

Digital Europe programme 2021–2027

2018/0227(COD) - 17/04/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 561 votes to 39, with 50 abstentions, a legislative resolution 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 European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Subject matter

The objective of the proposed Regulation shall be to establish the first Digital Europe Programme, which will be implemented for the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2027.

The general objective of the programme shall be:

- to support and accelerate the digital transformation of the European economy, industry and society and to bring its benefits to European citizens, public administrations and businesses across the Union;
- to strengthen Europe's competitiveness in the global digital economy while contributing to bridging the digital divide across the Union and reinforcing the Union's strategic autonomy.

European Digital Innovation Hubs

During the first year of the programme, an initial network of European Digital Innovation Hubs shall be established through an open and competitive process from entities designated by Member States.

A central role in the implementation of the Programme shall be attributed to European Digital Innovation Hubs, which should stimulate the broad adoption of advanced digital technologies by industry, in particular SMEs and entities employing up to 3 000 employees that are not SMEs (midcaps), by public organisations and academia.

European Digital Innovation Hubs shall have substantial overall autonomy to define their organisation, composition, and working methods. They shall act as facilitator to bring together industry, businesses and administrations which are in need of new technological solutions on one side, with companies, notably start-ups and SMEs, that have market-ready solutions on the other side.

They shall develop synergies with Digital Innovation Hubs funded by Horizon Europe programme or other R&I programmes.

Budget

Parliament proposed that the financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period 2021-2027 be set at **EUR 8.2 billion in 2018 prices**.

The Programme shall be structured into 5 specific objectives corresponding to the main areas of intervention, namely:

- up to EUR 2.4 billion for Specific Objective 1, High Performance Computing;

- up to EUR 2.2 billion for Specific Objective 2, Artificial Intelligence;
- up to EUR 1.8 billion for Specific Objective 3, Cybersecurity and Trust;
- up to EUR 623 million for Specific Objective 4, Advanced Digital skills;
- up to EUR 1.1 billion for Specific Objective 5, Deployment, best use of digital capacities and Interoperability.

Implementation of the project

- Actions under Specific Objective 1 shall be primarily implemented through the Joint Undertaking established by [Council Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1488](#) establishing the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking;
- Actions under Specific Objective 2 'Artificial intelligence' shall be implemented exclusively through direct management. The Commission shall specify, in accordance with relevant European and international legislation, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the conditions relating to ethical issues in the work programmes under this objective. Funding for actions that do not comply with the conditions relating to ethical issues may be suspended, withdrawn or reduced at any time.
- Actions under Objective 3 'Cybersecurity and Trust' shall be mainly implemented through the European Cybersecurity Industrial, Technology and Research Competence Centre and the Cybersecurity Competence Network.
- Actions under Objectives 4 'Advanced e-Skills' and 5 'Deployment, best use of digital capabilities and interoperability' shall be mainly implemented through direct management by the European Commission.

Third countries associated with the programme

Parliament has requested that the programme be open to the participation of members of the European Free Trade Association which are members of the European Economic Area (EEA). Full or partial association with the programme of other third countries would be based on a case-by-case assessment of the specific objectives, in accordance with the conditions laid down in a specific agreement on the participation of the third country in any EU programme, provided that this specific agreement meets a number of criteria.