



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the Communication on 2030 Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade {COM(2021)118 final}.

The Communication responds to the European Council's call in October 2020 for the Commission to present a Digital Compass by March 2021. The Commission is not only proposing a digital decade vision with ambitious goals for the European Union, but also a robust governance and monitoring mechanism to be fleshed out in a Digital Compass Policy Programme.

The programme will also include clear milestones and practical tools to facilitate its implementation, notably a mechanism for the Commission to engage with Member States to identify and address gaps and to launch and shape multi-country projects. A mechanism will be set up to incentivise Member States to work together and organise multi-country projects to build digital capacities in critical areas, and accelerate large technological projects that are necessary for EU's digital transition and industry transformation. The programme will also include a reporting and monitoring process, to ensure that we follow the trajectory and deliver on the common 2030 objectives.

The Commission welcomes the Senát's broad support for the digital ambition and its 2030 targets and acknowledges the view of the Senát that these are ambitious. Setting ambitious but achievable targets supported by the right framework for delivery will give a renewed impetus to meeting the EU's commitment for the digital transformation. Enabling the EU to pursue digital policies that empower people and businesses to seize a human-centered, sustainable and more prosperous digital future.

Like the Senát, the Commission attaches great importance to market openness and global cooperation that are compatible with European digital sovereignty. Becoming the digital leaders of the future implies that we need to become more digitally autonomous and resilient in key technological areas such as connectivity, data, cloud and microelectronics, and to address our weaknesses. The Commission underlines the geopolitical role of these emerging

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technologies and the importance of a common EU position in promoting international standards based on EU values, respect of human rights and cooperation with like-minded partners.

The Commission also agrees with the views expressed by the Senát aiming at ensuring that the rights applicable offline can also be exercised online. As a follow-up to the Communication, the Commission is currently working on the formulation of a set of digital principles and rights to promote and uphold EU values in the digital space and to empower people making sure that everybody has a chance to take an active part in society and democracy. Principles, such as access for all to internet services, a secure and trusted online environment or protection and empowerment of children online would complement, but not replace the legal rights already present in the Union acquis like the freedom of expression, the protection of personal data, of privacy, or of the intellectual creations of individuals in the online space, the protection of consumers online, and non-discrimination.

The Commission will take the opinion of the Senát and contributions received from the public consultation into account in developing a possible proposal for a joint Declaration on Digital Principles to be adopted by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. The Commission also appreciates and acknowledges the Senát's point on ensuring citizens choice towards digital citizenship and the option between online and offline services.

The Commission also shares the Senát's view that existing indicators and tools should be adapted and reused as much as possible. Likewise, monitoring of progress should not be too administratively demanding and there should be no duplication of activities. The Commission is currently developing its proposal for the Digital Compass Policy Programme and is pleased to inform the Senát that it is looking into aspects of coherence, in particular by adapting and enhancing the current Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) and its methodology.

The Commission will take the Senát's Opinion and other contributions received from the targeted public consultation into account in developing its proposal for the Digital Policy Programme. The Commission intends to present a proposal before the end of the year.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Senát and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Janusz Wojciechowski
Member of the Commission*