

THE DIGITAL FUTURE OF EUROPE

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Abstract:

Digital transformation raises global challenges. The European Committee has entered “The Digital Decade” and presents a vision, goals and ways to achieve a successful digital transformation of Europe until 2030. This is essential for achieving the transition towards a neutral economy from a climate point of view, both circular and resistant. This paper proposes to present, from a theoretical point of view, the new European strategy, called European Green Deal. Among the subjects described, the objectives and actions of the strategy are identified, both of whom must be achieved until 2030. Also, the digital future of Europe will be presented, as part of the European Green Deal strategy.

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JEL classification: *O10*

INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) is an international organization founded by treaties between the European states. EU, as we know it today, is the result of a process that has begun after the 2nd World War, with the making of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC).

The first measures taken have consisted in consolidating the economic cooperation: the purpose was for the countries involved in commercial exchanges to become interdependent from an economic point of view and thus, the avoidance of conflict to become more probable. Since then, 22 more countries have joined (Great Britain has left EU in 2020), creating a vast unique market (also called “internal” market), which continues to develop in order to capitalize its entire potential. What has begun as a purely economic union, has gradually evolved, becoming an organization that acts in numerous political fields, from climate related politics, environment and health, to external relationships, security, justice and migration. This shift has reflected in the name change of 1993 in the European Union, from the previous The European Economic Community.

Biodiversity strategy for 2030

The EU’s biodiversity strategy for 2030 is a comprehensive, ambitious and long-term plan to protect nature and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. The strategy, which contains specific actions and commitments, aims to put Europe’s biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030.

A core part of it will also support a green recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Climate change and environmental degradation represent a real threat to Europe and the world. To overcome these challenges, the European Green Deal will transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy, ensuring:

- ✓ no net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050
- ✓ economic growth decoupled from resource use
- ✓ no person and no place left behind

The European Green Deal will improve the well-being and health of citizens and future generations by providing:



Image No. 1: The European Green Deal

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

Objectives

The biodiversity strategy aims to put Europe’s biodiversity on the path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people, climate and the planet.

In the post-COVID-19 context, the strategy aims to build our societies’ resilience to future threats such as:

- ✓ the impacts of climate change
- ✓ forest fires
- ✓ food insecurity
- ✓ disease outbreaks – including by protecting wildlife and fighting illegal wildlife trade.

Actions

The strategy contains specific commitments and actions to be delivered by 2030. Establishing a larger EU-wide network of protected areas on land and at sea.

The EU will enlarge existing Natura 2000 areas, with strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value.

Through concrete commitments and actions, the EU aims to restore degraded ecosystems by 2030 and manage them sustainably, addressing the key drivers of biodiversity loss.

The strategy highlights unlocking funding for biodiversity, and setting in motion a new, strengthened governance framework to:

- ensure better implementation and track progress
- improve knowledge, financing and investments
- better respecting nature in public and business decision-making

Introducing measures to tackle the global biodiversity challenge. These measures will demonstrate that the EU is ready to lead by example to address the global biodiversity crisis. In particular, working towards the successful adoption of an ambitious global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Shaping Europe's digital future

The digital transition should work for all, putting people first and opening new opportunities for business. Digital solutions are also key to fighting climate change and achieving the green transition.

The European Commission is working on a digital transformation that will benefit everyone. Digital solutions that put people first will:

- open up new opportunities for businesses
- encourage the development of trustworthy technology
- foster an open and democratic society
- enable a vibrant and sustainable economy
- help fight climate change and achieve the green transition

The European approach will be based on three main pillars:

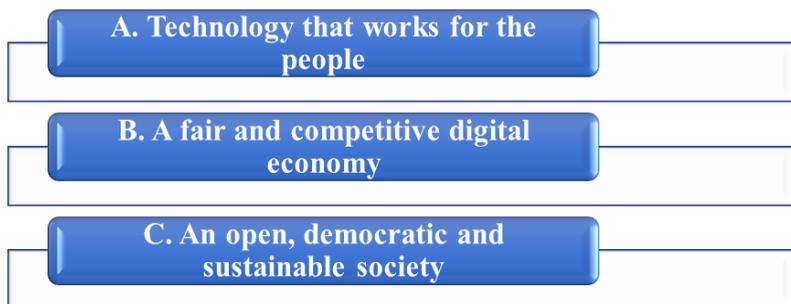


Image No.2: The three main pillars

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/shaping-europe-digital-future_ro#latest

A. Technology that works for the people

The EU's digital strategy will:

- ✓ invest in digital skills for all Europeans
- ✓ protect people from cyber threats (hacking, ransomware, identity theft)
- ✓ ensure Artificial Intelligence is developed in ways that respect people's rights and earn their trust
- ✓ accelerate the roll-out of ultra-fast broadband for homes, schools and hospitals throughout the EU
- ✓ expand Europe's super-computing capacity to develop innovative solutions for medicine, transport and the environment.

B. A fair and competitive digital economy

The EU's digital strategy will:

- enable a vibrant community of innovative and fast growing start-ups and small businesses to access finance and to expand
- strengthen the responsibility of online platforms by proposing a Digital Services Act and clarifying rules for online services
- make sure that EU rules are fit for the digital economy
- ensure fair competition of all companies in Europe
- increase access to high-quality data while ensuring that personal and sensitive data is safeguarded.

C. An open, democratic and sustainable society

The EU's digital strategy will:

- use technology to help Europe become climate-neutral by 2050
- reduce the digital sector's carbon emissions
- give citizens more control and protection of their data
- create a "European health data space" to foster targeted research, diagnosis and treatment
- fight disinformation online and foster diverse and reliable media content.

The EU's digital strategy will benefit European:



Image No. 3: The benefit of the EU's digital strategy

Source: Individual projection

The European Union will

- aim to become a global role model for the digital economy
- support developing economies in going digital
- develop digital standards and promote them internationally.

CONCLUSION

Digital technologies are profoundly changing our daily life, our way of working and doing business, and the way people travel, communicate and relate with each other. Digital communication, social media interaction, e-commerce, and digital enterprises are steadily transforming our world. They are generating an ever-increasing amount of data, which, if pooled and used, can lead to completely new means and levels of value creation. It is a transformation as fundamental as the one caused by the industrial revolution. The digital transformation can only work if it works for all and not for only a few. It will be a truly European project – a digital society based on European values and European rules - that can truly inspire the rest of the world.

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