



**COUNCIL OF  
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**NOTE**

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from:	Presidency
to:	Delegations

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Subject:	Europe 2020 Strategy
	a) Mid-term review of Digital Agenda for Europe - Next steps
	b) Annual Growth Survey
	- Policy debate

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The Commission's Annual Growth Surveys (AGS) and Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE) both contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Digital Agenda Review, foreseen to be adopted on 19 December 2012, intends to consider how best to refocus the DAE in order to better stimulate the digital economy through mutually enhancing and complementary measures in key areas. The Review also intends to respond to the fast pace of change in ICT and the appearance of new services, e.g. in the delivery of digital public services such as e-health. The Review will, in consequence, focus on the following areas - Digital Single Market; speeding up structural reforms of public services; broadband; trust & security; cloud computing; entrepreneurship, jobs and skills; research and innovation – in order to enable the EU to exploit the growth potential of ICT to the full by addressing market failure, reducing the fragmentation of the Digital Single Market and generally stimulating the conditions to create growth and jobs in Europe.

Building on the last year's AGS, which identified the digital single market and ICT as key growth levers of the EU, the AGS for 2013 (doc. 16669/12) identifies a number of priority actions for promoting the digital economy at national and EU level. As part of the 2013 AGS package, the Commission also published its first Report on the State of the Single Market Integration (doc. 17281/12), which further develops the challenges and priorities that the EU faces to better stimulate the digital economy with the view to fully seize all its potential to boost innovation, productivity, growth and employment. Section 2.4 "Digital markets" of this report looks at the performance and obstacles on various digital markets, such as the availability and deployment of high speed broadband, the place of the mobile sector in the telecom market, the availability and use of spectrum, progress in cross-border e-commerce and related consumers concerns, unequal development of e-procurement and lack of ICT skills. This report also suggests policy priorities which should be pursued by Member States, such as stepping up efforts in the deployment of fixed and wireless broadband and in improving its quality, ensuring the correct application of the e-commerce Directive, increasing the availability of user-friendly on-line public services or investing in ICT training.

In the current economic context, noting ongoing or planned legislative, as well as non-legislative initiatives, such as Cloud computing, Web accessibility, shared use of spectrum, the telecommunication guidelines under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), open data (review of Public Sector Information Directive), or e-Identification, e-Authentication and e-Signatures, with the priority given to initiatives supporting growth and jobs, and bearing in mind both the European Council in October 2013 on Innovation and Digital, as well as the 2015 deadline for achieving a fully functioning Digital Single Market, the Presidency suggests to structure the debate at Council by inviting delegations:

1. to provide their assessment of the progress made on the priorities of the DAE, be it with respect to infrastructure or services;
2. to highlight where they see the need for more intensive efforts at EU level in order to address the perceived challenges in the ICT sector and the Digital Single Market, from the perspective of both private and public stakeholders.