

ROADMAP	
TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	"Digital Agenda for Europe – Mid-Term Review"
TYPE OF INITIATIVE	X CWP • Non-CWP • Implementing act/Delegated act
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	INFSO C1
EXPECTED DATE OF ADOPTION	Month/Year: Q4 2012
VERSION OF ROADMAP	No: 1 Last modification: Month/Year: August 2011

This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content and structure.

A. Context, problem definition
(i) What is the political context of the initiative? (ii) How does it relate to past and possible future initiatives, and to other EU policies? (iii) What ex-post analysis of the existing policy has been carried out and what results are relevant for this initiative?
<p>The Digital Agenda for Europe, launched in May 2010, was the first thematic strategy launched under the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Digital Agenda is the European Commission's strategy for using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to the benefit Europe's society and economy. It outlines the vision, targets and policy measures for the period 2010-2015.</p> <p>Through the issues it addresses, the Digital Agenda is also closely linked to various other EU policies, such as the single market, consumer protection, research and innovation, industrial policy, regional and rural development, environmental sustainability, skills and culture, or healthcare.</p> <p>Europe's Digital Competitiveness Report 2010 (May 2010) analysed developments in the European information society and provided an evidence base for the European Digital Agenda. Delivery of the actions listed in the Digital Agenda policy programme is assessed on a regular basis: the Digital Agenda Scoreboard published in May 2011 reported on the first year of implementation of actions as well as on progress on the 13 key performance targets. The progress and challenges lying ahead were then debated at the Digital Assembly, a wide stakeholder event that brought together over 1600 participants on 16-17 June 2011. Another important source of feedback is the "Digital Agenda going local" initiative – a series of visits to all Member States. Last year the exercise focused on presenting the Digital Agenda, this autumn the aim is to gather feedback on the first year of implementation and emerging new issues.</p>
What are the main problems which this initiative will address?
<p>Although the Digital Agenda lists actions for the period of 2010-2015, most of them are scheduled for delivery in 2011-2012. By 2012 the majority of the Digital Agenda's "to do" list should therefore be close to completion. Secondly, the ICT landscape is rapidly changing, requiring flexibility, constant attention to emerging challenges and adjustment. It is therefore crucial that an updated strategy is presented in 2012, preceded by a wide and open dialogue with stakeholders. That is the aim of the Communication on the Mid-Term Review of the Digital Agenda.</p>
Who will be affected by it?
As the digital revolution is increasingly impacting all areas of life, all stakeholders are affected, citizens, industry, public administrations.
(i) Is EU action justified on grounds of subsidiarity? (ii) Why can Member States not achieve the objectives of the proposed action sufficiently by themselves? (Necessity Test) (iii) Can the EU achieve the objectives better? (Test of EU Value Added)
<p>Despite the global spread of the Internet, online markets in the EU are still separated by artificial barriers. For instance, European consumers face a number of obstacles when shopping or accessing content online. The Mid-Term Review of the Digital Agenda will continue to address a number of areas in which policies are fragmented along national lines and a coordinated response at the EU level is needed to take better advantage of the EU's major economic asset - the 500 million strong consumer market.</p>

B. Objectives of the initiative

What are the main policy objectives?

The Mid-Term Review will need to address new issues such as the rise of cloud computing. Secondly, the Commission has welcomed the European Council's call for a roadmap on the completion of the digital Single Market by 2015 and that pillar of the Digital Agenda will require intensified effort to help Europe's recovery from the economic crisis. Thirdly, the Mid-Term review will chart further way ahead on actions which have been completed and which require follow-up or further development.

Apart from that, the Commission will continue to work:

- To provide a stable legal framework that stimulates investments in an open and competitive high speed internet infrastructure and in related services;
- To develop an efficient spectrum policy;
- To facilitate the use of the EU's structural funds in pursuit of this agenda;
- To create a true single market for online content and services (i.e. borderless and safe EU web services and digital content markets, with high levels of trust and confidence, a balanced regulatory framework with clear rights regimes, the fostering of multi-territorial licences, adequate protection and remuneration for rights holders and active support for the digitisation of Europe's rich cultural heritage, and to shape the global governance of the internet;
- To reform the research and innovation funds and increase support in the field of ICTs so as to reinforce Europe's technology strength in key strategic fields and create the conditions for high growth SMEs to lead emerging markets and to stimulate ICT innovation across all business sectors;
- To promote internet access and take-up by all European citizens, especially through actions in support of digital literacy and accessibility.

At national level, Member States will need to continue:

- To implement their operational high speed internet strategies, and target public funding, including structural funds, on areas not fully served by private investments;
- To establish a legal framework for co-ordinating public works to reduce costs of network rollout;
- To promote deployment and usage of modern accessible online services (e.g. e-government, online health, smart home, digital skills, security);
- To address any further major issue that may emerge from the reflection process on the Mid-Term Review.

Do the objectives imply developing EU policy in new areas?

Due to the fast-changing nature of ICT and their disruptive impact worldwide, the Digital Agenda develops EU policy in an area which is still relatively new and constantly evolving – and which is of strategic importance to Europe's social development and economic competitiveness.

C. Options

- (i) What are the policy options being considered?
- (ii) What legislative or 'soft law' instruments could be considered?
- (iii) How do the options respect the proportionality principle?

The Digital Agenda is a flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 strategy. As such, it is a substantial policy package with a targeted programme of measures including legal measures notably in the areas of: promoting broadband roll out and take-up; legal reforms to stimulate the digital single market; reinforcing digital citizenship through enhanced e-skills and ICT for Energy Efficiency; the clarification and better enforcement of consumer protection in online environments; working with Member States to establish interoperable e-authentication to raise trust and security; stepping up and focusing ICT research in the EU; and legal measures to enhance the standardisation of ICT that is open and interoperable. Each individual action likely to have significant impacts will individually undergo impact assessments and will each have their own policy options (hence at this stage this aspect is not further developed here). The Digital Agenda will go significantly beyond routine update of existing legislation.

All policy measures under the Digital Agenda will respect the proportionality principle. As a strategy document the Agenda will continue to be accompanied by a stream of implementing measures each of which will carry its specific impact assessment.

D. Initial assessment of impacts

What are the benefits and costs of each of the policy options?

Without a comprehensive strategy for the digital society and economy, a deepening of the problems outlined above (see point A) can be expected.

Full implementation of the updated Digital Agenda, on the other hand, is likely to contribute to greater empowerment of the users, enabling consumers to become informed, competent, creative and critical users of converging technologies. Increasing consumer demand will guarantee investors' return on investments in ICT infrastructure, products and services, which will translate into improving jobs and growth at the EU level. The Digital Agenda is a package of demand-side and supply-side measures that will help Europe to maintain its strong and competitive position on the global ICT market.

Could any or all of the options have significant impacts on (i) simplification, (ii) administrative burden and (iii) on relations with other countries, (iv) implementation arrangements? And (v) could any be difficult to transpose for certain Member States?

Some of the actions proposed in the Mid-Term Review of the Digital Agenda may have an impact on simplification of administrative burden – that would be established in the course of future individual impact assessments.

(i) Will an IA be carried out for this initiative and/or possible follow-up initiatives? (ii) When will the IA work start? (iii) When will you set up the IA Steering Group and how often will it meet? (iv) What DGs will be invited?

No formal impact assessment is expected for the Mid-Term Review of the Digital Agenda.

(i) Is any of options likely to have impacts on the EU budget above €5m?

(ii) If so, will this IA serve also as an ex-ante evaluation, as required by the Financial regulation? If not, provide information about the timing of the ex-ante evaluation.

There are no budgetary implications to the overall Digital Agenda policy strategy, but specific implementing actions will certainly give rise to budgetary demands which will have to be assessed on their own merits as part of their individual impact assessments.

E. Evidence base, planning of further work and consultation

(i) What information and data are already available? Will existing impact assessment and evaluation work be used?

(ii) What further information needs to be gathered, how will this be done (*e.g. internally or by an external contractor*), and by when?

(iii) What is the timing for the procurement process & the contract for any external contracts that you are planning (*e.g. for analytical studies, information gathering, etc.*)?

(iv) Is any particular communication or information activity foreseen? If so, what, and by when?

The Mid-Term Review of the Digital Agenda will be preceded by extensive studies on selected thematic areas as well as an overall evaluation study looking at lessons learnt so far.

Which stakeholders & experts have been or will be consulted, how, and at what stage?

Extensive stakeholder consultation is foreseen in 2011-2012: the main vehicle for assessing the progress and discussing the challenges ahead is the annual Digital Agenda Assembly, the first of which took place in June 2011 in Brussels. The Assembly brought together a broad range of participants from industry, the research community and NGOs, as well as representatives from Member State governments and the other EU institutions. Another source of input is a series of Digital Agenda-related visits to the Member States, which were carried out first in 2010 and are planned again in autumn 2011. Thirdly, various issue-specific consultations, as well as internal and external workshops will provide input into the Mid-Term Review.