6G), establishing targets for cross-border industrial projects in cutting-edge digital technologies (such as constructing foundries for strategic semiconductor sectors), and developing new vertical applications of AI across key areas like energy, transport, and pharmaceuticals. The review should also strengthen links with **financial tools and incentives**, and ensure greater **coordination of digital policies and regulations** with clearly defined externalities, including spectrum policy.

### **Proposed logistics and format**

- Proposed date: **Thursday 3rd October**, 10:30AM to 12PM
- **Speakers joining in-person at L51**; audience **online open to all**
- 1 presentation by Eric PETERS, Acting Head of Unit for the Digital Decade Policy Programme, DG CNECT; followed by interactive discussion among external speakers:

- **Presentation by the EC (30')**: – the Second State of the Digital Decade Report and the next Commission's priorities
- **Discussion** among guest speakers **(60')** – specifically intervening on the ways in which the SDD24 and the Draghi/Letta Reports are connected/related.
- Advertised via Futurium and EC social medias

### Proposed speakers

- Georg Riekeles, Associate Director at the **European Policy Centre (CONFIRMED)**;
- Niclas Poitiers, Research Fellow at **Bruegel (CONFIRMED)**;
- Léa Auffret, Head of International Affairs and Single Market at **BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation (CONFIRMED)**;
- Ursula Pahl, Head of Collective Redress at noyb.eu, **the European Center for Digital Rights (TBC)**.

### Proposed leading questions to frame the discussion

1. How does the Digital Decade's focus align with the next EU Commission's priorities?
2. What do the Digital Decade and the next EU priorities tell us about Europe's **innovation needs**?
  - How can Europe **close the innovation and tech gaps** with the US?
3. What do the Digital Decade and the next EU priorities tell us about Europe's **investment needs**?
  - How can Europe develop a new **investment landscape**?
4. What do the Digital Decade and the next EU priorities tell us about Europe's **collaboration, regulatory systems, and their implementation**?
  - How can Europe improve EU-wide **collaboration, regulatory framework's implementation**, and the effectiveness of its **decision-making**?
  - How can the EU's regulatory regime improve to maintain its protection of fundamental (digital) rights and principles, while fostering innovation?