

Brussels, 06 April 2018

Subject: DIGITALEUROPE calls for action on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

Dear President Juncker,
Dear President Tajani,
Dear President Tusk,

DIGITALEUROPE, whose members include in total over 25,000 ICT Companies in Europe represented by 38 national trade associations from across Europe, believes that the European Union can achieve a Digital Single Market that will create hundreds of thousands of jobs and generate billions of euros to be invested in important social and economic programmes.

We understand from the draft plans for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) that you are considering a strategic structural instrument, entitled “Digital Europe Programme” that will help drive the development and adoption of important technologies, including artificial intelligence, high performance computing, advanced digital skills, cybersecurity, and interoperability solutions.

We applaud any effort to direct the current European Structural and Investment Funds to accelerate the implementation of super-fast Internet to reach and connect all communities across the Union, no matter how remote, as we firmly believe access to technology is crucial for Europe’s future.

DIGITALEUROPE’s Members fully support your efforts and stand firmly behind you to make this a reality. We also congratulate your commitment to ensure that digital skills and education reform remains a priority of the current and the next Commission, as we firmly believe a lot more can be done in this area.

DIGITALEUROPE has been leading the secretariat of the Digital Skills & Jobs Coalition since its launch and we strongly support the Digital Opportunity traineeship scheme. We are ready to enhance our close partnership with the EU institutions in leveraging future EU-wide projects in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity and computational thinking.

The existing instruments that include ESIF (especially ESF, ERDF, CF), Horizon 2020/FP9, Erasmus+, COSME and EFSI should remain in place as they deliver an important source of investment through research programmes and dispense essential skills training that are critical to the future of the EU project and to tackle the difficult societal challenges ahead. However, considering the Commission’s plans to double the amounts currently invested in the digital economy, DIGITALEUROPE calls for a stronger ICT focus in all these instruments.

Regarding the next Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP9), we support President Juncker’s commitment to aim for a 160 billion Euros budget, which would result in the net creation of 650,000 jobs by 2040 and a GDP increase of 0.5 per cent. DIGITALEUROPE stresses the need for FP9 to keep funding and involving the digital industry to nurture a proven collaborative R&I environment of large firms, SMEs, universities and research institutes. Together with the creation of a Digital Europe Programme, this

would help the European Union to foster innovation and complete the much-needed digitalisation of Europe.

With digital transformation in full gear, digital skills as transversal skills are important for life and work of every citizen. We would like to see more allocation of EU funds and programmes to the development of digital skills (on basic and advanced levels separately), allowing the upskilling and reskilling of the current and future workforce, as well as more encouragement for industry-education cooperation.

Our Members and National Trade Associations from across Europe stand ready to discuss this topic with you and the co-legislators. We invite the European Commission, the Parliament and the Council of the EU to maintain an open dialogue with DIGITALEUROPE regarding current legislative files and to hear our concerns and recommendations for future regulatory policies.

I personally remain at your disposal for any further question.

Yours sincerely,



Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl
Director General DIGITALEUROPE

Copy sent to: European Commission's Vice-Presidents Ansip and Katainen, Commissioners Bieńkowska, Crețu, Gabriel, Moedas, Navracscics, Oettinger, Thyssen, Secretary General Selmayr; DGs Calviño, Christophidou, Evans, Korte, Lemaître, Paquet, Viola; European Parliament's BUDG Chair Arthuis, ITRE Chair Buzek; Bulgarian EU Permanent Representative Tzantchev, Austrian EU Permanent representative Marschik; European Committee of the Regions' President Lambertz; European Economic and Social Committee's President Dassis.

ABOUT DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE represents the digital technology industry in Europe. Our members include some of the world's largest IT, telecoms and consumer electronics companies and national associations from every part of Europe. DIGITALEUROPE wants European businesses and citizens to benefit fully from digital technologies and for Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital technology companies. DIGITALEUROPE ensures industry participation in the development and implementation of EU policies.

DIGITALEUROPE's members include in total 25,000 ICT Companies in Europe represented by over 60 corporate members and 38 national trade associations from across Europe. Our website provides further information on our recent news and activities: <http://www.digitaleurope.org>

DIGITALEUROPE MEMBERSHIP

Corporate Members

Adobe, Airbus, Amazon, AMD, Apple, Bose, Brother, Canon, Cisco, Dell, Dropbox, Epson, Ericsson, Fujitsu, Google, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Hitachi, HP Inc., Huawei, IBM, Intel, JVC Kenwood Group, Konica Minolta, Kyocera, Lenovo, Lexmark, LG Electronics, Loewe, MasterCard, Microsoft, Mitsubishi Electric Europe, Motorola Solutions, MSD Europe Inc., NEC, Nokia, Nvidia Ltd., Océ, Oki, Oracle, Panasonic Europe, Philips, Pioneer, Qualcomm, Ricoh Europe PLC, Samsung, SAP, SAS, Schneider Electric, Sharp Electronics, Siemens, Sony, Swatch Group, Tata Consultancy Services, Technicolor, Texas Instruments, Toshiba, TP Vision, VMware, Western Digital, Xerox, Zebra Technologies.

National Trade Associations

Austria: IOÖ

Belarus: INFOPARK

Belgium: AGORIA

Bulgaria: BAIT

Croatia: Croatian Chamber of Economy

Cyprus: CITEA

Denmark: DI Digital, IT-BRANCHEN

Estonia: ITL

Finland: TIF

France: AFNUM, Syntec Numérique, Tech in France

Germany: BITKOM, ZVEI

Greece: SEPE

Hungary: IVSZ

Ireland: TECHNOLOGY IRELAND

Italy: Anitec-Assinform

Lithuania: INFOBALT

Netherlands: Nederland ICT, FIAR

Poland: KIGEIT, PIIT, ZIPSEE

Portugal: AGEFE

Romania: ANIS, APDETIC

Slovakia: ITAS

Slovenia: GZS

Spain: AMETIC

Sweden: Foreningen Teknikföretagen i Sverige, IT&Telekomföretagen

Switzerland: SWICO

Turkey: Digital Turkey Platform, ECID

Ukraine: IT UKRAINE

United Kingdom: techUK