



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

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Subject:	Cross fertilization between Europe 2020 flagship initiatives Digital Agenda for Europe and Innovation Union - Council Conclusions
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1. Following the launch of the EU2020 Strategy, the Commission adopted two major Flagship Initiatives: the "Digital Agenda for Europe" on 19 May 2010¹ and the "Initiative Innovation Union" on 6 October 2010². Both Flagships are of crucial importance to meet the Europe 2020 Strategy objectives.

¹ Doc. 9981/1/10

² Doc. 14035/10

2. The objective of the present conclusions is to link the two Flagships so as to underline that an integrated European innovation strategy needs the setting up of a fully functioning digital single market to the benefit of European businesses, in particular SMEs and innovative start-ups, and European consumers.
3. The Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society as well as the Coreper have examined the present draft Council conclusions, which were in principle acceptable to all delegations.
4. There are no reservations to the draft conclusions outstanding.
5. The Council is requested to adopt the attached draft conclusions at its meeting on 3 December 2010.

Council Conclusions on

"Cross fertilization between Europe 2020 flagship initiatives Digital Agenda for Europe and Innovation Union"

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. RECALLS :

- the Commission Communication of 13 March 2009 on “A Strategy for ICT R&D and Innovation in Europe : Raising the Game”;³
- the Commission Communication of 28 October 2009 on “A Public-Private Partnership for the Future Internet”;⁴
- the Council Conclusions of 3 December 2009 on “ICT research, innovation and infrastructures”;⁵
- the Granada Ministerial Declaration of 19 April 2010 on the “European Digital Agenda”;
- the Commission Communication of 19 May 2010 on a “Digital Agenda for Europe”;⁶
- the Council Conclusions of 31 May 2010 on “Digital Agenda for Europe”.⁷

³ Doc. 7883/09

⁴ Doc. 15279/09

⁵ Doc. 16128/09

⁶ Doc. 9981/1/10

⁷ Doc. 10130/10

2. **BEING AWARE** of the need for Europe to emerge from the crisis and of the urgency to respond quickly, strongly and efficiently to the challenges faced by the EU, while keeping in mind a sound public-finance approach, and of the need, even in times of important budgetary constraints for the EU and its Member States, to prioritise efficient investments where appropriate in education, training, R&D, innovation and key technologies such as information and communication technologies, which are all areas on which Europe's future growth performance will depend.

3. **UNDERLINES :**

- (a) that the flagship initiatives “Digital Agenda for Europe” and “Innovation Union” are integrated strategies of crucial importance to meet the Europe 2020 Strategy objectives since they put forward a strategic approach, bringing together all relevant decision-making levels and policies, in order to support the transition of the EU economy towards an energy and resource efficient and competitive knowledge economy that ensures a high level of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs, is able to face increasing global competition and addresses societal challenges;
- (b) that an integrated European innovation strategy needs the setting up of a fully functioning digital Single Market to the benefit of European businesses, in particular SMEs and innovative start-ups, and European consumers;
- (c) that taking decisive actions, both immediate and over the medium – to longer-term, by the EU and Member States is needed.

4. **WELCOMES** in this context the Commission Communication “Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovation Union”.⁸
5. **STRESSES** the need for:
- (a) recognizing the contribution of digital technologies as one of the main drivers to improve Europe’s productivity and growth capacity, the ability to innovate in all sectors, and to respond to the challenges facing our society;
 - (b) stimulating innovation in ICT to meet pressing challenges such as fast and ultra-fast internet supply, coverage and use, online trust and security, turning growing internet usages into value creation for EU companies;
 - (c) encouraging the Commission to develop a proposal with a view to launching a pilot European Innovation Partnership on active and healthy ageing, to assess the concept, notably based on a mapping exercise of activities and stakeholders in this area, in particular related to the ICT sector, and evaluating the pilot in due course;
 - (d) a more strategic use of pre-commercial procurements and public procurements of innovative digital products and services to improve the efficiency and quality of public e-services and to create new markets across Europe;
 - (e) reinforcing the digital literacy and skills (e-Skills) in particular in enterprises and the public sector but also in all other areas in view of strengthening an ICT-enabled inclusive society, reducing as much as possible the digital divide as well as the innovation divide; this may require partnerships with stakeholders based on supply and demand, quality assurance mechanisms for industry-based training, awareness-raising and digital inclusive activities;

⁸ Doc. 14035/10

- (f) strengthening and integrating the three sides of the “knowledge triangle” (education, research and innovation), including through the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) in view of fostering innovation-driven research as well as business creation and development and multi-disciplinary entrepreneurial education within the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), in particular those related to ICT;
- (g) treating investments in EU ICT research and development as key priority, taking note of the continued under-investment in the EU compared to major trading partners, acknowledging the need for these investments to strengthen the competitiveness of EU companies, especially in the ICT sector, on the worldwide markets and in view of reaching the target of 3% of EU GDP invested in R&D;
- (h) accelerating the roll out of high speed internet and its applications in research and business and in sectors such as energy, transport, health, and digital media like educational, cultural, creative and scientific content on line in view of capitalizing on Europe’s creative potential;
- (i) strengthening efforts on the "Internet of the Future" as a key enabler for innovation and competitiveness, recalling the importance of the transition towards the IPv6 protocol in this regard;
- (j) reinforcing the digitization and dissemination of European cultural heritage, and thereby increase the opportunities for digital service innovations, including the digital library project “Europeana”;
- (k) public administrations to regard innovation as an integral part of their way of working and to analyse how the use of ICT can improve the provision of e-services and public sector business processes and reduce administrative burden as set out in the “Malmö Ministerial Declaration on e-Government” of 18 November 2009;

- (l) increasing the availability of public sector information for re-use both by individuals and businesses as well as seeking collaboration with third parties on the development of e-services to foster innovation and the development of the knowledge-based economy;
- (m) making the most effective and appropriate use of ICT technologies in health and care services in order to maximise their societal and economic benefits;
- (n) taking full benefit of promoting ICT technologies to better contribute to setting up a low carbon and resource efficient economy;
- (o) strengthening international cooperation in information society and ICT research and innovation policies with third countries, to benefit from opportunities offered by R&D and Innovation cooperation in ICT and its contribution to open new markets.

6. INVITES THE COMMISSION TO :

- (a) leverage more private investment in ICTs through the strategic use of pre-commercial procurement and, where appropriate, effective industry-driven research partnerships, by using structural funds for research and innovation, where appropriate, and by maintaining the foreseen yearly increase of the ICT R&D budget for the duration of FP7 and without prejudice to the future financial framework;
- (b) actively support cooperation among national contacts points, where relevant for ICT, within the FP7 and Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) to facilitate closer cooperation among various stakeholders throughout Europe;
- (c) reinforce the coordination and mobilization of resources with Member States and industry, and put greater focus on demand- and user- driven partnerships in EU support to ICT research and innovation;

- (d) lead the ongoing efforts towards simplification of access to EU research funds in ICT ("light and fast" access), making them more simple and attractive in particular to SMEs and innovative start-ups and young researchers in view of a wider implementation within the revision of the EU RTD Framework;
- (e) support joint ICT research infrastructures and innovation clusters, cultural and creative industries, develop further world-class e-infrastructures and establish an EU strategy for cloud computing notably for government and science but also for SME's;
- (f) work with stakeholders to develop a new generation of user-friendly and accessible web-based applications and services, including for multilingual and creative content and services, by supporting open standards and open platforms through EU-funded programmes;
- (g) propose by 2011 an integrated framework for the development and promotion of e-skills for innovation, creativity, and competitiveness, based on partnerships with stakeholders;
- (h) present in early 2011 a communication accompanied by a legislative proposal on standardization, which will inter alia cover the ICT sector, in order to speed up and modernize standard-setting to enable interoperability and foster innovation in fast moving global markets;
- (i) propose by 2012 a revision of the Re-use of Public Sector Information (PSI) Directive taking into account the results of the public consultation and, making, where appropriate, public sector data easily available as a resource for innovation;

7. INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO :

- (a) by 2020, prioritise efficient investments in ICT research and development in the context of the headline targets of the new strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020 Strategy) to improve the conditions for research and development;
- (b) engage in projects to test and develop innovative, creative and interoperable solutions that are co-financed by the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) or other relevant EU programmes;
- (c) increase in so far as possible involvement in the Public-Private Partnership for the "Internet of the Future" in order to reach the objectives set out;
- (d) further monitor their digital and ICT related performances through indicators and scoreboard and collaborate with relevant international partners;
- (e) implement a systemic use of the digital tools, technologies and infrastructures in the tackling of the challenges facing our society and economy;
- (f) seek ways to facilitate the use of ICTs by enterprises, especially by SMEs and innovative start-ups, including by identifying and removing any barriers related to their use.