

# A Europe fit for the Digital age

*“Maintaining our digital leadership where we have it, catching up where we lag behind and moving first on new-generation technologies.”*

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the EU Commission, to Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice-president of the Commission responsible for A Europe fit for the Digital age

# A Europe fit for the Digital age

One of the 6 top  
priorities of the new  
Commission!



EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

**Margrethe Vestager**

A Europe Fit for the Digital Age



**Thierry Breton**  
Internal Market



**Mariya Gabriel**  
Innovation, Research, Culture,  
Education and Youth



**Nicolas Schmit**  
Jobs and Social Rights



**Didier Reynders**  
Justice

# A Europe fit for the Digital age: policy areas

## **Better access to online goods for consumers and businesses**

Helping to make the EU's digital world a seamless and level marketplace to buy and sell.

## **The right environment for digital networks and services**

Designing rules that match the pace of technology, such as the rollout of next-generation 5G mobile connections or the Action Plan on Financial Technology.

## **Economy and Society**

Ensuring that citizens and businesses can take full advantage of the opportunities digitalisation can offer.

## **Data protection**

Reforming data protection to give people control over their data and help businesses comply. Ensuring that non-EU countries protect data of EU citizens

# Digital single market



A **Digital Single Market (DSM)** is one in which the free movement of persons, services and capital is ensured and where the individuals and businesses can seamlessly access and engage in online activities under conditions of fair competition, and a high level of consumer and personal data protection, irrespective of their nationality or place of residence.

1. **Access:** better access for consumers and businesses to digital goods and services across Europe;
2. **Environment:** creating the right conditions and a level playing field for digital networks and innovative services to flourish;
3. **Economy & Society:** maximising the growth potential of the digital economy.

# Achievements and investments under the Juncker Commission

- Around €41.3 billion in investment in the digital sector is made available from the **European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI)**.
- In addition, more than €14 billion under the **European Structural and Investment Funds** is being invested in digital technologies.
- Overall 2,800 municipalities in Europe were selected to receive a **WiFi4EU** voucher worth €15,000
- **Single digital gateway**: facilitating online access to the information and assistance services that citizens and businesses need to get active in another EU country
- Better **spectrum coordination** will increase the value of spectrum-enabled services to €1 trillion a year by 2023. Europe will be able to successfully launch 5G connection.
- Europeans can access their **online subscriptions** to services while travelling to another Member State.
- **End of roaming charges**



# Investments and achievements under the Juncker Commission



- New rules against unjustified **geoblocking**
- **Cross-border data storage and processing** becomes easier through a single set of rules: could result in additional revenues for European businesses of up to €10.4 billion
- €1 billion is being invested jointly with Member States to build a world-class European **supercomputer infrastructure**
- Approach to **artificial intelligence and robotics** deals with technological, ethical, legal and socio-economic aspects to boost the EU's research and industrial capacity and to put Artificial Intelligence at the service of European citizens and economy
- EU-wide legislation on **cybersecurity**: Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems and the Cybersecurity Act to reinforce cooperation against cyber-attacks

# Digital Europe programme

Planned overall **budget of €9.2 billion** for next long-term EU budget (2021 - 2028). Digital Europe will complement other EU programmes, such as the proposed Horizon Europe programme for research and innovation, as well as the Connecting Europe Facility for digital infrastructure.

The programme will boost investments in **supercomputing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, advanced digital skills**, and ensuring a wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society. Its goal is to improve Europe's competitiveness in the global digital economy and increase its technological autonomy.



# Digital Europe programme

Supercomputing:  
€2.7 billion



- **Building world-class exascale supercomputers** by 2022/2023
- Broaden the **use of supercomputing** in areas of public interest such as health, environment and security, and in industry, including small and medium-sized enterprises

Artificial intelligence:  
€2.5 billion



- Invest in and open up the use of artificial intelligence **by businesses and public administrations**
- Facilitate safe access to and storage of large sets of data and algorithms
- Strengthen and support existing **artificial intelligence testing and experimentation facilities** in areas such as health and mobility

# Digital Europe programme

Cybersecurity:  
€2 billion



- Procurement of **advanced cybersecurity equipment**, tools and data infrastructures in Member states and across the economy
- Support the best use of European knowledge, capacity and advanced skills related to cybersecurity
- Reinforce capabilities within Member States and the private sector for a **uniformly high level of security** of network and information systems

Advanced digital skills:  
€700 million



- **Short-term trainings** and courses for entrepreneurs, SME leaders and the workforce
- **Long-term trainings and Master's courses** for students, IT professionals and the workforce
- Support **on-the-job trainings and traineeships** for students, young entrepreneurs and graduates

# Digital Europe programme

Wider use of digital technologies: €1.3 billion



- Ensure that the public sector and areas of public interests, such as **health and care, education, transport, and the cultural and creative sectors, can deploy and access state-of-the-art digital technologies**
- Provide more interoperable public services across the EU and at EU level
- Offer public administrations access to testing and piloting of digital technologies, including their cross-border use
- Support the **uptake of advanced digital and related technologies by the industry, notably small and medium-sized enterprises**
- **European Digital Innovation Hubs**, aiming to have a Hub in every region, to help companies benefit from digital opportunities

# Links with the European Green deal



The Commission will explore measures to ensure that digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, 5G, cloud and edge computing and the internet of things can accelerate and maximise the impact of policies to deal with climate change and protect the environment.

Digitalisation also presents new opportunities for distance monitoring of air and water pollution, or for monitoring and optimising how energy and natural resources are used.

# Role and achievements of the European Parliament



- Ending roaming charges
- Supporting free Wi-Fi connections in towns and villages (Wifi4EU)
- Supporting investment in high-performance computing and in the science cloud (European Open Science Cloud)
- Measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks
- Improving data protection and promoting investments in essential cybersecurity industrial capacities
- Approving the creation of a European Information and communications technology (ICT) security framework and organising ICT certification in the EU
- Improved data access and transfer for all by setting network neutrality standards
- Harmonising the use of the 470-790 MHz frequency band

# Finnish presidency priorities / End of 2019

## Internal market and consumer protection:

- digital economy, including digital services, digital single market were high on the Presidency's programme
- digitalisation, artificial intelligence, geoblocking, digital skills

**Legal Affairs:** digitalisation and technological advances can help contribute to speeding up and improving access to justice

**Industry, Research and Energy:** strong focus on research and innovation

**Transport and Tourism:** digitalisation of the tourism sector to accelerate growth and employment

**Economic and Monetary Affairs:** harmonised digital taxation in the EU

**Culture and Education:** development of digital skills in education, developing the audiovisual sector, including new technologies, high quality content, engagement with the audience and digital transformation.



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# Croatian presidency priorities / ½ of 2020

## Strengthening competitiveness and skills:

- Further integration of digital common market and digitalization of business
- Modernization of agriculture and rural areas

## Networked economy and fulfilled potentials:

- **Common European traffic area:** Digitalization and innovation in the traffic sector

## High quality and secure data infrastructure:

- Decreasing digital gaps
- Creating conditions for full functioning and security of 5G networks
- Starting discussion on legal and ethical implications of artificial intelligence and defining standards for new technologies

## Safer union and its citizens, increasing resilience to hybrid threats:

- Combating all forms of hybrid threats and malicious cybernetic activities
- Suppressing false news, intolerance and disinformation on digital platforms
- Increasing expert and technological capacities in cybernetic security domain



# Smart Villages - Smart rural areas

Why smart cities and no smart villages? How to battle depopulation of- and the migration from- rural areas? How to embrace the digitalisation of rural life? How to provide additional income for farmers? How to battle the digital divide between urban and digital areas?

Focus on: Precision farming, Digital platforms offering all essential services, Renewable energy, Rural tourism, New and high-value jobs, Social innovation, Mobility, Entrepreneurship, Shared economy, Circular economy, Biobased economy



# Smart Villages - Smart rural areas

Proposed additional funding for rural development projects in the European Regional Development Fund in the next financial perspective 2021-2028

Approved by the EP Committee for Regional development: €13,5 billion for development of rural areas, €2,4 billion of that for Smart Villages projects

Implemented through the LEADER scheme (Local Action Groups)



# Goals in the next decade

Aiming for an inclusive digital society which benefits from the digital single market, building smarter cities and villages, improving access to digital services and digital skills will enable a truly digital European society.