



## Commission puts forward declaration on digital rights and principles for everyone in the EU

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Today, the Commission is proposing to the European Parliament and Council to sign up to a [declaration](#) of rights and principles that will guide the digital transformation in the EU.

The draft declaration on digital rights and principles aims to give everyone a clear reference point about the kind of digital transformation Europe promotes and defends. It will also provide a guide for policy makers and companies when dealing with new technologies. The rights and freedoms enshrined in the EU's legal framework, and the European values expressed by the principles, should be respected online as they are offline. Once jointly endorsed, the Declaration will also define the approach to the digital transformation which the EU will promote throughout the world.

Executive Vice-President for a Europe Fit for the Digital Age, Margrethe **Vestager**, said: *"We want safe technologies that work for people, and that respect our rights and values. Also when we are online. And we want everyone to be empowered to take an active part in our increasingly digitised societies. This declaration gives us a clear reference point to the rights and principles for the online world."*

Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry **Breton**, said: *"We want Europeans to know: living, studying, working, doing business in Europe, you can count on top class connectivity, seamless access to public services, a safe and fair digital space. The declaration of digital rights and principles also establishes once and for all that what is illegal offline should also be illegal online. We also aim to promote these principles as a standard for the world."*

### Rights and principles in the digital age

The draft declaration covers key rights and principles for the digital transformation, such as placing people and their rights at its centre, supporting solidarity and inclusion, ensuring the freedom of choice online, fostering participation in the digital public space, increasing safety, security and empowerment of individuals, and promoting the sustainability of the digital future.

These rights and principles should accompany people in the EU in their everyday life: affordable and high-speed digital connectivity everywhere and for everybody, well-equipped classrooms and digitally skilled teachers, seamless access to public services, a safe digital environment for children, disconnecting after working hours, obtaining easy-to-understand information on the environmental impact of our digital products, controlling how their personal data are used and with whom they are shared.

The declaration is rooted in EU law, from the Treaties to the Charter of Fundamental rights but also the case law of the Court of Justice. It builds on the experience of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#). Former European Parliament President David Sassoli promoted the idea of the access to the Internet as a new human right back in 2018. Promoting and implementing the principles set out in the declaration will be a shared political commitment and responsibility at both Union and Member State level within their respective competences. To make sure the declaration will have concrete effects on the ground, the Commission [proposed](#) in September to monitor progress, evaluate gaps and provide recommendations for actions through an annual report on the 'State of the Digital Decade'.

### Next Steps

The European Parliament and the Council are invited to discuss the draft declaration, and to endorse it at the highest level by this summer.

### Background

On 9 March 2021, the Commission laid out its vision for Europe's digital transformation by 2030 in its Communication on the [Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade](#). In September

2021, the Commission introduced a robust governance framework to reach the digital targets in the form of a [Path to the Digital Decade](#). In a [speech](#) at the 'Leading the Digital Decade' event in Sines, Portugal, on 1 June 2021, Commission President Ursula **von der Leyen** declared: "*We embrace new technologies. But we stand by our values.*"

The Commission also conducted an open public consultation which [showed broad support](#) for European Digital Principles – 8 EU citizens out of 10 consider it useful for the European Union to define and promote a common European vision on digital rights and principles – as well as a [special Eurobarometer survey](#). Yearly Eurobarometer surveys will collect qualitative data, based on citizens' perception of how the digital principles enshrined in the declaration are implemented in the EU.

The declaration also builds on previous initiatives from the Council including the [Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment](#), the [Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-based Digital Government](#), and the [Lisbon Declaration – Digital Democracy with a Purpose](#) for a model of digital transformation that strengthens the human dimension of the digital ecosystem with the Digital Single Market as its core.

## For More Information

[Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and Council on establishing a European declaration on Digital Rights and Principles](#)

[Factsheet on digital rights and principles for everyone in the EU](#)

[Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade](#)

[Communication on the Path to the Digital Decade](#)

[Tallinn Declaration on eGovernment](#)

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