Digital Europe programme 2021–2027

2018/0227(COD) - 28/11/2018 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Angelika MLINAR (ALDE, AT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Digital Europe programme for the period 2021-2027.

The Committee on Culture and Education, exercising its prerogative as an associated committee in accordance with Article 54 of the Rules of Procedure, also gave its opinion on the report.

The current state of digitalisation of EU economy, industry and society is not sufficient to answer to the political ambition of the Digital Single Market. There is still an important gap to cover through substantial and better European investment, in order to achieve the common goal and fully benefit from the EU added value.

This proposal is the first pan-European digital programme; it should be seen as a major step for strengthening and improving Europe leading position.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows.

Aim: this aim of this proposed Regulation is to **establish the Digital Europe programme**, which shall be implemented for the period of 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2027.

Definition: the amended text defines what a 'European Digital Innovation Hub' means. It is an existing or new legal entity or a consortium of legal entities designated or selected in an open, transparent and competitive procedure in order to fulfil the tasks under the Programme. European Digital Innovation Hubs shall act as **one-stop-shops** where companies - especially SMEs, start-ups and mid-caps – can get help to improve their business, production processes, products and services by means of digital technology that could result in added value.

General objective: the Programme shall seek to **support and to accelerate the digital transformation of the European economy, industry and society** and to bring its benefits to European citizens, public services and businesses, as well as to reinforce the strategic autonomy and cohesion of the Union while securing competitiveness and reducing the digital divide.

Budget: the financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period 2021-2027 shall be **EUR 8.2 billion** in 2018 prices (compared to EUR 9.2 billion as proposed by the Commission).

Specific objectives: the Programme shall be structured into **five specific objectives** reflecting key policy areas, namely:

1. high-performance computing with a budget up to EUR 2.4 billion;
2. artificial intelligence and distributed ledger technologies with a budget up to EUR 2.2 billion;
3. cybersecurity with a budget up to EUR 1.8 billion;
4. advanced digital skills with a budget up to EUR 623 million;
5. deployment, best use of digital capacities and interoperability with a budget up to EUR 1.1 million.

For all these areas, the Programme shall also aim at better aligning Union, Member States and regional policies, and pooling of private and industrial resources in order to increase investment and develop

stronger synergies. The Commission shall ensure that when **leveraging the complementary character** of the programme with other European funding programmes, in particular ESIF, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Horizon Europe and Connecting Europe Facility (CEF-2), investEU, Erasmus, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) the achievement of Specific objectives are not hampered.

Monitoring and reporting: the Commission shall ensure regular monitoring and external evaluation of the Programme. The evaluations shall also provide for a qualitative assessment of the progress towards achieving the general objectives. In addition to regularly monitoring the Programme, the Commission shall establish an interim evaluation report no later than 31 December 2024. The interim evaluation shall present the findings necessary to make a decision about a follow-up to the Programme beyond 2027 and its objectives. The interim evaluation shall be submitted to the European Parliament.