**Amsterdam Declaration**

*As the European Union stands at a crucial juncture in shaping its digital future, the D9+ calls for increasing the EU's digital competitiveness and tech sovereignty in an open manner[[1]](#footnote-2). Welcoming the Commission’s ambitious Competitiveness Compass, the D9+ calls for a coherent and forward-looking* ***European strategic approach to technology with a strong*** *human-centric and rights oriented* ***digital component.*** *This strategic approach should bridge between the different existing initiatives*, *while encompassing the relevant policy goals from the Digital Decade.*

The D9+ countries are committed to refining and advancing the trajectory of European digital policies to boost the next wave of frontier technologies. The Presidents’ political guidelines provide the new Commission with an ambitious agenda in the digital domain. The Competitiveness Compass, which is based on the findings of the Draghi report, emphasises the transformative potential of digitalisation for Europe’s economic growth, social cohesion, and global competitiveness. It underscores the need for robust, primarily private, investments in digital technology and infrastructure, greater public-private partnerships, and a unified approach in order to harness and accelerate the development of emerging technologies such as AI and quantum technologies within the Union.

In Amsterdam, we, the D9+ ministers, discussed three aspects of EU digital policy and innovation:

* first, the rapid scientific and commercial development of artificial intelligence (AI) in the EU and the benefits of its deployment in both the private and public sectors;
* second, the need to foster the development of a large, open, competitive, collaborative, and interoperable European connectivity, cloud-edge and AI ecosystem, as a prerequisite to unlock the potential of European digital innovation;
* and finally, the need for a reviewed digital rulebook that is fit for purpose, deregulated where possible, avoids unnecessary red tape and does not hinder the development and use of technology by innovative European companies.

In the light of our discussions, we, the D9+ countries, recognise the importance of deepening digital cooperation among Member States and call for a cohesive and forward-looking European strategic approach to technology with a strong digital component aimed at increasing the EU's tech sovereignty in an open manner.

**The urgent need for private investments in European digital technology**

Digitalisation plays a crucial role when it comes to accelerating efforts to improve Europe’s economic and geopolitical outlook. The EU’s competitiveness will increasingly depend on the digitalisation of the economy in and across different sectors and on building strengths in advanced technologies, which will drive investment, job and wealth creation. A strong and competitive position in digital technology not only benefits our overall prosperity, but also enables us to meet societal challenges and ensures our security and resilience. In a rapidly changing world order, characterised by a global race for technological dominance, digital competitiveness and tech sovereignty in an open manner are crucial enablers of economic and geoeconomic strength. All this is essential for Europe's competitiveness, economic security and its stature as a geopolitical actor.

As it is vital to remain at the forefront of technological development, the EU needs to invest substantially and consistently in digital technologies. Since public funding has its limits, it is important to reduce barriers for private investments in European digital technology and explore what other actions are needed to unlock sufficient capital to support the EU digital investment agenda. In the EU we should increase focus on improving conditions for growth in sectors and technologies that will shape and underlie tomorrow’s industries. We must take a strategic, long-term, pragmatic and integral view on digital technology and take a whole-of-stack approach[[2]](#footnote-3). This should be done in cooperation with the business sector and investors, researchers and international partners.

The D9+ welcomes the Competitiveness Compass and will work with the European Commission in taking forward proposals regarding the digital realm to create the right preconditions for growth to support the EU’s digital ambitions.

To increase Europe’s digital competitiveness and tech sovereignty in an open manner, we, the D9+ ministers:

* Call for a European strategic approach to technology with a strong digital component, with an emphasis on increasing investment opportunities rather than introducing new legal obligations. This strategic approach should be aimed at a prioritised set of key technologies that have the most impact on the EU’s competitiveness and security, building towards technological leadership on select key technologies by 2035.
* Propose to include key digital technologies in the strategic approach, for example AI, semiconductors and quantum technology, while also acknowledging the importance of fundamental enablers in the digital domain, such as networking technologies, cloud technology, cybersecurity and the availability of data. These technologies do not stand alone, but are inextricably linked, which requires stimulating synergies.
* Stress the need to create optimal conditions for growth, innovation and investment, by removing barriers and ensuring a fully functioning Single Market, simplifying EU rules and procedures, deepening the capital markets union to ease access to finance and especially venture capital. Also, innovation ecosystems need to be strengthened and connected across Member State borders, driven by public-private partnerships and geared to achieving the necessary scale.
* Support the Commission in its aim of simplifying and creating more synergies between the different European and national funding programmes.
* Emphasise the importance of the European Investment Bank substantially increasing its investment volumes in venture capital and focusing more on impact investments, of which the digital domain is an important area.
* Emphasise the importance of the combined purchasing power that the EU and national governments have, which can be used to strengthen the EU’s position in the digital domain. Public procurement should be effectively used to bolster the development of critical digital technologies, while safeguarding competition and ensuring flexibility for national needs.
* Support finding innovative ways to mobilise private capital. An example could be promoting more attractive investment and savings possibilities in all EU-member states, including (the creation of) savings and investment accounts based on best practices.
* Emphasise the need to strategically project European interests and priorities internationally and build cooperation with likeminded partners, including on technology regulation and coordination of R&D efforts, while strengthening supply chains and dismantling barriers to trade on technology products.

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[PM NAMES & TITLES SIGNATORIES]

1. With tech sovereignty in an open manner in this declaration we mean the ability to act autonomously on the world stage and in line with our values, while reaping the benefits of collaboration with global partners when possible. To improve its tech sovereignty the EU needs to strengthen its technological capabilities as well as its trade relations, with the goal to mitigate strategic dependencies and control key strategic positions in value chains. Also, it should enable swift and decisive decision making in times of crises, such as value chain disruptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The digital technology stack deconstructs the digital domain in vertically interacting layers, from raw materials at the bottom, through cloud, AI and other core technologies, up to applications and services at the top. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)