

Berlin Declaration
on
Digital Society and
Value-Based Digital Government

at the ministerial meeting during the
German Presidency of the Council of the European Union
on 8 December 2020

Preamble

Digital transformation opens up new opportunities and new forms of social participation and public opinion-forming processes, with the potential to engage all members of our societies. Digital technologies offer new ways of solving societal issues and making governments and public institutions more efficient and effective. Our societies ought to benefit fully from such new opportunities. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a profound impact on our societies from an educational, economic, leisure and behavioural perspective, it also highlights that digital technologies can enable our societies to effectively tackle sudden and extreme challenges and that innovative digital tools can be developed incorporating the European Union's values and fundamental rights. However, this is only possible if people are adequately skilled and provided with easy access to the necessary technology and connectivity. We need to explore the "lessons learned" from this pandemic with a view to crisis prevention and resilience on a broader scale and the boost it has given to the digital transformation. We need to seize this unique opportunity to more actively shape the strategic direction of the digital transformation in our Member States.

The 2017 Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment marked a milestone for a service-oriented, reliable and innovative eGovernment in Europe. As the goals and framework of the declaration remain undisputed, we reconfirm our common political commitment regarding the stated priorities with a view to ensuring high quality, user-centric and seamless cross-border digital public services for citizens and businesses in developing a future-oriented European Single Market. Yet, the success of a modern and innovative Digital Government hinges on the involvement of as many members of our societies as possible, especially those who feel anxious about digitalisation, security and privacy, or find it difficult to keep pace with rapid technological development. What is at stake is true digital empowerment of our citizens who want to benefit from a digitalised world. Everyone should be able to seize the opportunities offered by digitalisation. No one should be left behind.

This declaration aims to contribute to a value-based digital transformation by addressing and ultimately strengthening digital participation and digital inclusion in our societies. We need a compass to navigate the digital transition, aligned by our common European fundamental rights and values and shaped by participatory processes that to some extent may themselves need to be redesigned by involving citizens and the general public in

open consultations, online and offline. As emphasised by the Treaty on European Union (TEU), we draw inspiration from *“the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.”* We welcome ongoing efforts to improve digital cooperation on a global scale, in particular the UN Secretary General’s Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, as well as ongoing initiatives like the Coalition of the Willing, that aim to combine strengths in digital government transformation at EU level. By making sure that the digital transformation is based on our strong common democratic and ethical values and the following principles, we can take advantage of new technologies for the common good while striving for an ever-closer European Union.

I. Principles

Acknowledging the laws, rules and values on which the European Union rests¹ as well as key initiatives, legislation and strategies for shaping the digital transformation and strengthening the European Single Market², we reaffirm our commitment to respect and defend individual freedoms and rights, while ensuring that these are exercised in respect of the freedoms and rights of others. We acknowledge the public sector as an essential element for the European Single Market and a driving force for new and innovative technological solutions for public services and societal challenges. Public authorities at all levels must lead by example to strengthen the tenets of the European Union by adopting the following cornerstone principles in the digital sphere:

¹ in particular, the fundamental rights set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,

² i.e. Council Conclusions of 9 June 2020 “Shaping Europe’s Digital Future”; Council Conclusions of 7 June 2019 on the “Future of a highly digitised Europe beyond 2020: Boosting digital and economic competitiveness across the Union and digital cohesion”; the European Commission’s Digital Package, including the overall strategy Shaping Europe’s Digital Future, the European Data Strategy and the White Paper on Artificial Intelligence; the Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment and the eGovernment Action Plan 2016-2020 with their shared commitment to user centricity, simplicity of services, user friendliness, accessibility and convenience; a strengthened EU Digital Government Strategy and Government Interoperability Strategy [in preparation]; the Web Accessibility Directive ensuring access to public sector websites for the 80 million people with disabilities in the EU; the European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience; the Next Generation EU instrument to foster sustainable and resilient growth in view of the COVID-19 Pandemic; the Single Digital Gateway Regulation enabling user friendly, cross-border access to digital public services; the eIDAS Regulation with the aim of offering trustworthy cross-border digital identity for interoperability of services across Europe; data governance rules based on voluntary data contribution to encourage the development of federated, safe, secure and trusted common European data spaces for strategic sectors in order to facilitate the use of publicly available data and the free movement of data, such as the Directive on Open Data and the Reuse of Public Sector Information, “A European strategy for data” COM(2020) 66 final, the Regulation on the Free Flow of Non-Personal Data in compliance with the legal framework for the protection of personal data, especially the General Data Protection Regulation; the Cybersecurity Act, the Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS Directive) and the Council Conclusions on cybersecurity capacity and capabilities building in the EU,

(1) Validity and respect of fundamental rights and democratic values

All human beings are equally entitled to be treated with respect and fairness - both in the analog and in the digital sphere. The existing rights, values and the corresponding legal framework of the European Union apply regardless of our means of communication and irrespective of the use of analog, digital, hybrid or integrated formats. Our common core foundations such as the rule of law, our concern for human dignity, right to autonomy, and shared ethical values must prevail in the digital world. European democracy must be protected from both disinformation and outright attacks on elections with due respect for the freedom of expression. All citizens should be able to verify the authenticity of online information, websites and applications. Everyone, especially children and young people, needs the best possible protection from malicious cyber activity like cyber bullying, mobbing or grooming. We strive for a digital transformation in which every person recognises that fundamental rights and freedoms laid out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as shared fundamental values like respect for others, transparency, privacy and authenticity of information form the cornerstone of all interactions, including in the digital sphere.

(2) Social participation and digital inclusion to shape the digital world

All people of Europe should be able to participate in and benefit fully from digital opportunities on an unconditional basis and without discrimination. We recognize the need for equal access to an open Internet for all parts of society, including disadvantaged groups and citizens with disabilities, as a cornerstone of diversity of opinion, pluralism, innovation and progress. Governments and public authorities at all levels should lead by example and provide digital services, which respond to and evolve with citizens' digital preferences. As the majority of citizens use mobile devices for access to the internet, we need to pay tribute to the paradigm shift from "eGov" (electronic Government) to "mGov" (mobile Government) when encouraging inclusion or aiming to provide seamless, transparent, accessible and user-friendly digital government services. Citizens must be able to use such digital services without having legal knowledge. The members of our societies should have the opportunity to help shape the digital transformation and share their ideas and content with others unimpeded, while respecting the rights of third parties. The public sector should encourage such wider participation in policy-making by involving society in the design of public services through co-creation, experimentation and collaboration.

(3) Empowerment and digital literacy

Every citizen and business in Europe should be able to navigate the digital world with confidence and in a self-determined manner. Users should be further empowered to manage their digital identity and to protect their personal data and privacy online. They should be made aware of the risk within the digital world resulting from cybercrime and other threats to information security or privacy. Citizens and businesses should have the option of seamless and easily accessible interaction with public administrations following the digital-by-default approach. Aside from fair, transparent and user-friendly digital procedures and services, that are based on the concept of privacy by design, this demands digital literacy on the part of the user. It is our common interest that the people of Europe maintain autonomy by keeping control over their data and its use. They should be empowered to consistently decide for themselves about the scope, visibility and existence of their own digital footprint. Life-long learning and the development of digital skills should be promoted and include ethical, technical, legal, ecological and social aspects.

(4) Trust and security in digital government interactions

Everyone should be able to navigate the digital world safely, authenticate and be digitally recognised within the EU conveniently. All people of Europe should avail of an easy to use, widely accepted and secure electronic identification conforming to European standards (e-ID), which allows them to securely access public, private and cross-border digital services. As a broad acceptance of digital government depends on trust, we must ensure that citizens and businesses are able to rely on trustworthy and verifiable digital government applications and services, which are in full conformity with high security standards and respond to user needs. Moreover, in order to ensure a free, open and safe digital domain and enhance social trust, fundamental rights and security should be integrated in all policies with a digital dimension. To foster trust in digital interactions with the public sector, suitable regulatory frameworks must be provided that ensure transparency, predictability, security-by-design and, where necessary, reinforcement or adjustment of existing provisions.

(5) Digital sovereignty and interoperability

Digital sovereignty is key in ensuring the ability of citizens and public administrations to make decisions and act in a self-determined manner in the digital world. We must ensure that all underlying digital components of ICT solutions (hardware, software, and services) meet European requirements. We must create the right conditions for Europe to develop and deploy our own key digital capacities, including the deployment of secure cloud infrastructure and interoperable services that fully comply with European legal provisions and ethical values. Common standards, modular architectures and the use of Open-Source Software (OSS) in the public sector are facilitators for deploying and developing strategic digital tools and capacities. We must ensure the availability of diverse and high-performing digital solutions to guarantee freedom of choice and the ability to change IT modules when necessary. Software, data and tools generated by the public sector should be reusable and openly accessible as long as this is compliant with fundamental rights. As explained in the European data strategy, a strengthened interoperability framework, as well as suitable regulatory frameworks are key in helping Europe benefit from the economic value of data, thus creating a single market for data that will ensure Europe's global competitiveness and data sovereignty.

(6) Human-centred systems and innovative technologies in the public sector

We need to ensure that the European Union further strengthens its pioneering role in the research on secure and trustworthy technology design and that the opportunities of Emerging Disruptive Technologies (EDT) including the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems, distributed ledger technologies, and quantum computing are put at the service of all European Member States' citizens, and businesses. Such technologies carry great potential for evidence-based policy-making and play a key role in providing user-centric public services. With reference to the current Presidency Conclusions on "The Charter of Fundamental Rights in the context of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Change" and related key documents³, we aim to promote a human-centred, responsible and common-good oriented development and use of AI and other novel technologies in the public sector. The human-centred approach aims to ensure that such applications are inclusive, help solve societal challenges and do not reproduce harmful social or economic biases. The public sector has a role-model function in ensuring that the development and application of these novel

³ i.e. the Coordinated Plan on Artificial Intelligence (COM(2018) 795 final) and the Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence presented by the EU High-Level Expert Group on Artificial Intelligence.

technologies is firmly rooted in our common fundamental rights and values and underpinned by a regulatory framework that is sufficiently flexible to mitigate the risks while accelerating innovation and competitiveness.

(7) Towards a resilient and sustainable digital society

One of the most pressing challenges and responsibilities for Europe is keeping our planet and people healthy and better preserving our natural foundations of life. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a warning that new crises of unforeseen nature are likely to emerge in the future. In times where healthcare systems are under unprecedented pressure, digital solutions have proved essential in crisis management. We ought to explore and continuously follow up on the “lessons to be learned” from the COVID-19 pandemic and the boost it has given to digital transformation. We also need to make sure that the increasing use of digital technologies does not harm but rather contributes to people’s physical and psychological well-being. In addition, the digital transformation in Europe needs to be closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement as well as the goals of the European Green Deal. With reference to the current work on Council Conclusions on “Digitalisation for the Benefit of the Environment”, we need to ensure that a sustainable digital transformation serves our citizens and businesses on an individual level as well as our society as a whole, while at the same time safeguarding the preservation of our natural foundations of life.

II. Policy action areas

In accordance with the principles outlined above, we will in our countries take steps and -building on the experience of the Tallinn Declaration - call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions for support to implement and monitor progress towards the following objectives. The policy action areas stated below will be applied in ways that are appropriate and feasible in each country and digital public service context. In concrete terms, we will

a) Promote fundamental rights and democratic values in the digital sphere by

- promoting the validity of fundamental rights in the digital sphere and adopting measures to strengthen compliance with fundamental rights and values;
- enhancing our efforts to ensure that the public opinion-forming and democratic decision-making processes are not manipulated by improper or malicious use of new technologies;
- supporting the fight against cybercrime, particularly online child abuse and sexual exploitation as well as online grooming;
- applying and promoting measures (i.e. digital codes of conduct) that aim to achieve an understanding of mutually respectful, fair and dignified online behaviour towards one another.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Engage in strategic projects with the aim of increasing awareness of the relevance of a value-based digital transformation, i.e. by building platforms to exchange and further develop national and European strategies with regard to digital transformation (“digital round tables”) and by organising cross-border and international exchange (i.e. workshops);
- ✓ Translate abstract fundamental rights regulation into tangible policies and strive to set an example by incorporating fundamental rights into public sector innovation policies and technology procurement rules;
- ✓ Encourage the establishment of ethical and technological expert councils to provide advice to and foster debate among citizens.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Further facilitate the Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online;
- ✓ Develop guidelines, codes of conduct and other instruments to strengthen compliance, fight against harmful content, and further support actions to coordinate and tackle child sexual abuse material online⁴
- ✓ Continue supporting the development and expansion of the European Digital Media Observatory to combat online disinformation.

⁴ in reference to the 2018 OECD report “Children & Young People’s Mental Health in the Digital Age Shaping the Future”.

b) Enhance social participation and inclusion by

- reinforcing digital policy dialogue with citizens to promote social cohesion and active participation of civil society in democratic political discourse;
- encouraging citizens and government administrations to more strongly explore the use of digital tools in shaping the political discourse on digital transformation;
- ensuring that the digital transformation is inclusive of and accessible for persons with disabilities and developing relevant policies to deal with existing participation gaps especially with regard to demographics and remote or rural areas;
- making public services fully available via standard mobile devices and accessible for persons with disabilities, including secure possibilities for electronic identification;
- promoting solutions aimed at minimising digital exclusion or aimed at adjusting to a changing economic and social world.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Put co-creation and collaboration with citizens into practice and encourage the use of digital tools to foster participation of citizens in political-decision-making;
- ✓ Provide easy access to services for the mobile channel by enabling citizens to use their mobile devices to carry out digital public services and by cooperating at EU level in establishing necessary elements for ensuring mobile device interoperability across borders;
- ✓ Ensure that the digital transformation is inclusive of and accessible for persons with disabilities and elderly persons and increase our efforts to make public services and information fully digitally accessible in accordance with the Web Accessibility Directive and the European Accessibility Act.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Facilitate cooperation between Member States in finding effective approaches to help vulnerable groups to become more self-sufficient, including simple language, alternative service channels, skills and hardware to ensure inclusiveness for all citizens;
- ✓ Continue to work with Member States to support the implementation of the Web Accessibility Directive and the European Accessibility Act, and to foster the development of digital accessibility skills in the IT professions.

c) Foster digital empowerment and digital literacy by

- fostering measures that contribute to improving citizens' digital literacy, awareness, skills and reinforcing their ability to act and make informed decisions in the digital sphere;
- enhancing our continuous and relentless efforts to ensure that European citizens and businesses are in a position to control their data and their digital identity;
- strengthening development and actual use of digital skills and tools in the public sector,
- encouraging advanced managerial skills training due to new digital modes of operation in view of the increased shift towards remote working practices and contactless modes of doing business (e.g. cashless payments, smart contracts, electronic signatures);
- paying particular attention to diversity, inclusiveness and gender equality when fostering digital competencies in the public sector.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Initiate workshops, training etc. in order to promote digital skills and awareness in the public sector;
- ✓ Continue to provide easily accessible, user-friendly services and seamless digital public services, tools and applications;
- ✓ Launch and promote initiatives to ensure that the general public is equipped with access and a minimum understanding of digital technologies and digital skills (i.e. online service of “digital ambassadors”).

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Launch a Digital Skills platform which will be a one-stop-shop for digital skills initiatives (including on new technologies like AI and cybersecurity), self-assessment tools and related information from all over Europe in 2021;
- ✓ Continue to support the EU-wide network of Safer Internet Centres, offering awareness, helpline and hotline services to protect and empower children online, to enable them to grow into resilient digital citizens;
- ✓ Consolidate and expand the European Digital Education Hub, which will be a central interface for digital education initiatives across the EU (involving national advisory services on digital education, linking national policies and enabling cross-sector cooperation on digital education initiatives);

- ✓ Facilitate collaboration on media literacy skills to ensure awareness of the developing online environment and the roles of algorithms and other AI tools as well as AR, VR and mixed reality.

d) Strengthen trust through security in the digital sphere by

- taking steps to make widely usable, secure and interoperable electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions available for each European resident and providing trustworthy, user-centric, accessible and reliable public services and information;
- applying adequate criteria to data generated or collected with support from public funds in order to facilitate their reuse;
- paying tribute to principles of cyber-ethics such as transparency, accountability and confidentiality when providing digital public services and promoting honesty, integrity and obedience to the law among users;
- strengthening efforts to make data stored by Member States' public administrations immune from any unwanted interference.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States States by 2024

- ✓ Promote the rollout and use of notified eID means and introduce incentives for the private sector to use European trustworthy and notified eID;
- ✓ Consider ways to foster agreement on ICT security requirements;
- ✓ Promote responsible and legally compliant re-use of data and the Once-Only Principle in line with the Tallinn Declaration and encourage new concepts such as personal data management based on user consent.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Continue working towards developing an EU-wide Digital Identity framework allowing citizens and businesses to securely and seamlessly access online public and private services, while minimising disclosure and retaining full control of data;
- ✓ Promote the exchange of best practice and the formation of links among competent national and regional authorities, in order to make best use of existing structures and groups such as the NIS cooperation group and the European cooperation network on elections.

e) Strengthen Europe's digital sovereignty and interoperability by

- agreeing on common European requirements for technology providers and solutions in the public sector (including security, data protection, interoperability, reusability) by accommodating existing requirements of the EU and Member States;
- fostering our own key digital capacities to develop and deploy digital solutions in a secure cloud infrastructure and for public services;
- establishing common standards and modular architectures;
- making public sector data within the European Union freely available based on demand in accordance with the Directive on Open Data and Reuse of Public Sector Information (EU 2019/1024);
- providing adequate, secure and affordable spaces to foster innovation through testing and experimenting with data and digital technologies (i.e. sandboxes);
- reducing administrative burdens on European businesses and citizens by implementing the Single Digital Gateway Regulation ((EU) 2018/1724) and promoting cross-border implementation of the Once-Only Principle in accordance with existing European rules and interoperability frameworks while paying particular attention to a demand-driven course of action;
- fostering interoperability by design of policies, data, solutions and services to enhance cross-border and cross-sector interconnections.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Work with the European Commission to jointly agree on concrete deadlines and criteria such as a demand-driven approach for providing further suitable public services online for EU cross-border use;
- ✓ Jointly work towards agreements on requirements for technology providers and solutions in the public sector that are essential for digital sovereignty;
- ✓ Implement common standards, modular architectures and – when suitable – open source technologies in the development and deployment of cross-border digital solutions.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Establish and promote platforms for data exchange and reuse of data (“data spaces”) like those in the context of the European Health Data Space and establish the European Alliance on Industrial Data and

Cloud with a view to building the next generation of secure, resilient and energy-efficient cloud computing capacities in Europe;

- ✓ Continue coordinating cross-border interoperability and strengthen the European interoperability framework;
- ✓ in close cooperation with Member States support innovative public-private (GovTech) cooperation and promote the development, sharing and reuse of open source standards, solutions and specifications across borders;
- ✓ Promote coherent high quality data across Member States by ensuring implementation of the Directive on Open Data and the Re-Use of Public Sector Information ((EU) 2019/1024) with common standards;
- ✓ Ensure through the Better Regulation framework that policies and legislative acts proposed by the European Commission are digital-ready and interoperable by default. Support the exchange with Member States through a community around Better Legislation and pilot and share solutions.

f) Create value-based, human-centred AI systems for use in the public sector by

promoting an AI ecosystem based on European values and rules that unlocks the social and economic benefits of this technology for European citizens and businesses through

- fostering responsible, accountable public welfare and human-centred development and use of transparent and explainable AI as well as the promotion of competitiveness and innovation in the European Union;
- ensuring that necessary safeguards are in place to prevent, detect and remedy unlawful discrimination through the use of AI systems in the public sector;
- enhancing our common efforts to provide effective ICT security tools and requirements to prevent unauthorised access and use, manipulation of data or malicious interference with self-learning algorithms;
- increasing our relentless efforts to ensure confidentiality, integrity and availability of any AI system over its entire life cycle;
- recognising the importance of explainable AI, including e.g. adequate transparency at algorithm level, in order to strengthen trustworthiness;

- ensuring proper data governance mechanisms - including appropriate levels of human oversight, if necessary, to ensure an AI system's correct functionality and decision-making.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Share best practices on the development of successful human-centric AI systems in the public sector;
- ✓ Foster transparency and accountability i.e. by revealing when automated decision-making processes are used in digital public services, and ensure quality standards of data sets fed into AI systems when designing digital public services (e.g. by quality seals for data sets);
- ✓ Stimulate knowledge sharing between practitioners of administrative innovation strategies and on examples of human centric technologies in public administrations.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Continue to monitor the uptake of AI within European public administrations;
- ✓ Strengthen digital innovation hubs and AI on demand platform;
- ✓ Propose a risk-based, future proof and proportionate legislative proposal on AI and an updated AI coordinated plan, including measures to promote the uptake of trustworthy and human centric AI by public administrations, as appropriate, and assess skills development in public administrations;
- ✓ Support research, development and innovation for increasing performance, trustworthiness and uptake of AI-based solutions in the public sector in line with the AI White Paper (COM (2020) 65)).

g) Foster resilience and sustainability by

- ensuring that the digital transformation in Europe contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and making the digital transformation itself more sustainable regarding the consumption of energy resources;
- encouraging the use of digital tools and ICT as solutions in the transition to climate neutrality in the European Union as well as reducing the emissions connected to the increased use of data and technology in a digital society;

- developing relevant policies to support a workplace culture that promotes a healthy and appropriate use of digital technologies and work-life balance, namely through co-creation and collaboration with the civil society;
- strengthening the Digital Single Market that reaps the economic and social benefits of digitalisation and connectivity for citizens in all countries and regions;
- ensuring federated trusted common data space for the European Green Deal to widen and deepen the EU collaboration, re-use and sharing of data, good practices and solutions of digital governance.

Therefore, we, the signatories, will in our EU Member States by 2024

- ✓ Consider how to assess and make transparent the energy sources and consumption of digital tools and infrastructures as well as ways to improve their efficiency;
- ✓ Evaluate the environmental impacts of ICT using a multi-criteria lifecycle analysis and establish a strategy to extend the lifespan of digital equipment and promote the eco-design of ICT products to improve circular product cycles;
- ✓ Foster the exchange of crisis management data, in particular in the health sector, e.g. via the European Health Data Space;
- ✓ Initiate expert consultations to provide guidelines on healthy and appropriate use of digital technologies and work-life balance to prevent adverse impact on mental or physical human health development.

We call upon the European Commission and other EU institutions to

- ✓ Foster cooperation within the European Union in order to maximise the contribution of communications network infrastructure to the EU's resilience and green deal objectives;
- ✓ Foster an EU-wide exchange of innovative ideas through the European Research Area (ERA) as a framework for action to ensure that Europe and the EU Member States are well-positioned and ready to respond to potential future challenges;
- ✓ Enhance the resilience of our health and care systems by continuing to develop and deploy together with the Member States in the eHealth Network interoperable digital health solutions, like the exchange of health records, mHealth and telehealth applications, assisting and promoting hereby the shift towards integrated, continuous and personalized care systems.

III. Conclusion

We, the signatories, will undertake the implementation of the above-mentioned aspects of this declaration in our own countries by the end of 2024. We will annually present our implementation progress of this declaration in our countries annual progress reports as prepared by the respective EU council presidency until 2024 and ask the European Commission for support in setting up an appropriate mechanism. We will in our countries set the above-mentioned priorities underlining that the funds provided for digital transformation by the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and by the extraordinary recovery effort "Next Generation EU (NGEU)" may have the potential to support, inter alia, the achievement of these common goals and the implementation of the actions and measures outlined above.

Building on the achievements of the Tallinn Declaration and the eGovernment Action Plan, we commit to working with the European Commission and the EU institutions to build a reinforced EU digital government policy and to ensure coordination and support for the digital transformation of public administrations in all EU Member States.

We call upon the European Union institutions to support and promote the policy principles and actions outlined in this declaration at the European level. We encourage the Commission and other EU institutions to align digital and innovative government initiatives with the lines of action of the declaration and EU policies. We call upon the European Commission to take note of this declaration when setting up new policies, such as a new Digital Government policy, interoperability strategy or the new Digital Compass requested by the European Council.

We call upon the French Presidency of the Council of the EU to take stock of the implementation of the declaration in spring 2022. We call upon the incoming Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU to support, promote and extend the present declaration's principles and objectives by presenting a Lisbon Declaration that constitutes a common understanding of the legal values that support a digital society.