



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 13.11.2020  
C(2020) 7995 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Commission Communication on Shaping Europe's digital future {COM(2020) 67 final}. This Communication, adopted at the same time as a European Strategy on Data and a White Paper on Artificial Intelligence, sets the European Commission's agenda in the field of digital policy for the next five years.*

*While digital technology has considerably improved our lives, technology can have unforeseen consequences, including affecting people's privacy, the placing of unsafe products on the market, spreading disinformation, and the proliferation of cyberattacks. The Shaping Europe's Digital Future Strategy is built around three main principles: i) technology works for the people; ii) technology thrives on a fair and competitive economy and iii) technology supports an open, democratic and sustainable society. It sets an ambitious agenda for the next five years, with the overall aim that every citizen, every employee, every business has a fair chance to make the most of our increasingly digitised society – a European model for digitalisation.*

*The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's broad level of support for the Strategy's objectives and notes the recommendations outlined in the Opinion, in particular on cybersecurity, digital skills, data protection, improving connectivity and taking into account the experience of all Member States. The Commission also fully supports the Camera Deputaților's overall integrated approach to digitalisation, particularly using the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to adapt European economies and societies to the digital age, as well as increase investments in digitalisation.*

*In her State of the European Union speech on 18 September, Commission President von der Leyen called for 20% of the Recovery and Resilience Facility to be invested in the digital field, and outlined her vision for Europe's Digital Decade. The European Commission has already started to deliver. In September, the Commission adopted the first set of measures on*

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*digital policy on connectivity<sup>1</sup> and High Performance Computing<sup>2</sup>. By the end of the year, the Commission will put forward its proposal for a Digital Services Act, which will introduce due diligence obligations enhancing responsibility and safety rules for digital platforms, services and products. In 2021, the Commission will act in other key areas of the digital economy, such as Artificial Intelligence, connectivity, data and cybersecurity.*

*As underlined in the Camera Deputaților's Opinion, all relevant stakeholders (business, academia, civil society) will have the opportunity to contribute to the adoption process through public consultations and constant dialogue, using all fora available. All legislative proposals will be accompanied by thorough impact assessments and will be discussed with the co-legislators, the European Parliament and the Council.*

*In response to the more technical comments in the Opinion, the Commission would like to refer to the attached annex.*

*The Commission believes that the political dialogue with national Parliaments is essential to connect the institutions and the citizens of the European Union, and looks forward to continuing such a dialogue with the Camera Deputaților in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič*

*Vice-President*

*Thierry Breton*

*Member of the Commission*

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<sup>1</sup><https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/commission-recommendation-common-union-toolbox-reducing-cost-deploying-very-high-capacity>

<sup>2</sup><https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/proposal-council-regulation-establishing-european-high-performance-computing-joint-0>

## Annex

*The Commission welcomes the inquiry that the Camera Deputaților has carried out into the topic of digitalisation. The detailed work that the Camera Deputaților has undertaken constitutes an important contribution to the debate that is now underway.*

*As regards the points to which the Camera Deputaților has drawn the Commission's particular attention, the Commission would like to make the following comments:*

*Point 2: The Commission agrees on the need for a stronger digital component with regard to third countries, an objective that features prominently in the International section of the Digital Strategy adopted in February 2020. The Commission will continue to push for an ambitious international agenda in the field of ICT, particularly with the Eastern Partnership countries, the Western Balkans, Africa and Latin America.*

*Points 5 and 10: The Commission fully shares the opinion of the Camera Deputaților on the importance of cybersecurity for ensuring trust in an increasingly connected society. While fully observing national competences in this area, the Commission will continue to push for further strategic, operational and technical cooperation between the European level and the Member States.*

*Regarding data security, the Commission draws the attention of the Camera Deputaților to the extensive work done based on the EU toolbox on 5G cybersecurity and the secure 5G deployment in the EU.*

*Point 11: access to the Internet for all citizens is a key element for the success of the Shaping Europe's Digital Future Strategy, particularly in ensuring fairness and avoiding a digital divide. To this end, achieving the goals of a European Gigabit Society remains one of the core objectives of the European Commission. In September 2020, the European Commission published a Recommendation calling Member States to boost investment in very high-capacity broadband connectivity infrastructure, including 5G.*

*The Commission welcomes the idea proposed by the Camera Deputaților on exploring the possibility of ensuring access to the Internet for Europeans through European space programmes. The European Satellite Operators Association (ESOA), with the support of the European Commission, has already created an online tool that helps citizens find a local distributor who can supply them with immediate Internet connectivity through satellite no matter where they live. More information can be found on the European Commission's website<sup>3</sup> and the 'Broadband for all' project page.<sup>4</sup>*

*Point 13: The Commission shares the Camera Deputaților's view that education is essential for digital skills and innovation. While education remains primarily a national competence, there is considerable scope for improving how the education sector can adapt and thrive in the digital era. All these ideas will be included in a new Digital Education Action Plan to be presented by the European Commission in autumn 2020.*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/broadband-all-satellite>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.broadbandforall.eu/>

*Point 14: The Commission fully shares the assessment that digital technology will lead to economic growth, provided that it is accompanied by increased investment, both public and private. A recently published Study<sup>5</sup> on the macro-economic potential of digital transformation found that the cumulative additional GDP contribution of such digital technologies could amount to €2.2 trillion in the EU (equivalent to the 2019 combined GDP of Spain and the Netherlands). Raising the investment level of private and public actors in digital technologies and skills is essential to see this happen.*

*Point 16: The Commission agrees on the need for increased technological interoperability and intends to adopt a reinforced EU governments' interoperability strategy to ensure coordination and common standards for secure and borderless public sector data flows and services in 2021.*

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<sup>5</sup> Study on Shaping the digital transformation in Europe, McKinsey & Co., 2020, <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/commission-publishes-analysis-macro-economic-potential-digital-transformation-independent>