Europe’s digital sector calls for a budget that matches our ambitions

“Digital companies grow two and a half times faster than non-digital companies. Yet only 3% of the proposed EU budget is devoted to the digital transformation of our society. This should be at least 10% if we are serious about bringing Europe into the digital age, with half of that focused on deploying new technologies.

On Thursday EU leaders will have to decide whether to invest in the industries of the future, or those of the past. The European social model is at stake.”

Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl, Director General of DIGITALEUROPE.

DIGITALEUROPE and 24 national digital associations have written letters to President Charles Michel and national leaders ahead of the extraordinary European Council on 20 February.

Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl continued:

“"This European Council will define Europe’s future. Spending on digital can deliver economic growth, good well-paying jobs, and energy efficiency.”

"We have five recommendations that will help transform Europe into a digital powerhouse. We need to look across the whole budget and see where digital can make a difference – that could be in agriculture, in research and development or elsewhere. If we don’t act, this will be a huge missed opportunity."

"We are not necessarily asking for an overall budget increase, rather that the money is allocated to those areas which can make the biggest difference to our future prosperity.”

Our recommendations:

- Increase the share of the EU budget spending on digital transformation to 10%. It is currently around 3%.
- Significantly expand the Digital Europe programme from €9.2 billion to €25 billion to maximise the short- and medium-term impact on skills, AI and SME digitalisation across the EU.

† See opposite page. PIIT joined campaign later.
Integrate digital across the Horizon Europe framework programme for research.

Earmark specific spending on digital innovation from other funding programmes, like the Common Agricultural Policy or Cohesion Policy.

Increase overall funding on research and development from 2% to 3% of EU GDP.

Background

Digital companies grow two and a half times faster than non-digital companies. However, over half of citizens need to gain new digital skills in order to do their jobs.

Artificial intelligence could add €3.6 trillion to Europe’s economic growth by 2030, but right now the US is investing four times more than the EU, and China is investing twice as much.

Digitally enabled industries could support a 20% reduction in global CO2 emissions.

National trade associations that co-signed the letter:

- **AFNUM** – France
- **AGORIA** – Belgium
- **AGEFE** – Portugal
- **Anitec-Assinform** – Italy
- **ANIS** – Romania
- **APDETIC** – Romania
- **APSI** – Luxembourg
- **Bitkom** – Germany
- **CITEA** – Cyprus
- **GZS Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Slovenia** – Slovenia
- **HGK Croatian Chamber of Economy** – Croatia
- **INFOBALT** – Lithuania
- **IT-Branchen** – Denmark
- **ITL** – Estonia
- **ITL** – Estonia
- **IVSZ** – Hungary
- **KIGEIT** – Poland
- **NLdigital** – The Netherlands
- **PIIT** – Poland
- **SEPE** – Greece
- **Syntec Numérique** – France
- **TECH IN France** – France
- **Teknikföretagen** – Sweden
- **Technology Industries of Finland** – Finland
- **ZIPSEE** – Poland

---

2. 'The Future of Jobs Report', World Economic Forum, 2018
3. "Innovation in Europe: Changing the game to regain a competitive edge", McKinsey, October 2019
4. #SMARTer 2030, GeSI & Accenture, 2015
FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Chris Ruff

Director of Communication and Political Outreach

chris.ruff@digitaleurope.org / +32 485 55 22 54
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 Membership

Corporate Members

Airbus, Amazon, AMD, Apple, Arçelik, Bayer, Bosch, Bose, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Brother, Canon, Cisco, DATEV, Dell, Dropbox, Epson, Ericsson, Facebook, Fujitsu, Google, Graphcore, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Hitachi, HP Inc., HSBC, Huawei, Intel, Johnson & Johnson, JVC Kenwood Group, Konica Minolta, Kyocera, Lenovo, Lexmark, LG Electronics, MasterCard, METRO, Microsoft, Mitsubishi Electric Europe, Motorola Solutions, MSD Europe Inc., NEC, Nokia, Nvidia Ltd., Océ, Oki, Oracle, Palo Alto Networks, Panasonic Europe, Philips, Qualcomm, Red Hat, Ricoh Europe PLC, Rockwell Automation, Samsung, SAP, SAS, Schneider Electric, Sharp Electronics, Siemens, Siemens Healthineers, Sony, Swatch Group, Tata Consultancy Services, Technicolor, Texas Instruments, Toshiba, TP Vision, UnitedHealth Group, Visa, VMware, Xerox.

National Trade Associations

Austria: IOÖ
Belarus: INFOPARK
Belgium: AGORIA
Croatia: Croatian Chamber of Economy
Cyprus: CITEA
Denmark: DI Digital, IT BRANCHEN, Dansk Erhverv
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
Luxembourg: APSI
Netherlands: NLdigital, FIAR
Norway: Abelia
Poland: KIGEIT, PIIT, ZIPSEE
Portugal: AGEFE
Romania: ANIS, APDETIC
Slovakia: ITAS
Slovenia: GZS
Spain: AMETIC
Sweden: Teknikföretagen, IT&Telekomföretagen
Switzerland: SWICO
Turkey: Digital Turkey Platform, ECID
Ukraine: IT UKRAINE
United Kingdom: techUK