



# 2030 DIGITAL DECADE

DIGITAL DECADE POLICY PROGRAMME  
STATE OF THE DIGITAL DECADE REPORT

## The Digital Decade Report 2024

Setting the scene for  
the new EU's digital policy agenda

*CONNECT UNIVERSITY SESSION*  
*3 October 2024*



# Agenda

- 1. Presentation of the Second State of the Digital Decade Report (30')**  
– *Eric PETERS, Acting Head of Unit for the DDPP, DG CNECT*
- 2. Panel debate: Comments and reactions from 3 Guest Speakers (45' > 60'),**  
including time for Q&As



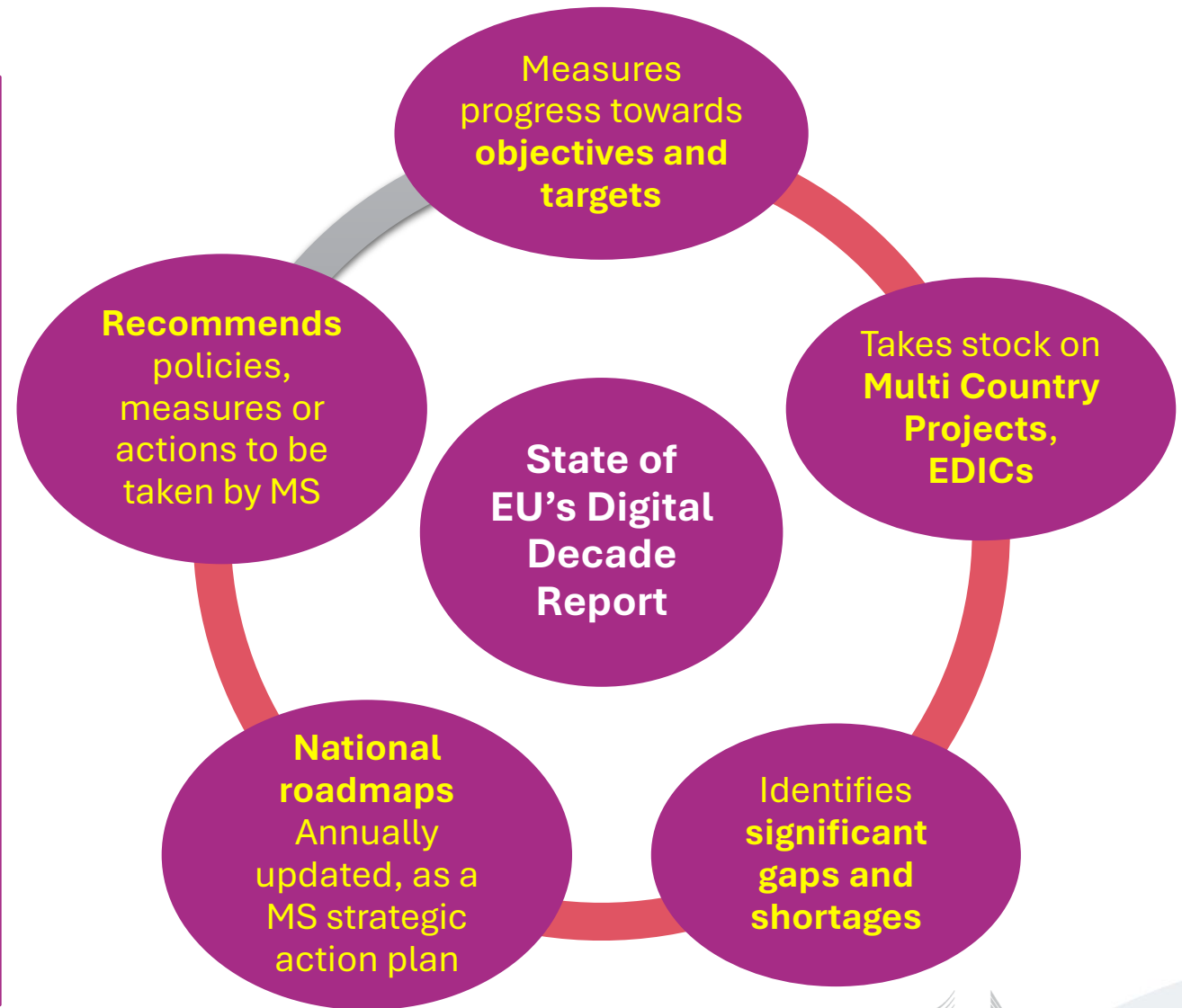
European  
Commission

# The Second State of the Digital Decade Report

# State of the Digital Decade Report

- **Digital Decade Report:** the annual ‘rendez-vous’ to take stock on digital policies, to be presented in the Council and Parliament
- **Comprehensive** report on EU’s digital transformation based on **input from the Commission and Member States** including their **annual strategic national roadmap**
- **Multi Country Projects** allowing Member States to pool investments in digital infrastructures (**EDICs**)
- Underpinned by the **Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles**

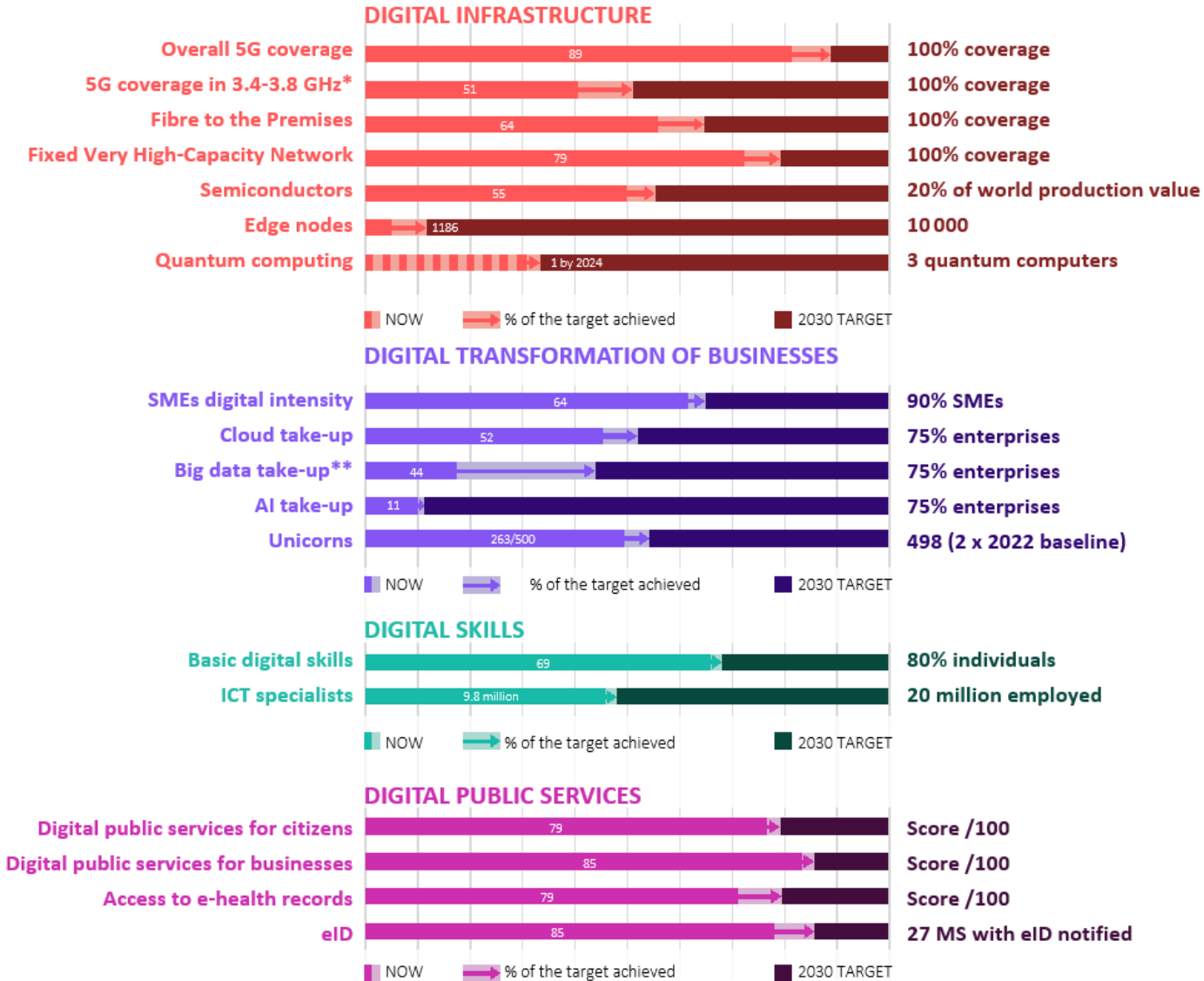
=> **Second report published on 2 July**



# SDD24 Report: Key overarching messages

- With the world's **most ambitious digital agenda**, including increased funding for digital, intensive legislative activity and other major initiatives, the EU positioned itself as a **global policy innovator** and an **increasing digital industrial power**.
- **Massive action, yet (for now) limited progress** in most Digital Decade dimensions:
  - Objectives: share of ICT sector and trends in R&I, disinformation and illegal/harmful content, cyberthreats, protection of children, green & digital.
  - Targets: high-quality 5G, Fibre to the Premises (FTTP), edge nodes, semiconductors, take up of advanced digital technologies including AI, digital skills & ICT specialists;
- **New challenges** (inflation, technological race, energy prices, rise of disinformation) **demand further action**, particularly in:
  - Technological leadership, resilience, competitiveness, sovereignty;
  - Empowering and including people in the digital transition;
  - Leveraging digital transformation to support the green transition.

# Taking stock of progress towards 2030 targets



\*Not a KPI but gives an important indication on high quality 5G coverage

\*\* The former Big data indicator is now replaced by the take up of Data analytics technologies. Progress are not fully comparable.

# Eurobarometer 2024: Some key findings



For 82% it is important that public authorities ensure that EU companies can grow and become **European champions able to compete globally**



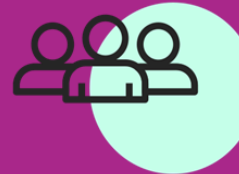
There are increasing concerns about insufficient action to ensure **safe digital environments and content for children and young people (+ 10 percentage points since last year)**



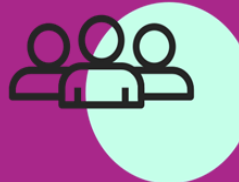
8 out of 10 stress the need for **better connectivity** through **availability and affordability of high-speed internet connection**



**4 out of 5** consider it important that public authorities ensure **digital technologies serve the green transition**  
**3 out of 4** think that digital technologies will be playing an important role in **helping to fight climate change (increasing from 2 out of 3 last year)**



**For 9 out of 10**, it is important that **people receive proper human support** to use digital technologies and services



Among the online issues perceived with the biggest personal impact: **misuse of personal data; fake news and disinformation; insufficient protection of minors**

# SDD 2024 (i): Competitiveness

- **Concerning the evolution of the global technological race:** China has become the global frontrunner in scientific publications in engineering, enabling strategic technologies and ICT. R&I investments in the EU are at 2.2% of EU's GDP, below its own 3% target, vs US levels (3.4%), China's (2.4%).
- **The potential of the (Digital) Single Market remains untapped:** Intra-EU trade in services accounts for only about 15% of GDP, compared with more than 50% for goods.
- **Significant work yet ahead to reach the 2030 objectives and targets:** FTTP networks only reach 64% of households; the combined EU27 semiconductor market share is 9.8% of global revenues; AI take-up stalls at 8%; only 58% of SMEs are digitalised; only 13% of the world's unicorns are based in Europe.
- The EU cybersecurity landscape continues to be strongly impacted by geopolitical events while **cyberattacks are on the rise.**



# A concrete focus for action: Fibre to the Premises



**By 2030:**

**Objective:** resilience, competitiveness, sovereignty

**Target:** 100% coverage in populated areas

**Where we are now:**

In 2023, 64% across the entire EU, with 13% progress in a year, gap with trajectory of over 10 p.p., business as usual trajectory means less than 90% by 2030

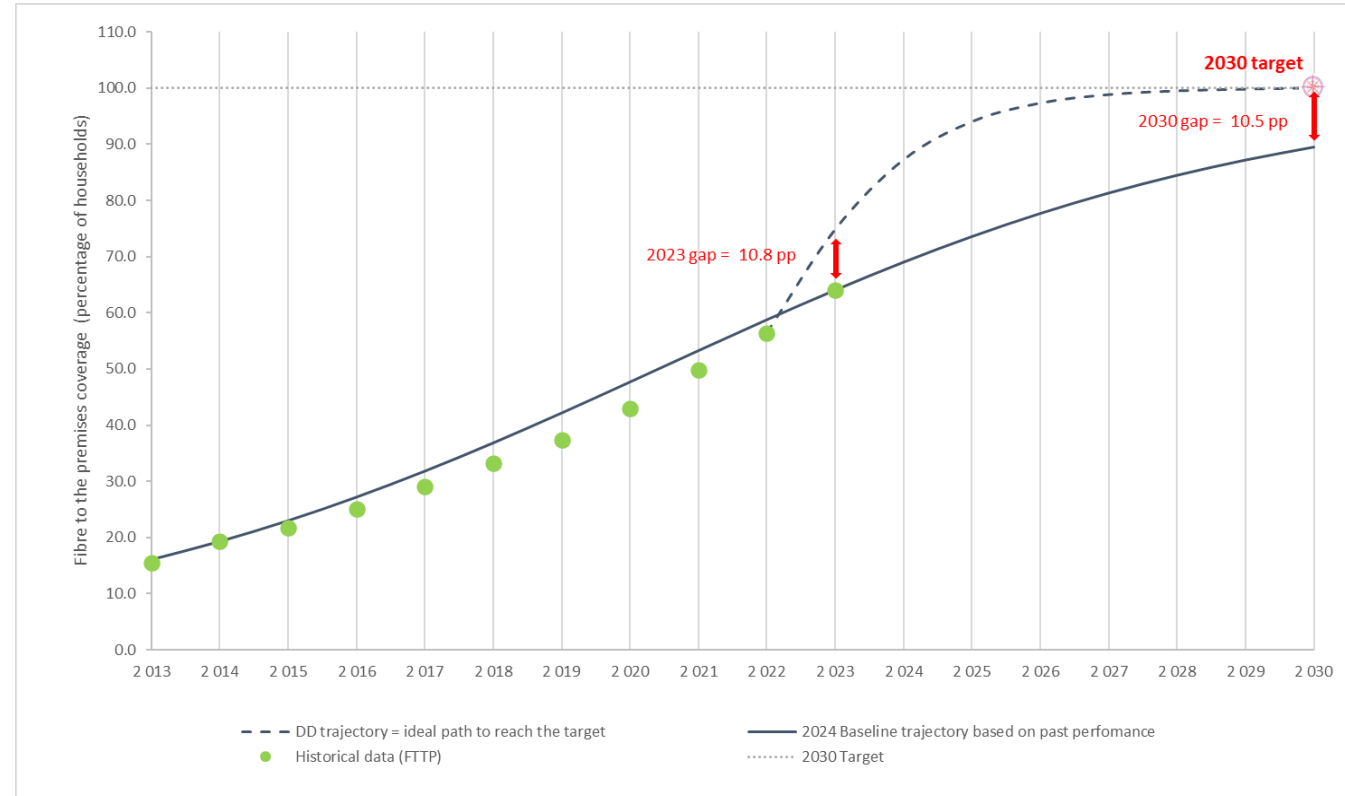
## What are the key issues?

Coverage increasing but **growth rate** (+13.5%) **still insufficient**. **Discrepancies** between Member States are even greater than for VHNC coverage: from over 90% in ES, RO, PT to less than 40% in CZ, DE and BE. **Very low average take up of 1Gbps** (18.5%).

**High investment gap**, and limited capacity to invest in view of the challenges and transformation needs of the sector. Important part of building **collaborative connectivity and computing ecosystems**.

## Way forward

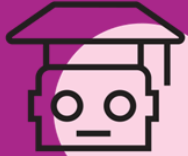
- **Work with the Commission** to transform the electronic communications sector and allow operators to reach critical size.
- **Mobilise investments** to incentivise the take-up of enhanced fixed and mobile networks services; boost public and private investment towards new 5G use cases, the deployment of stand-alone 5G core networks and sustainability.
- Fostering **cooperation** in view of a coordinated mapping and assessment of our cable infrastructures.



# SDD 2024 (ii): People & Society

- **People are at the centre of the digital transformation:** they want and must be kept on board. For 88% of EU population, public authorities should provide for proper human support to accompany the digital transformation of their lives.
- **Significant work remains to be done to reach the 2030 targets on digital skills:** only 56% of EU population have at least basic digital skills and, at the current trend, ICT specialists will be just 12 million in 2030.
- **Availability of e-ID schemes, digital public services and access to e-health records is growing,** but significant differences remain across countries. The take-up of e-ID is also uneven.
- **Risks online are on the rise and disinformation has been identified as one of the biggest destabilising factors for our societies.** It requires comprehensive, coordinated action across borders and actors.
- **Implementation of the robust digital regulatory framework adopted under this Commission's term remains crucial:** Digital Services Act, European Media Freedom Act, AI Act, EU Digital Identity regulation and others require proactive implementation to ensure safety and fundamental rights in the digital space.

# A concrete focus for action: ICT specialists



## By 2030:

**Objective:** resilience, competitiveness sovereignty

**Target:** At least 20 million ICT specialists

## Where we are now:

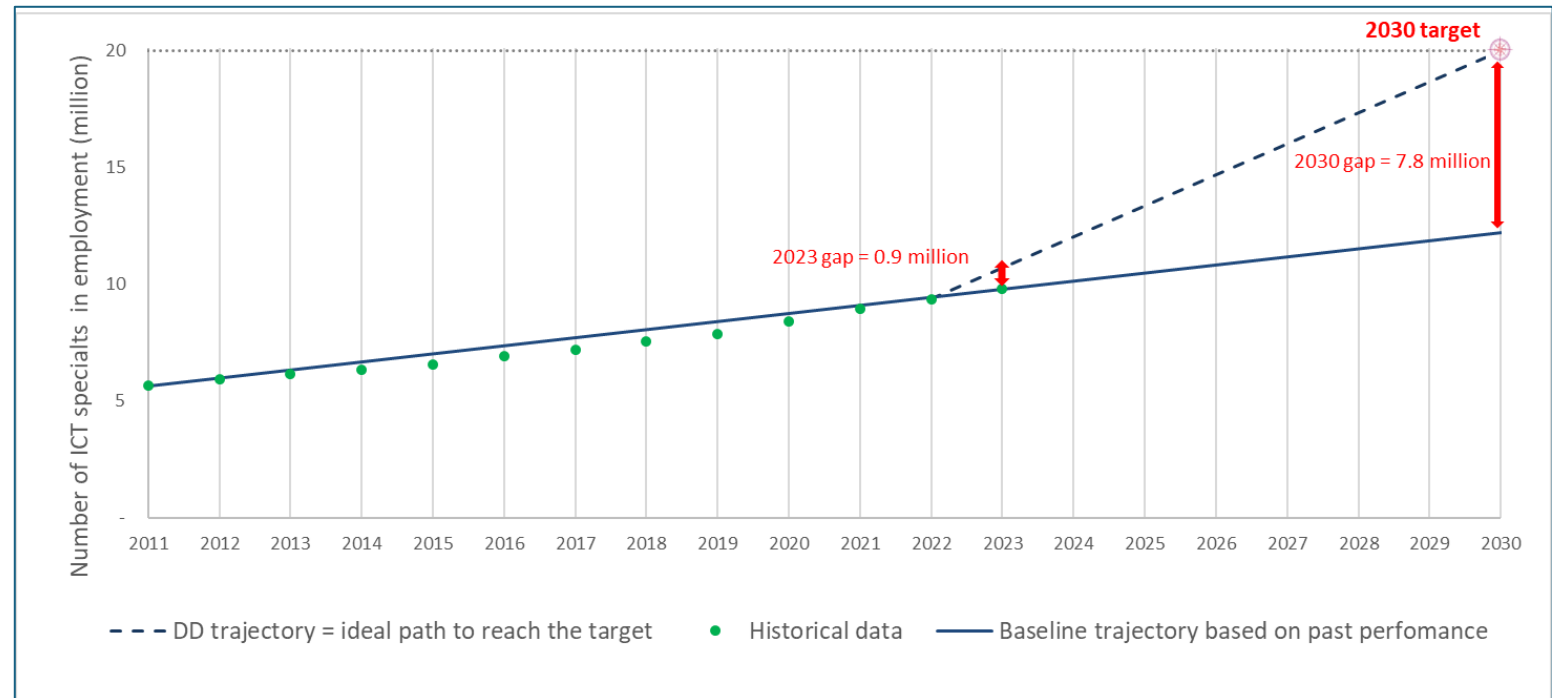
In 2023, **9.79 million** across the entire EU, with **4,3% annual** progress, **gap with trajectory 900.000**, business as usual trajectory means only **12 million** by 2030

## What are the key issues?

Low **number of students** in ICT and STEM;  
lack of **specialised and flexible training**;  
low **participation of women**;  
attracting/retaining specialists in the context of **global competition for talents**.

## Way forward

- Develop **initiatives, strengthen policy and prioritise action** in line with the Council Recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills in education and training;
- Support **early exposure**
- Promote **VET and lifelong learning, increase the academic offer**
- Foster **diversity and inclusion**




# SDD 2024 (iii): Smart Greening

- **The digital sector represents 7-9% of global electricity consumption** – to rise to 13% by 2030 in line with the global demand for Internet services and AI notably. **Energy-efficient semiconductors and climate-neutral edge nodes** are key for reducing the energy consumption of devices.
- **Essential role of the digital transformation:** to reduce the environmental footprint and achieve the EU Green Deal, with a potential to reduce total GHGs by 15%-20% bef. 2030 (WEF, GESI).
- **The RRF supports measures for the twin transition**, including Smart Mobility, or Smart Energy Systems (smart grids and ICT systems) to which MS devote about EUR 25 billion.
- **Important recent progress:** delivery of a **science-based methodology** to measure the net environmental impact of digital solution, through the **European Green Digital Coalition**.
- The priority is to develop synergies and **move from small scale pilots and initiatives to large scale projects based on cooperation between public and private actors** as well as to prepare the work in view of a possible target on environment.

# SDD 2024 (iv): Coherence and Synergies

- **Striving for an effective, efficient and red-tape free implementation of the digital regulatory environment:**
  - There is an increasing need for reducing the administrative burden, creating synergies, avoiding duplication and efficiently manage existing governance structures' complementarities.
- **Funding the digital transformation through synergies among EU programmes:**
  - The digital transformation is one of the main political priorities of the Commission and benefits from major coordinated support from EU funding across the board.
  - About **EUR 205 billion**, for the period 2021-2027, contribute to the Digital Decade targets and objectives (through the RRF and Cohesion policy funding to DIGITAL, CEF2 and Horizon Europe).
- **Linking the Digital Decade with cooperation across governance levels:** Key role of **EU regions and cities** for an inclusive digital transformation & DDPP as an opportunity to enhance their contribution and collaboration framework with various instruments.

The background is a solid dark blue color. It is decorated with several large, soft-edged, organic shapes in various shades of green and teal. These shapes are scattered across the frame, some overlapping each other and the blue background. The overall aesthetic is modern and clean.

# **Recommendations and conclusion**

# What is needed: all MS to intensify action

4 categories of recommendations to **EU as a whole**:

<b>Mobilising investments</b>	<b>Completing the Digital Single Market</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Strengthen public support to reach market failure areas and facilitate 5G use cases</li><li>- Step-up public investment in generative AI and incentivize private investments</li><li>- Support use cases for the EU Digital Identity Wallet</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Transform the electronic communications sector and allow operators to reach critical size, following up on the White Paper on digital infrastructure</li><li>- Accelerate action that is necessary for the implementation of the regulatory framework, particularly the DSA.</li></ul>
<b>Disseminating technologies</b>	<b>Fostering cooperation between MS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Uptake of cloud, leveraging the IPCEI-CIS</li><li>- Procure sovereign AI solutions</li><li>- Dialogue with regions and cities for best practices</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Accelerate EDICs (3 established)</li><li>- Joint Economic Security risk assessment exercises</li><li>- Leverage the Digital Decade Board</li></ul>



# Denmark Country Report

In 2023, **Denmark made notable progress** in increasing its number of ICT specialists. Considering its previous progress, challenges persist in the digitalisation of SMEs and, more generally, in enterprises' take-up of advanced technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). However, in the past year, Denmark progressed in the digitalisation of public services for businesses.

## Two Main Strengths or Areas of Progress

### Digitalisation of public services

The country shows a high degree of digitalisation in its public services (scoring 84.2 out of 100 on the digitalisation of public services for citizens and 88.7 out of 100 for businesses). People and businesses are generally encouraged to interact using digital tools.

### ICT specialists

ICT specialists as a percentage of the Danish population in employment are at 5.9%, which is above the EU average of 4.8%, although there is still an important gender difference (only 22.6% of employed ICT specialists are women).

## Two Main Weaknesses or Areas to Improve

### Digitalisation of SMEs

Although 75.3% of SMEs have at least a basic level of digital intensity, above an EU average of 57.7%, this indicator has shown a very limited annual growth over two years, suggesting further efforts may be needed to ensure the 90% target is reached by 2030.

### Adoption of advanced digital technologies by enterprises

In 2023, 15.2% of Danish enterprises adopted AI solutions in 2023, almost twice the EU average of 8.0%. However, the indicator has shown a significant decrease since 2022.



# Wrapping up: the way forward in 4 priority areas

- 1. Implementing, enforcing and improving regulatory frameworks** (e.g. DSA, DMA, AI Act), codification, mapping reporting obligations, consolidation, smart regulations based on innovation, enhancing synergies, reducing administrative burdens, and leveraging the Digital Decade Board.
- 2. Strengthening competitiveness** by deepening the **single market** (e.g. telecom), by accelerating the development of the **European-based digital industry**, infrastructures and services (e.g. leveraging procurement, civil-defence synergies), and **mobilising investments** on human capital, infrastructure development and deployment, start-up ecosystems (funding, capital market), supporting a **smart green transition**
- 3. Providing for “common goods”:**
  - **Security** as an integral and essential element of digital technologies and infrastructures
  - Ensuring that **people and their rights are central to digital transformation**, e.g. intensifying fight against disinformation, for safe and healthy online spaces for all, **protecting children**.
- 4. Harnessing the whole society** : fostering inclusiveness and involvement of all actors at all levels.
  - **Disseminating digital technologies across society and regions**, tackling digital divides, fostering digital ecosystems initiatives (AI factories, EDIH, EDICs, smart cities).
  - **Increasing cooperation, mutual inspiration, and sharing success stories and solutions** to systemic challenges.

# A clear alignment with President VDL priorities for next College

## 'Europe's Choice' – The new political priorities 2024-2029:

- Encompassing "Defence and security. Sustainable prosperity and competitiveness. Democracy and social fairness. Leading in the world and delivering in Europe."
- **The State of the Digital Decade report 2024 anticipated many of the issues and priorities** presented in the new Commission's guidelines, e.g. need to limit administrative burden, focus on implementation, need to reinforce R&I, dissemination of tech, protection of children online and impacts on wellbeing and mental health.
- The Digital Decade Policy Programme **is extremely relevant** and can **strongly support** the achievement of the goals and ambitions for the next mandate, referenced in the Mission Letters and the Draghi Report.

***"Reaching our digital targets and building a true digital single market would be a gamechanger for our productivity and competitiveness."***

'Europe's Choice', Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029

# Questions & Answers

# Thank you !



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# Panel Debate

- **Georg RIEKELES, Associate Director  
European Policy Centre (EPC)**
- **Niclas POITIERS, Research Fellow  
Bruegel**
- **Léa AUFFRET, Head of International Affairs & Single Market  
BEUC**

# Questions & Answers

# Thank you !



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