

Management Plan 2025

Directorate-General for
Communications Networks,
Content and Technology

Contents

PART 1. Introduction and strategic outlook.....	3
Mission statement and operating context.....	3
Strategic outlook 2025 - 2029.....	5
Cross-cutting efforts – implementation and simplification agenda	10
PART 2. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities in 2025.....	13
PART 3. A modern and sustainable public administration: outputs in 2025	20
A. Human resource management.....	20
B. Digital transformation and data management.....	21
C. Sound financial management.....	22
D. Fraud risk management.....	24
E. Sound environmental management	24
ANNEX 1: Specific objectives and result indicators 2025-2029.....	25
ANNEX 2: Performance tables – delivering on Commission priorities in 2025.....	29
ANNEX 3: Performance tables – A modern and sustainable public administration.....	36
A. Human resource management.....	36
B. Digital transformation and data management.....	37
C. Sound financial management.....	38
D. Fraud risk management.....	39
E. Sound environmental management	39

PART 1. Introduction and strategic outlook

Mission statement and operating context

The **Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology** (CONNECT) is carrying forward and enforcing digital policies, developing the European vision for the digital transformation and delivering a broad set of programmes, and standards.

Geopolitically, technology is emerging as a critical lever of influence. Rising tensions, hybrid threats, and digital warfare - including an unprecedented surge in state-linked cyberattacks - have underscored the need for Europe to secure its digital sovereignty, including by leveraging and strengthening its network of digital partnerships and alliances internationally. In parallel, the race to define global norms and standards in areas like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data governance and internet governance has accelerated and the EU needs to maintain and strengthen its position in relevant international fora. In this complex scenario, the EU approach will need to become increasingly transactional, with a stronger association of EU tech businesses to its international engagements.

Economically, digital technologies are the backbone of industrial competitiveness, productivity, and innovation. Yet, the EU still trails global frontrunners in the deployment of foundational technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advanced semiconductors. Addressing this gap requires both structural reform and massive investment - public and private. With an estimated EUR 150 billion until 2030 ⁽¹⁾ in annual investment needed just to meet the EU's digital objectives, the role of digital policy in mobilising capital, streamlining regulation, and supporting scale-up trajectories is more pivotal than ever. The Commission's emphasis on Capital Markets Union, strategic procurement, and digital public infrastructure reflects this imperative.

Socially, the digital transition must be fair, inclusive, and human-centric. European citizens increasingly live, learn, and work in digital spaces, but face growing risks - ranging from hybrid threats and cyberbullying to algorithmic discrimination and data misuse. CONNECT is leading efforts to safeguard digital rights, close digital divides, and embed trust into every layer of Europe's digital transformation. The emphasis on digital skills, secure digital identities, and rights-based governance frameworks demonstrates the EU's commitment to putting people at the heart of digital progress.

Technologically, 2025 marks a tipping point. Generative artificial intelligence is reshaping productivity and creativity. Data centres and edge computing are driving new energy demands, challenging the sustainability of digital growth. Meanwhile, the convergence of

⁽¹⁾ The Draghi report: In-depth analysis and recommendations (Part B), Section 2, Chapter 3, figure 2, page 282.

technologies – artificial intelligence, cloud, connectivity, cybersecurity, and compute – is reshaping global value chains. CONNECT is working to ensure that Europe’s digital infrastructure and technologies are not only competitive, but secure and sustainable. Initiatives like the artificial intelligence factories, the Digital Networks Act, and support for sovereign cloud and chip ecosystems aim to align technological ambition with environmental and strategic realities. Beyond Europe, this will allow to build a comprehensive technology offer towards partner countries.

In this challenging yet opportunity-rich context, CONNECT’s mission is clear: to empower Europe to lead in the digital age – not only by regulating but by simplifying rules and enabling, innovating, and defending a digital transition that is competitive, sustainable, democratic, and sovereign. The road ahead requires unity of purpose, strategic clarity, and the collective resolve to act decisively.

CONNECT MISSION STATEMENT

CONNECT invests in research, innovation, deployment and uptake of trustworthy and green digital technologies that improve Europe’s economy and people’s lives. Through funding, legislation and policy initiatives, we help ensure European leadership and independence in critical digital technologies (such as artificial intelligence, common data spaces, high-performance computing, 5G, micro-electronics, blockchain and quantum).

We foster the internal market where all companies can invest and compete on equal terms, develop, market and use digital technologies, products and services and where the rights of creators and consumers are respected. We work on the deployment of very high-speed networks to all companies and households, as connectivity is key for digital transformation. We work towards making Europe a global leader in the data economy and in cybersecurity. We promote the EU’s human-centric model of an innovative, fair and sustainable digital transformation of society, which respects our democratic values, our fundamental rights and cultural diversity. We help bridge the digital divide by supporting digital literacy and skills of EU citizens.

To achieve its objectives, CONNECT works closely with decentralised agencies, namely the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity and the Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications.

The EU has developed a network of digital partnerships and alliances with countries and regions around the world, allowing for concrete joint projects and initiatives in fields such as secure connectivity, artificial intelligence, semiconductors, digital public infrastructure, and platforms.

CONNECT interacts with many other Commission directorates-general (DGs). There is a particularly close cooperation with DG Research and Innovation, DG Defence Industry and

Space, DG Health and Food Safety as well as DG Justice and Consumers, DG Migration and Home Affairs, and DG Digital Services. Given the digitalisation of all sectors of the economy, the importance of collaboration between CONNECT and several other DGs is set to increase. To support the implementation of its policies and reach its objectives, CONNECT uses EU funding programmes and instruments that cover all aspects of the digital transformation, from fundamental research to deployment, while addressing digital skill gaps.

Strategic outlook 2025 - 2029

Over the 2025–2029 period, CONNECT contributes decisively to three general objectives through four specific objectives that are backed by clear, measurable key performance indicators:



These objectives are mapped onto the transformational imperatives of the Competitiveness Compass: closing the innovation gap and reducing excessive dependencies and increasing security. Compass imperatives are also key for the EU to preserve its social model. They also reinforce the five horizontal enablers: simplifying the regulatory environment, reducing burden and favouring speed and flexibility; fully exploiting benefits of scale offered by the single market by removing barriers; financing through a Savings and Investments Union and a refocused EU budget; promoting skills and quality jobs while ensuring social fairness and better coordinating policies at EU and national level by integrating governance, investment, and monitoring.

The work of CONNECT follows the vision and objectives of the 2022 [Digital Decade Policy Programme](#) 2030, which aim to empower businesses and people in a human-centred, sustainable and more prosperous digital future. In 2026, CONNECT will lead the review of the programme's implementation strategy and digital targets, focusing on identifying where updates are needed in light of technological developments, cybersecurity concerns, and our wider productivity and sustainability goals.

A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Europe has always been a continent of industry, enterprise and innovation – reinventing itself through industrial and technological revolutions, enabling wealth creation and to compete globally. This strength is in large part down to our unique social market economy, which gives Europe many advantages over its competitors.

But there are still too many structural brakes on our competitiveness. Central to this is the insufficient diffusion of digital technologies, impacting our ability to use technology to develop new services and business models.

Specific Objective 1: Strengthening digital and frontier technologies for Europe's strategic autonomy

To reduce technological dependencies and strengthen its capacity to innovate, the EU is investing in frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, quantum, and cloud. The Digital Decade Policy Programme plays a central role in accelerating this shift, by setting investment and performance benchmarks across Member States. CONNECT supports this objective through policy initiatives (e.g. the Chips Act, AI factories, Important Projects of Common European Interests) and funding instruments that unlock public-private investment. This aligns with the Competitiveness Compass imperatives to scale innovation and reduce dependencies.

As part of the **AI Continent strategy**, the **AI factories** initiative will aim to leverage all the benefits from aggregation and network effects at European level. Building on Europe's existing world-class network of European high-performance computing supercomputers, the initiative establishes AI factories to boost Europe's computing power and makes it accessible for start-ups, researchers and industry to train, develop and improve their artificial intelligence models.

Europe must also maintain a leading position in quantum technologies, which will support our digital society, health – via scanning and drug discovery, energy, defence and security as well as business economy. A **Quantum strategy** and a **Quantum Act** will build on the existing Chips Act to address regulatory fragmentation, align EU and national programmes and support investment in pan-European quantum computing, communication and sensing infrastructure. As proposed by the Draghi report, CONNECT will develop a long-term EU Quantum Chips plan.

Digitalisation and diffusion of advanced technologies across the European economy are necessary to lift Europe's productivity growth. Overall, 70% of the new value created in the global economy in the next 10 years will be digitally enabled. Integrating artificial intelligence into strategic sectors where Europe has traditionally been strong will be critical to maintaining their competitive edge. The **Apply AI strategy** will aim to boost new industrial uses of artificial intelligence in sectors such as manufacturing, automotive, mobility, energy, agriculture, robotics, pharmaceuticals, aeronautics, financial services, as well as to improve public services, for example in healthcare and justice. CONNECT will also

establish a robust framework (including through the setup of a comprehensive governance framework in collaboration with Member States and stakeholders, the preparation of guidelines, and the collaboration with standardisation bodies on the development of technical norms) for the progressive entry into application and enforcement of the provisions of the **AI Act**, which will be instrumental in fostering the development and adoption of trustworthy artificial intelligence technologies and creating uniform and clear rules across the Union. CONNECT will address the increasingly realistic deepfakes that have impacted elections across Europe, notably by ensuring that transparency requirements in the AI Act are implemented.

An **AI Research Council** will be set up to pool resources, similar to the approach taken with the Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire (CERN).

Specific Objective 2: A true digital single market to advance Europe's productivity and competitiveness

An effective digital single market requires enabling cross-border scale, simplifying regulation, and improving productivity for businesses. CONNECT supports this transformation by promoting digital interoperability, reducing fragmentation of the digital single market, fostering investment in startups and reducing administrative burden. This objective also directly advances two enablers of the Competitiveness Compass: simplifying the regulatory environment, reducing burden and favouring speed and flexibility; fully exploiting benefits of scale offered by the single market by removing barriers.

CONNECT will continue to support the deployment of public digital infrastructure, notably with the **European Business Wallet** which will be the cornerstone of doing business simply and digitally in the EU, providing a seamless environment for companies to interact with all public administrations.

Closing the innovation gap will require investment in state-of-the-art **digital infrastructure**, including modern fibre networks, wireless and satellite solutions, investments in 6G and cloud computing capabilities. A **Digital Networks Act** will propose solutions to improve market incentives to build the digital networks of the future, reduce burden and compliance costs, and improve digital connectivity for end-users, by creating an integrated single market for connectivity and a more coordinated EU spectrum policy.

In parallel, through an **EU Cloud and AI Development Act** the Commission will mobilise public and private investment to advance artificial intelligence infrastructure development. The objective would be to substantially increase the EU's data centre capacity within the next five to seven years to support the training of smaller artificial intelligence models, and to improve business access and calibrate artificial intelligence solutions. This initiative will complement the new artificial intelligence gigafactories specialised in training of very large artificial intelligence models enabling key artificial intelligence ecosystems throughout the EU. It will also support chip design and manufacturing in Europe, including further actions in relation to cutting-edge artificial intelligence chips.

As the availability of large and high-quality data is an essential component of developing artificial intelligence, the Commission will propose a **Data Union strategy** to improve and facilitate secure private and public data sharing, simplify the regulatory regime and its application, and accelerate the development of new systems or applications. The strategy will also address international data flows, with the aim of fostering trusted data exchanges and ensuring the EU remains globally connected while upholding its values and standards.

A robust **copyright** framework remains essential to support the production and distribution of creative content in the age of generative artificial intelligence. CONNECT will continue to support the application of the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market and will consider the need to further improve the copyright framework, in particular to facilitate licensing agreements between artificial intelligence providers and the creative sectors.

CONNECT will continue to enforce the **Digital Services Act** (DSA) and the **Digital Markets Act** (DMA) against very large online platforms and search engines and gatekeepers, ensuring a safer online environment by setting clear responsibilities for online platforms (DSA) and making markets in the digital sector more contestable and establishing a level playing field to foster innovation, growth, and competitiveness, both in the European single market and globally.

CONNECT will actively work to **combat unethical techniques online**, such as dark patterns, marketing by social media influencers, the addictive design of digital products, and online profiling, particularly when these practices exploit consumer vulnerabilities for commercial purposes.

As announced in the Union of Skills, CONNECT will **address critical skills gaps** in key technological areas through advanced digital skills academies.

CONNECT will implement the **European Digital Rulebook** to boost productivity and protect our security and democracy. We will also continue to promote EU digital norms and standards internationally and to ensure a leading role for the EU in global digital governance.

A new era for European Defence and Security

If the last few years have been a sharp reminder about how fragile peace is, they have also been a wakeup call for Europe to give the means to defend and protect itself and to deter potential adversaries. As part of this, we will focus on further strengthening our cyber defence capabilities, coordinating national cyber efforts, and securing our critical infrastructures – notably by developing a trusted European cyber-defence industry.

Specific Objective 3: Enhancing cybersecurity and defending Europe's digital infrastructure

Geopolitical tensions exacerbate the threat landscape and complexity of supply chains, disruptive technologies and overreliance on high-risk vendors increase the attack surface

available to malicious actors. CONNECT implements the Network and Information Security Directive (NIS2), supporting the **Cyber Resilience Act**, and funding innovation in cyber defence. The future Digital Decade Policy Programme targets could reinforce this by requiring Member States to enhance the resilience of digital services and infrastructures following the review in 2026.

The digital age is accelerating the speed of **cyberthreats and cyberattacks**. Entire economic sectors and essential services depend on the resilience of our digital, transport and space infrastructure, energy grids, technological hardware. **Undersea cables** are a prominent recent example of an area of intensifying security risks. Europe must factor in risks for the security of critical infrastructure, whether digital or physical, at all stages – from construction and technology choice to operations and recovery capabilities. The internal security strategy sets out a comprehensive EU response to face security threats, whether online or offline, and to ensure that security is integrated in EU legislation and policies by design.

To address the threat quantum computers pose to current encryption methods, the Commission is actively supporting the shift to **post-quantum cryptography** (PQC). CONNECT will work with Member States to facilitate the transition towards PQC and ensure the protection of sensitive communications and infrastructures.

Over the 2025-2029 period, CONNECT will explore how digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence offer significant opportunities to enhance law enforcement capabilities and address these evolving threats effectively.

Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Europe's future in an increasingly complex world will depend on having a strong democracy and on defending the values that give us the freedoms and rights that we cherish. CONNECT will support the European Democracy Shield, working to countering foreign information manipulation and interference online. We will protect European democracy and uphold shared values by embedding rights, inclusion, and trust at the core of the EU's digital transformation.

Specific Objective 4: Strengthening social resilience and promoting diverse cultural content to protect Europe's values and democracy

Digital transformation must uphold democratic integrity, media pluralism, and cultural diversity.

CONNECT leads the **implementation of the Digital Services Act (DSA)**. The DSA aims to make the online world safer for children, requiring online platforms to put in place measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors as part of their service. In addition, the DSA promotes a healthy information space by requiring very large online platforms and search engines to carry out a risk assessment and mitigate risks

related to civic discourse, electoral processes and public security, while protecting the fundamental rights.

Through the Digital Decade Policy Programme, Member States also commit to increasing **digital skills and inclusive content access**.

With the DSA setting the basis for online platforms' responsibility, the **European Media Freedom Act** adds guarantees to ensure the independent provision of media services in the internal market, foster media freedom and pluralism and protect the integrity of EU's information space. These will be complemented with a series of initiatives related to viability and resilience of the media sector facing the digital transformation, notably the **revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive**, which aims at levelling the playing field between different players in the media distribution ecosystem and promoting circulation of quality European content.

Cross-cutting efforts – implementation and simplification agenda

Over the next five years, CONNECT will continue to ensure that the digital transformation is not only ambitious, but also easier to implement and less burdensome – especially for citizens, businesses, and public administrations. To help deliver on the EU's specific digital objectives, we are conducting an ambitious 'stress test' of the entire digital *acquis* over the next years. This includes notably the review of almost all CONNECT's *acquis* by the end of the mandate, with evaluation clauses on all major acts ⁽²⁾. We will focus on simplifying rules, reducing red tape, and supporting Member States and stakeholders with practical tools and guidance. This will support the Commission's commitment to **cutting administrative burdens by 25% for all businesses, and 35% for small and medium size enterprises**, while ensuring legal certainty and maintaining high standards for safety, security, and fundamental rights. The cost reduction dimension will undergo careful analysis for each of the different work streams supporting the broader 'stress testing', in order to contribute to the Commission's ambitious targets.

As a first step, CONNECT will prepare an intensive 'stress test' of the *acquis* in the areas of cybersecurity, data and artificial intelligence. This will be addressed in a digital omnibus, part of the digital package on simplification planned for the end of 2025. The 'stress test' will rely on a combination of consultations, contracted studies, and internal analytical

⁽²⁾ Upcoming reviews and evaluations include: evaluation of the Digital Markets Act (2026), review of the Digital Decade Policy Programme (2026), review of the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market (2026), evaluation of the Chips Act (2026), evaluation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (2026), evaluation of the Cyber Solidarity Act (2027), review of the Open Internet Regulation (2027), review of NIS2 (2027), review of the Digital Services Act (2027), implementation report of the Gigabit Infrastructure Act (2028), evaluation of the European Media Freedom Act (2028), review of the Data Act (2028), review of the Roaming Regulation (2029), evaluation of the AI Act (2029), sunset clause of the European Cybersecurity Competence Centre and Network (2029), review of the Cyber Resilience Act (2030).

assessment. For instance, public consultations were launched on the Apply AI Strategy, on the revision of the Cybersecurity Act, and on the Data Union Strategy – all with specific subsections relating to the implementation and potential simplification of parts of the *acquis*. All these consultations are complemented by the organisation of various workshops and stakeholder events, to gather additional input.

The **European Business Wallet** is intended to streamline business-to-business and business-to-government interactions, enabling secure data exchange while creating new opportunities for trust service providers. It will provide a seamless environment for companies to interact with all public administrations, by enabling businesses to streamline national and cross-border regulatory requirements, notifications, and compliance processes in one place.

To make sure our networks can handle future demands – from new consumer applications to industrial services in key sectors – CONNECT is also preparing the **Digital Networks Act** (DNA). The DNA aims at creating an integrated single market for connectivity and a more coordinated EU spectrum policy to incentivise new business activities and for companies to scale up and go cross-border. In that context we will also review the existing regulatory framework (European Electronic Communications Code) with an aim to modernize, simplify and harmonize where necessary.

The continued implementation of the **European Data strategy**, specifically in terms of the rollout of the common European data spaces will further support simplification. Interoperable European data spaces (in health, agriculture, mobility, etc.) can help businesses to overcome the bureaucratic challenges of compliance, through using means for the automatic verification of compliance with EU rules. To support this, CONNECT will publish **interpretative guidance**, host **transposition workshops**, and provide **scoreboards** to track Member States' implementation progress transparently.

CONNECT will also put forward a **European Data Union strategy** that will draw on existing data rules to ensure a simplified, clear and coherent legal framework for business and administrations to share data seamlessly, while respecting high privacy and security standards. This initiative will also contribute to the digital package on simplification, on one hand by reviewing and evaluating data related legislation in order to make the horizontal data *acquis* simpler and more coherent, and on the other hand by incentivizing data technologies that can aid in the efforts of simplification and burden reduction.

CONNECT will further support implementation efforts of companies and public authorities on the **AI Act**, through outreach, guidelines, and tools to support compliance. An AI Act service desk will provide additional support by answering questions that stakeholders have around the application of the AI Act.

To ensure laws work in practice, CONNECT will continue to work closely with Member States and stakeholders through consultations, reality checks and supporting the Executive Vice-President Henna Virkkunen's **implementation dialogues**. Two implementation dialogues,

the first on AI and data and the second on cybersecurity, are already in the pipeline for 2025. CONNECT will also write an annual progress report on implementation and enforcement and continue to monitor the application of EU law in Member States. CONNECT will handle complaints and where appropriate launch infringement procedures against Member States. Last, implementation support will continue to be guaranteed via implementation strategies, as well as guidance documents.

The **Digital Decade Board** will be a key enabler in this period. It will serve as the central forum for coordination and governance between the Commission and Member States. It will play a vital role in ensuring alignment across national digital roadmaps, helping identify best practices, monitor implementation gaps, and recommend corrective action where needed. The Board will also help foster trust and transparency, offering a platform for structured dialogue and strategic steering of the digital transition at EU level.

Together, these efforts will make the EU's digital rules clearer, easier to apply, and better suited to help Europe meet its 2030 Digital Decade targets.

PART 2. Delivering on the Commission's priorities in 2025

Europe's **Digital Decade Policy Programme** aims to ensure that the digital transformation serves the needs of people and businesses while making the EU more competitive and autonomous in the digital sphere by improving the digital infrastructure, supporting the digital transformation of businesses and public services, and promoting the development of digital skills. EU funding programmes are paramount in implementing the Commission's objectives of fostering a robust and competitive digital economy. **Digital Europe** focuses on enhancing digital infrastructures and capabilities, bolstering competitiveness and resilience while reducing administrative burdens. **Horizon Europe** facilitates research and innovation to support the green and digital transitions essential for European resilience and economic growth. **Connecting Europe Facility - Digital** tackles the need for high-capacity digital infrastructure, essential for creating a well-functioning digital economy and for building connectivity across EU member states, aligned with the sustainability and economic stability goals. **Creative Europe - MEDIA** supports the competitiveness of the European content production industry by promoting cultural diversity and upholding European values in the digital world.



General Objective 1

A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness



Specific Objective 1: Strengthening digital and frontier technologies for Europe's strategic autonomy

To strengthen Europe's strategic autonomy in digital and frontier technologies, CONNECT, together with the European High Performance Computing Joint Undertaking (EuroHPC JU), will continue enhancing the European network of supercomputers by inaugurating JUPITER, the first exascale (allowing for one quintillion (1 followed by 18 zeros) calculations per second) European supercomputer.

EuroHPC quantum computers will continue to be integrated into Europe's high-performance computing infrastructure, enabling access for academia and industry. The establishment and expansion of quantum sensing infrastructures will unlock new precision capabilities in

sectors like healthcare, environment, and geophysics. The Commission will promote industrial uptake by supporting quantum start-ups and scale-ups, facilitating access to pilot lines and computing platforms, and strengthening public procurement for early-stage quantum technologies. Finally, initiatives across Member States will address talent gaps and support a skilled, inclusive quantum workforce, ensuring long-term technological sovereignty.

As announced in the Competitiveness Compass, CONNECT will work with public and private partners towards setting up artificial intelligence (AI) gigafactories (large-scale facilities equipped with approximately 100 000 state-of-the-art AI chips, four times more than current AI factories), which will integrate massive computing power and data centres to train and develop complex artificial intelligence models at unprecedented scale. CONNECT and the EuroHPC JU will work together with the selected hosting entities to set up AI factories around Europe's world-leading supercomputers. The first 13 of these factories will start deploying in 2025. These two actions that are part of the infrastructure pillar of the AI Continent action plan will be complemented by four more pillars on: data, artificial intelligence adoption, artificial intelligence skills and talent and minimisation of regulatory burden and guaranteeing the successful implementation of digital regulations.

CONNECT will work to ensure the EU can become a global leader in artificial intelligence and promote the development and deployment of artificial intelligence solutions that benefit society and the economy. To this end CONNECT will bring together federated data from different AI factories and link them to the corresponding common European data spaces, increase the adoption of artificial intelligence harnessing its potential for developing new services, innovative business models, and optimise production processes and reorient the network of European Digital Innovation Hubs to become AI Experience Centres, educating, train, retain and attract artificial intelligence experts, and, finally, create the AI Act service desk, which, as part of the efforts to facilitate a smooth application of the AI Act, will be a central information hub on the Regulation, allowing stakeholders to ask for help and receive tailor-made answers.

CONNECT will contribute to Europe's strategic autonomy by supporting research on 6G and 5G deployment, large-scale pilots on telco-edge-cloud, '5G for Smart Communities' and '5G Corridors' projects for connected and automated mobility along main European roads, rails, and waterways. A focus on European open-source solutions will reinforce EU tech sovereignty. In 2021, the Commission launched the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking (SNS JU), a major initiative to develop 6G systems concepts and technologies in partnership with the industry, with a budget of EUR 900 million of EU funding. The main missions of the SNS JU are fostering Europe's technology sovereignty on 6G and boosting 5G deployment in Europe.

The European quantum communication infrastructure (EuroQCI) uses the latest quantum-enhanced encryption techniques to enable public administrations to transmit and store information and data very securely, and safeguard critical infrastructures like hospitals and

energy grids across the EU. The EuroQCI will be gradually integrated into IRIS², the new EU space-based secure communication system. In 2025, a call for proposals under the Connecting Europe Facility – Digital will target cross-border links between these networks and a call under IRIS² will support the further development of European technologies for secure quantum communication. The European Commission and the European Space Agency will also continue to work together to plan the launch of the satellites that will form the EuroQCI's space segment, ensuring that its secure communication services cover the entire EU.

CONNECT will implement the EU Quantum Strategy, which will guide public and private investments to reinforce Europe's strategic autonomy and global competitiveness. In 2025, key milestones will include the deployment of quantum chip pilot lines under the Chips Act, advancing Europe's capabilities in device fabrication.

The implementation of the chips for Europe initiative will show progress on the design platform, competence centres, quantum chips, and pilot lines. As of February 2025, seven approvals of state aid for semiconductor manufacturing facilities were announced, and a few more may be expected in 2025. Cooperation with Member States via the European Semiconductor Board on economic security, risk assessments, and more continues. The Commission will gather inputs for a report on the evaluation and review of the Chips Act due in September 2026.

Finally, together with the Chips Joint Undertaking, CONNECT is leading the launch of the European Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Alliance as part of the automotive action plan.

Specific Objective 2: A true digital single market to advance Europe's productivity and competitiveness

CONNECT will take numerous actions to foster a true digital single market to advance Europe's productivity and competitiveness.

To make more data available to support artificial intelligence development and innovation, a new Data Union strategy will be adopted. The strategy will enhance interoperability, data availability, will improve data sharing across sectors and borders, and will ensure governance structures are efficient and effective to better align data policies with the needs of businesses and society. Particular attention will be given to streamlining existing data legislation. Data labs will collect and organise data in large datasets to train artificial intelligence models. International data flows will also be addressed to foster trusted data exchanges and to ensure the EU remains globally connected while upholding its values and standards.

CONNECT will prepare two initiatives to build a competitive European cloud supporting the AI Continent and to develop a competitive cloud offer, incentivising large investments in sustainable cloud and edge capacity and a single market for EU cloud services. It will

improve the availability of highly secure EU-based cloud capacity for highly critical use cases in the public and private sector.

Following the review of the European Electronic Communications Code, the proposal for a Digital Networks Act (DNA) will be prepared to create an integrated single market for connectivity and a more coordinated EU spectrum policy. The DNA will aim to improve market incentives to build the digital networks of the future and to reduce burden and compliance costs.

The European Business Wallet will enable secure data exchange and create new opportunities for trust service providers. It will provide a seamless environment for companies to interact with all public administrations, by streamlining national and cross-border regulatory requirements, notifications, and compliance processes in one place.

CONNECT will continue to supervise and enforce the implementation of the Digital Services Act (DSA) and, together with DG Competition, the Digital Markets Act (DMA). For the DSA, the enforcement vis-a-vis very large online platforms and search engines will focus on illegal content, protection of minors, online marketplaces, and protecting the integrity of elections and information interference. Work on the DMA, the enforcement against gatekeepers will focus on making sure that platform ecosystems are open up for innovation and new opportunities, giving end users control over their data; preventing big tech from favouring their own services in detriment of new innovative start-ups and scale-ups; and guaranteeing that services do not tip in favour of few large tech platforms.

To ensure coherence and simplification, the DG will work on a report on the way that the DSA interacts with other legal acts, due by November 2025. Together with DG Competition, CONNECT will conduct a review of the DMA Regulation, due by May 2026.

A European Media Industry Outlook report assessing the competitiveness of the audiovisual, video games and news media sectors at European level will be published.

In the field of copyright, the DG will work 1) on artificial intelligence related challenges for copyright-protected content, including supporting the practical implementation of the text and data mining exception; 2) follow-up on EU Court judgments regarding the international application of EU copyright law; and 3) assess the effects of the 2023 Commission Recommendation on combatting online piracy of sports and other live events together with Member States and stakeholders.

CONNECT will support the deployment of interoperable and secure federated infrastructures for intensive care units for more precise, faster, more effective clinical decision-making, diagnostics and treatment. A state-of-the-art platform for the advanced integration of computational models and next generation virtual human twins solutions will be launched, which will accelerate personalised and precision medicine.

The *Connecting Europe Facility – Digital* work programme will reinforce the security and resilience of backbone networks of strategic interest, support quantum communication infrastructures, and large scale 5G pilots calls.

More information and communication technology (ICT) specialists are needed to develop, deploy and use advanced digital technologies to ensure Europe's digital sovereignty and contribute to the EU's competitiveness. Therefore, CONNECT will launch calls for advanced digital skills academies to address critical talent gaps in key technological areas (i.e. artificial intelligence, virtual worlds, quantum and semiconductors). These academies will expand education and training offers at all levels, scale up successful training programmes, and foster talent ecosystems, contributing to reaching the target on ICT specialists. They will offer flexible learning pathways, promote training uptake - especially among women - and collaborate with industry and research institutions to drive innovation and workforce development. The European league of advanced digital skills academies will federate EU initiatives on advanced digital skills, ensuring coordination, synergies, and a cohesive approach.

Creative Europe-MEDIA and cross-sectoral actions will be implemented considering the findings of the interim evaluation to be submitted in mid-2025. The digital transformation of audiovisual and media sectors and the European industry competitiveness are the main issues. Some actions of the media and audiovisual action plan for 2025 include MediaInvest - an equity investment platform aiming to leverage EUR 400 million.

General Objective 2

A new era for European Defence and Security



Specific Objective 3: Enhancing cybersecurity and defending Europe's digital infrastructure

Under the Cable Security action plan, the Commission will work with Member States to establish voluntary integrated threat surveillance mechanisms per sea basins, leveraging *Digital Europe* support. The Submarine cable infrastructure expert group will deliver a mapping of existing and planned submarine cables, coordinated risk assessments, a cable security toolbox of mitigating measures, and a list of cable projects of European interest.

A budget of EUR 542 million is set aside under the *second Connecting Europe Facility – Digital (CEF – Digital)* work programme for the security and resilience of backbone networks of strategic European interest. A fourth *CEF-Digital* call for proposals will lead to new Global Gateways project signatures contributing to the security, reliability, and resilience of the critical digital communications infrastructure. In line with the provisions of the action plan on cable security, most projects involve the deployment of smart sensor technologies.

Supported by the Joint Research Centre, CONNECT and the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), in collaboration with competent authorities, industry and other stakeholders, will use a multistakeholder forum to identify best available internet standards and deployment techniques to support uptake and compliance with security requirements.

Together with DG Health and Food Safety, CONNECT will implement the European action plan on Cybersecurity of Hospitals and Healthcare providers. Specific outputs will be

delivered by different actors including ENISA and the Member States under the Commission's coordination. CONNECT will support the establishment of a support centre for hospitals and healthcare providers within ENISA, as well as establishing the health cybersecurity advisory board and the European health chief information security officers' network together with ENISA.

The European Commission is fostering the transition to post-quantum cryptography (PQC), a new kind of cryptography that will be crucial to safeguarding sensitive communications and infrastructures in the coming years. Based on the 2024 Commission Recommendation calling on Member States to prepare by 2026 a coordinated implementation roadmap for the transition to post-quantum cryptography, CONNECT will work with Member States to foster this transition and protect digital infrastructures and services for public administrations and other critical infrastructures in the EU.

Finally, CONNECT will revise the Cybersecurity Act to modernise it and to ensure the security and resilience of information and communication technology supply chains and infrastructure. It will propose to improve the European cybersecurity certification framework, so that future certification schemes can be adopted in a timely manner and respond to policy needs. The Commission and the Council will adopt a new cyber crisis management blueprint by June 2025. The Commission will deepen its actions for cyber defence, including developing the European cyber defence industry and developing cyber capabilities in accordance with the political guidelines and the Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030

General Objective 3

Protecting our democracy, upholding our values



Specific Objective 4: Countering disinformation while promoting diverse cultural content to protect Europe's values and democracy

The Digital Services Act (DSA) aims to create a safer online environment for children by supporting online platforms accessible to minors to ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security for children. In addition to enforcing the DSA, CONNECT is preparing guidelines on the protection of minors which will help shape a better and safer online environment for younger users.

To provide a common European age verification solution for the single market and building upon the rules in the DSA, CONNECT is developing a short-term EU-wide, interoperable, and privacy-preserving white label age verification application to protect minors from age-inappropriate content, as a bridge solution to the EU Digital Identity Wallet.

Building on the work of Better Internet for kids and the DSA, CONNECT will work on an action plan against cyberbullying. Consultations to feed the plan will be launched in 2025.

CONNECT will monitor the implementation of the voluntary Code of Conduct on Disinformation (integrated into the DSA framework from July 2025) and will work with signatories to implement their commitments, focusing on transparency, accountability and cooperation measures, notably in the context of elections or crisis situations such as the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. In addition, CONNECT, together with DG Justice and Consumers, will monitor the implementation of the voluntary Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online (integrated into the DSA framework in January 2025).

In the context of the implementation of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), the European Commission will provide guidelines and will check Member States compliance with EMFA during the year. CONNECT will coordinate the media freedom and pluralism part of the 2025 Annual Rule of Law Report and will follow-up member states implementation of the Recommendation on safety of journalists.

CONNECT will continue monitoring the implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive to ensure a level playing field for emerging audiovisual media while preserving cultural diversity, protecting children and consumers and safeguarding media pluralism. CONNECT will also launch a study that will be the basis for the Commission's report to the European Parliament and the Council on the *ex post* evaluation of the impact of the Directive and its added value, and may be accompanied by proposals for its review.

CONNECT will continue to support the availability and access to European news content to provide citizens with information about European issues from pan-European points of view.

Creative Europe – MEDIA will support access of audiences to content from other EU countries by supporting high-quality co-productions of films, series, and documentaries. Also the distribution of works across national borders will be funded. The Cross-sectoral strand will support partnerships between news media outlets across borders, monitoring of media freedom and strengthening of media literacy.

CONNECT will support the European Digital Media Observatory and its hubs, which play a pivotal role in detecting, analysing and exposing disinformation, through a broad coverage across the EU and beyond. CONNECT will maintain its commitment to initiatives promoting media literacy, critical thinking and societal resilience to disinformation, while contributing to the European Democracy Shield under DG Justice and Consumers' leadership.

PART 3. A modern and sustainable public administration: outputs in 2025

The internal control framework supports sound management and decision-making. It ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are addressed and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls.

CONNECT has established an internal control system tailored to its characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and will be subject to an annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

A. Human resource management

To maintain a high staff satisfaction level (staff engagement index 73% in 2023) despite the ongoing human resources challenges, CONNECT will implement the follow-up action plan addressing the concerns identified the 2023 staff opinion survey.

The DG will pursue its efforts to adjust to the new ways of working in the dynamic collaborative environment, leveraging Microsoft 365 to enhance collaborative efforts.

The local diversity and inclusion network will discuss topics of concern to staff and take actions for improvement (e.g., annual diversity and inclusion days, new working methods).

CONNECT is pursuing its 'We are CONNECT' staff engagement campaign to increase the sense of belonging to CONNECT and to ensure that colleagues are better aware of the DG activities and achievements. CONNECT will continue to set up CONNECT University sessions, aiming at sharing knowledge about the digital transformation steered by CONNECT and enhancing the take up of digital skills both internally and externally.

To strive towards gender balance at all management levels by the end of 2025 (in 2024, 50% of CONNECT middle managers were female), the DG will supplement corporate efforts and targets of female first appointments to middle management posts with initiatives to cultivate a pipeline of female management talent (e.g., local female talent development programme and 180°/360° feedback mechanism).

Resource management is crucial in light of the challenges resulting from the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027. CONNECT plans to ensure fair and efficient resource allocation despite reduced staffing levels due to budget cuts and redeployments. This involves maximizing internal redeployment possibilities and achieving efficiency gains to manage increased policy workload. CONNECT will adapt its organisational structure to meet the challenges that the implementation of the platforms policy and enforcement will bring, while achieving further efficiency gains and improving the ways of working together internally.

B. Digital transformation and data management

Digital transformation

Digital transformation is fundamental to CONNECT's mission of fostering a more autonomous, secure, and human-centred digital society in Europe. To support this mission, a CONNECT Digital Transformation Office will integrate the vision and solutions from various CONNECT perspectives such as the data sources (data, information, document and knowledge management), the technical solutions (artificial intelligence, Microsoft 365, automation, ad hoc informatic solutions, cybersecurity tooling...), people/stakeholders (governance bodies, sectorial networks, communities of practices, champions...) and new, mobile, working practices (improved collaboration, security culture, remote working, sharing culture...), closing the gaps and linking people at the appropriate level. This achievement will be measured through the following indicators: 'Digital culture', as percentage of statutory staff that has completed at least one IT training course (baseline 2024: 37%); and 'Seamless digital environment: cloud adoption', as the percentage of IT systems utilising cloud infrastructure services compared to the total number of IT systems (baseline 2024: 59%).

Data Management

Our perspective on Data Management is summarised in the Data Maturity Matrix by CONNECT. This estimation shows our efforts in establishing a light governance structure, a data steward network, and enhancing inventory, practice sharing, training, and services. Moving forward, we aim to improve data quality and launch a more systematic data skills campaign, coordinated under the new IMSB governance led by DG Research and Innovation and the Publications Office for our family. Corporate data trainings will be offered based on user profiles in order to provide more targeted training content to staff.

Data management will be evaluated through the maturity level in implementing corporate data policies across four key areas: data management, ownership and responsibilities, data quality, and data skills (baseline 2024: developing), and through the 'compliance indicator', as the percentage of staff trained on data protection compliance combined with the percentage of public records of processing operations reviewed within the last two years (baseline 2024: 100%).

Indicator	Basic	Developing	Established	Advanced	Trendsetting
Data Management			√		
Ownership and responsibilities			√		
Data quality		√			
Data Skills		√			

Data Protection

CONNECT will implement the Commission's data protection action plan that identifies the main objectives and priorities to ensure compliance with data protection rules. The operational controllers will adopt new records, together with the corresponding privacy statements, for new processing activities and will bi-annually review existing ones. A digitally transformed and data-driven Commission goes hand in hand with enhancing CONNECT staff's data protection knowledge. For this reason, awareness raising activities will continue (in particular, a training dedicated to newcomers in general and a specific training for newcomers in the directorates in charge of AI and DSA/DMA).

CONNECT will invest in implementing the data protection action plan for the Artificial Intelligence Office. The DG will ensure that agreements with external processors are duly signed.

C. Sound financial management

CONNECT implements the budget directly and through executive agencies, i.e., the European Health and Digital Executive Agency, the European Research Executive Agency, the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency, and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency.

CONNECT supervises entities to which it delegates policy or budget implementation tasks, i.e., decentralised agencies ⁽³⁾, joint undertakings ⁽⁴⁾, and other EU bodies ⁽⁵⁾. CONNECT also entrusts budget to other bodies ⁽⁶⁾, to the European Investment Bank, and to the European Investment Fund in respect of financial instruments.

CONNECT is responsible for the implementation of several programmes: *Digital Europe*, *Connecting Europe Facility - Digital*, the framework programme for research, *Horizon Europe*, and *Creative Europe - MEDIA*, and the corresponding legacy programmes. Controls are put in place to ensure the legality and regularity of transactions and the sound financial management, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes and the nature of the payments concerned. The internal control systems are adapted to the DG's portfolio of programmes that it manages directly or has delegated to the entrusted entities, and to

⁽³⁾ The European Union Cybersecurity Agency and the Office for support the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications.

⁽⁴⁾ The Chips Joint Undertaking, the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking and the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking.

⁽⁵⁾ The European Cybersecurity and Competence Centre and the Ambient Assisted Living Association.

⁽⁶⁾ The European Space Agency, the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites, the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, the European Audiovisual Observatory, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and Europol.

the enforcement tasks (the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act, the Artificial Intelligence Office/Act).

As regards *Digital Europe*, an *ex post* audit strategy for the programme is currently being implemented. It contributes to the assessment of the legality and regularity of transactions by means of *ex post* financial audits carried out by HaDEA. The *ex post* audit campaign was launched in the second half of 2024 and continues during 2025. The first audit results are expected only at the end of 2025 and they will not be sufficient to estimate a representative level of error. In its 2024 Annual Activity Report, in the absence of audit results at the end 2024, CONNECT estimated the level of error for the Digital Europe grant expenditure at 2%.

CONNECT's controls are measured against specific indicators, namely effectiveness, efficiency and economy indicators. To achieve the targets, the DG put in place risk differentiated controls (*ex ante* and *ex post*) embedded in its programme management processes which are regularly revised. The *ex-ante* controls are tailored to the different forms of costs and follow a shared approach to risk management, involving objective criteria for identifying risks, and tools to manage and mitigate them. The *ex post* controls for grant management are part of the programme specific audit strategies. For Horizon programmes the *ex post* audits are centralised in the Common Audit Service (CAS) for the whole Research and Innovation family, while for Digital Europe they are carried out by HaDEA.

Currently all programmes implemented by CONNECT are onboarded in the corporate Commission IT tools (eGrants, eProcurement, etc) which are continuously improved for a simplified and harmonised programme management. Communication campaigns to National Contact Points and to beneficiaries are regularly organised to bring more awareness about the specificities of the Digital Europe programme and to facilitate the understanding of the reporting requirements. In addition, HaDEA is working closely with the external audit firms performing audits for Digital Europe on behalf of the Commission to ensure the audit work is aligned to the needs of the programme.

In 2024, the estimated overall risk at payment and risk at closure represented 2.50% and 1.68% of CONNECT's relevant expenditure respectively. CONNECT will keep on monitoring closely all key performance indicators linked to financial management ensuring that they are reached following the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The DG's internal control system is designed to maintain error rates within an acceptable range.

As regards the other control objectives, controls are in place to:

- safeguard CONNECT's assets and to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is not disclosed, or its integrity breached (data altered).
- ensure reliability of reporting stemming from the supervision of entrusted entities.

D. Fraud risk management

CONNECT has developed and implemented its own anti-fraud strategy based on the European Anti-Fraud Office's methodology. CONNECT's anti-fraud strategy 2025-2027 ensures that the strategy and its action plan address the risk of fraud related to the current portfolio of activities of the DG including the new enforcement tasks. It also ensures alignment with the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy and with the Common Anti-Fraud Strategy in the Research Family. The actions planned for 2024 stemming from the previous anti-fraud strategy 2022-2024 were implemented, for which reason DG CONNECT's baseline for the mandatory indicator is 100%.

CONNECT will continue to implement awareness campaigns and deliver trainings on anti-fraud topics, especially related to grant management for its programmes. CONNECT will continue the good cooperation, in the anti-fraud area, with the members of the Research Family and with the services implementing the Digital Europe Programme. CONNECT will work closely with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) to notify all suspicions of fraud and to implement the recommendations stemming from its investigations. The DG will be responsible for the implementation of action 32 (Media freedom) of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy. CONNECT's risk register which is regularly updated and discussed at senior management level also covers the fraud aspects.

E. Sound environmental management

The focus will be twofold: how to reduce emissions from staff professional travel emissions and expert travel (2019 baseline for CONNECT's carbon footprint: 816 tCO₂eq), and advertising more the regular or ad hoc Eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) actions (VéloMai, clothes collecting, etc). Some informal events could be planned, depending on budget availability.

Closer collaboration across units will enhance the visibility and regularity of EMAS actions in CONNECT, and facilitate actions such as recycling, bring your mug, etc. At least one poster campaign is planned regarding sustainable events and emissions reduction.

ANNEX 1: Specific objectives and result indicators 2025-2029

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.1: Strengthening digital and frontier technologies for Europe's strategic autonomy

Related to spending programme(s): Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting Europe Facility – Digital

Result indicator 1.1.1 Percentage of enterprises using at least one artificial intelligence technology

Explanation: Enterprises using any AI technology

Source of data: Eurostat, table [isoc_eb_ai](#)

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
8%	59%	71%

Result indicator 1.1.2 Quantum computing

Explanation: Number of operational quantum computers or quantum simulators, including accelerators of High-Performance Computing supercomputers, deployed and accessible to the user communities

Source of data: European Commission

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2026)	Target (2029)
0	6	8

Result indicator 1.1.3 Value of production of electronic components, including microprocessors by EU companies

Explanation: Investment in electronic components and systems

Source of data: Financial reports and SIA (Semiconductor Industry Association)

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
EUR 63 billion	None	EUR 90 billion

Specific Objective 1.2: A true digital single market to advance Europe's productivity and competitiveness

Related to spending programme(s): Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting Europe Facility – Digital

Result indicator 1.2.1: Impact of the data economy on EU GDP

Explanation: This indicator measures the contribution of the generation, collection, storage, processing, distribution, analysis elaboration, delivery, and exploitation of data enabled by digital technologies to EU GDP

Source of data: European data market monitoring tool ⁽⁷⁾

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
4.4 % of EU GDP	4.9 % of EU GDP	5.4 % of EU GDP

Result indicator 1.2.2 Cloud computing

Explanation: Cloud computing, measured as the percentage of enterprises using at least one intermediate or sophisticated cloud computing services ⁽⁸⁾

Source of data: Eurostat, Table ISOC_CICCE_USE: Cloud computing services

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
38% of enterprises	67% of enterprises	73% of enterprises

Result indicator 1.2.3 Number of start-ups achieving Unicorn status

Explanation: calculated as the sum of unicorns referred to in Article 2, point (11)(a), of Decision (EU) 2022/2481 and those referred to in Article 2, point (11)(b), of that Decision

Source of data: Dealroom.co

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
263	Increasing trend	500

Result indicator 1.2.4 Number of ICT Specialists

Explanation: Employed ICT specialists. Broad definition based on the ISCO-08 classification and including jobs like ICT service managers, ICT professionals, ICT technicians, ICT installers and servicers.

Source of data: Eurostat, tables ISOC_SKS_ITSPT and ISOC_SKS_ITSPS: ICT specialists in employment

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
10.7 million individuals	16 million individuals	18.6 million individuals

⁽⁷⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/european-data-market-study-2024-2026>

⁽⁸⁾ Intermediate or sophisticated cloud computing services: finance or accounting software applications, enterprise resource planning (ERP) software applications, customer relationship management (CRM) software applications, security software applications, hosting the enterprise's database(s), and computing platform providing a hosted environment for application development, testing or deployment.

Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
Result indicator 1.2.5 Gigabit connectivity Explanation: measured as the percentage of households covered by fixed Very High-Capacity Networks (VHCN). Source of data: Broadband Coverage in Europe 2023 Final report		
Baseline (2023)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
78,8%	99,1%	99,8%

General objective 2: A new era for European Defence and Security

Specific Objective 2.1: Enhancing cybersecurity and defending Europe's digital infrastructure

Related to spending programme(s): Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting, Europe Facility – Digital

Result indicator 2.1.1 Number of cybersecurity infrastructures, services and/or tools (projects) supported with DEP funding

Explanation: The indicator measures the number of cybersecurity infrastructures, services and/or tools (projects) supported with DEP funding

Source of data: ECCC Report

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2025)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
138	250	350

General objective 3: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Specific Objective 3.1: Strengthening social resilience and promoting diverse cultural content to protect Europe's values and democracy

Related to spending programme(s): Horizon Europe, Creative Europe – Media

Result indicator 3.1.1 Number of people accessing European audiovisual works from countries other than their own supported by Creative Europe MEDIA

Explanation: Number of people accessing European audiovisual works from countries other than their own supported by Creative Europe MEDIA

Source of data: Creative Europe MEDIA

This result indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2022)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
17 million	Increasing trend	20 million

Result indicator 3.1.2 Promote a free and pluralistic media environment: number of countries under high risk for market plurality as per the Media Pluralism Monitor

Explanation: Number of countries under high risk for market plurality as per the Media Pluralism Monitor

Source of data: Media Pluralism Monitor

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
14	Decreasing trend	<10

Result indicator 3.1.3 Impact of measures tackling online disinformation, including the implementation of the Code of Practice

Explanation: Impact of measures tackling online disinformation, including the implementation of the Code of Practice

Source of data: CONNECT

Baseline (2024)	Interim milestone (2027)	Target (2029)
14 EDMO hubs cover all 27 Member States	None	Presence of national/regional hubs covering at least 3 EU neighbouring countries associated to EU programmes

Indicator: Estimated risk at payment for cost-based expenditure



Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

Source of data: CONNECT

This indicator is selected as a KPI

Baseline (2024)	Target (2029)
2.50% of relevant expenditure	Remains < 2% of relevant expenditure

ANNEX 2: Performance tables – delivering on Commission priorities in 2025 ⁽⁹⁾

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness		
Specific Objective 1.1: Strengthening digital and frontier technologies for Europe's strategic autonomy		
<i>Related to spending programmes: Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting Europe Facility – Digital</i>		
Main outputs in 2025:		
New policy initiatives		
Output	Indicator	Target
 AI Continent action plan (non-legislative)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2025
 Quantum strategy of the EU (non-legislative)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2025
Apply AI strategy	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2025
Automotive action plan	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2025
Evaluations and fitness checks – part of the stress testing of the EU acquis		
Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of the Chips Act	Launch of the public consultation on the evaluation	Q4 2025
Major public consultations		
Output	Indicator	Target
Public consultation on Apply AI	Closure of the public consultation	Q2 2025
Public consultation on the evaluation of the Chips Act	Launch of the public consultation	Q4 2025
Major implementation activities and enforcement actions		
Output	Indicator	Target
Implementation Dialogue on AI and data	Launch of Dialogue	Q3 2025
Selection of the large-scale pilot to set up telco-edge-cloud, end-to-end integrated infrastructures and platforms	Selection of the project (under Horizon Europe)	Q4 2025

⁽⁹⁾ Initiatives that are part of the 2025 Commission work programme are marked with the following icon .

Output	Indicator	Target
Selection of the first projects under the Open Internet Stack	Selection of the projects (under Horizon Europe)	Q4 2025
Other major outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
AI factories	Start of operations of the 13 AI factories selected in December 2024	Q2/Q3 2025 (AIFs services)
AI factories	Selection of the new AI factories	Q3 2025
European connected and autonomous vehicle alliance	Establishment of the alliance	Q4 2025
Inauguration of the first exascale supercomputer under the EuroHPC JU	Inauguration	Q3 2025
Apply AI strategy: structured dialogues for agriculture	Number of participants	> 200 participants
Apply AI strategy: structured dialogues for energy	Number of participants	> 200 participants
Apply AI strategy: structured dialogues for automotive	Number of participants	> 200 participants
Apply AI strategy: structured dialogues for mobility	Number of participants	> 200 participants
EU Energy saving reference framework	First set of deliverables	Q4 2025
Fourth phase of Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking (JU) Horizon Europe projects on selected technologies and large-scale pilots	Selection of project	Q4 2025
EU Code of Conduct for the sustainability of telecommunications networks	Publication	Q4 2025
Fourth call for proposals Connecting Europe Facility – Digital (CEF – Digital) supporting Global Gateways, 5G large scale projects and quantum connectivity infrastructure	Selection of projects	Q4 2025
European quantum communication infrastructure: cross border quantum communication infrastructure and optical ground stations	CEF-Digital call for proposals evaluated	Q4 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Quantum Chip pilot lines under the Chips Act	Selection of Quantum Chip pilot line projects	Q2 2025

General objective 1: A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness

Specific Objective 1.2: A true digital single market to advance Europe's productivity and competitiveness


Related to spending programmes: Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting Europe Facility – Digital and Creative Europe - MEDIA

Main outputs in 2025:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
 Digital Networks Act (legislative, incl. impact assessment, Article 114 TFEU)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
 Digital package (legislative, including impact assessment)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
 European Business Wallet (legislative, incl. impact assessment, Article 114 TFEU)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Cloud and AI Development Act	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Single EU-wide cloud policy for public administrations and public procurement	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Data Union strategy	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2025

Evaluations and fitness checks – part of the stress testing of the EU acquis

Output	Indicator	Target
 Fitness check on the legislative <i>acquis</i> in the digital policy area	Launch of a consultation on a broader fitness check	Q4 2025
Evaluation of the European Electronic Communications Code	Adoption by the Commission, as part of the Digital Networks Act package	Q4 2025
Interim evaluation of Creative Europe	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2025

Major public consultations		
Output	Indicator	Target
Public consultation on the Cloud and AI Development Act	Closure of the public consultation	Q3 2025
Consultation to gather input from businesses, researchers, and other stakeholder for the Data Union strategy	Closure of the public consultation	Q3 2025
Other major outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Deployment of common European energy data space (INSIEME)	Launch of project	Q1 2025
Deployment of common European mobility data space (EMDS)	First set of deliverables	Q4 2025
Deployment of common European agriculture data space (CEADS)	Launch of project	Q2 2025
Adoption of Creative Europe – media work programme 2026	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2025
Calls for proposals under the Creative Europe – MEDIA work programme 2025	Launch of the calls	Q4 2025
Proposal for successor to Creative Europe Programme for post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2025
Assessment of the effects of the Commission Recommendation on fighting piracy of live content	Adoption	Q4 2025
Calls for advanced digital skills academies	Launch of calls	Q1 2025 (GenAI, virtual worlds, quantum) Q2 2025 (AI Factories)
European Media Industry Outlook	Adoption of Staff Working Document	Q2 2025
Association of Switzerland to the Digital Europe Programme	Finalisation of the association process	Q4 2025



General objective 2: A new era for European Defence and Security

Specific Objective 2.1: Enhancing cybersecurity and defending Europe's digital infrastructure

Related to spending programmes: Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Connecting, Europe Facility – Digital

Main outputs in 2025:

New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
 Cable security action plan	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2025
 EU Cybersecurity in Hospital action plan	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2025
Revision of the Cybersecurity Act, and associated evaluation	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Proposal for a Council Recommendation for cyber crisis management	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2025

Initiatives linked to regulatory simplification and burden reduction

Output	Indicator	Target
Simplification of the cybersecurity legislation (including simplification of reporting obligations)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025

Implementation dialogues and reality checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Cybersecurity implementation dialogue	Launch of Dialogue	Q3 2025

Major public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
Consultation on the revision of the Cybersecurity act	Conclusion of the consultation	Q3 2025
Cybersecurity of Hospitals and Healthcare providers	Conclusion of the consultation	Q2 2025

Major implementation activities and enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Annual Progress Report on Implementation and Enforcement	Adoption	Q4 2025
Recommendations further refining of the Action plan on the cybersecurity of hospitals and healthcare providers (non-legislative)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Implementing Act on technical descriptions of important and critical products on the basis of the Cyber Resilience Act	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Delegated Act specifying the terms and conditions for applying the cybersecurity-related grounds in relation to delaying the dissemination of notifications in the Cyber Resilient Act single reporting platform	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2025
Other major outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Submarine cables infrastructure expert group delivers mapping, risk assessments, cable security toolbox, and cable project of European interest list	Submission of the report to the Commission.	Q4 2025
NIS 2 multistakeholder forum to establish guidelines and good practices for the uptake of internet standards in the digital infrastructure sector	Launch of the forum	Q3 2025
Member States coordinated roadmap for the transition to post-quantum cryptography (first version)	Publication	Q2 2025
Launching of the EU Cybersecurity Reserve (in cooperation with ENISA)	Launch of the action	Q3 2025
Coordinated ICT supply chain risk assessments (ICT supply chain toolbox, connected vehicles and security/ customs equipment) under NIS2 Directive	Reports published with NIS Cooperation Group	Q4 2025

General objective 3: Protecting our democracy, upholding our values**Specific Objective 3.1: Strengthening social resilience and promoting diverse cultural content to protect Europe's values and democracy**

Related to spending programme(s): Horizon Europe, Creative Europe - MEDIA

Main outputs in 2025:**Evaluations and fitness checks – part of the stress testing of the EU acquis**

Output	Indicator	Target
Interim evaluation of Creative Europe	Adoption of Commission Communication	Q3 2025

Major public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
Targeted consultations for the action plan against cyberbullying	Closure of the targeted consultations	Q3 2025
Public consultation for the action plan against cyberbullying	Closure of the public consultations	Q3 2025

Major implementation activities and enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Report on Member States readiness to implement the European Media Freedom Act	Adoption of the interim report	Q2 2025
Guidelines on Article 18 of the European Media Freedom Act	Adoption of the guidelines	Q4 2025
Evaluation of the Audio Visual Media Service Directive	Study contract signed	Q2 2025

Other major outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
EU age verification app - mini wallet	Release of the app	Q2 2025
Multimedia actions financing	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2025
Multimedia calls for proposals	Launch of the calls	Q1 2025

ANNEX 3: Performance tables – A modern and sustainable public administration

A. Human resource management

Objective: CONNECT employs a skilled, diverse and motivated workforce to deliver on the Commission's priorities		
Main outputs in 2025:		
Output	Indicator	Target
Gender balance in CONNECT		
Local female talent development programme	Launch of a local female talent development programme	Yes
Participation to corporate female talent development programme	Maximum female participation to corporate management development programme	At least 50% of women under the DG CONNECT quota
Close monitoring of gender statistics in pre-management positions by CONNECT's HR Committee	Number of women in middle-management positions (baseline: situation on 01/01/23 (51%))	>50%
Active diversity & inclusion (D&I) network	Organisation of 2 local D&I sessions and 1 D&I conference	Yes
Staff Engagement Index		
Follow-up action plan in response to the 2023 corporate staff satisfaction survey	Implementation of Staff Survey Follow-Up action plan	Yes
'We are CONNECT' staff engagement campaign	Number of We Are CONNECT newsletters	8
CONNECT University sessions	Number of CONNECT University sessions	15 CONNECT University sessions and 1 CONNECT University School
Skills gap		
Targeted calls for expression of interest will be launched in order to attract the necessary profiles to deliver on the implementation of the Digital Services Act and the Artificial Intelligence Act	Number of additional recruitments of external staff to work on the implementation of the Digital Services Act and the Artificial Intelligence Act	Increase of 100 external staff (50 for DSA and 50 for AI) over 2025.

B. Digital transformation and data management

Objective: CONNECT is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policymaking, data management and administrative processes to create a digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

Main outputs in 2025:

Output	Indicator	Target
Digital Transformation		
Digital Culture		
Staff following at least one IT training, including cybersecurity	% of staff that completed at least one IT training	40% (Baseline 37% in 2024) ⁽¹⁰⁾
Performance of staff on phishing exercise	Percentage of click rate	Click rate < 20 %
Business-driven Digital Transformation		
AI technical capabilities implemented across systems	Number of AI technical capabilities implemented across systems	5 systems (baseline 3)
Seamless Digital Environment		
Projects using reusable solutions	Percentage of project using reusable solutions	55 % (baseline 48%)
IT system using cloud against datacentre	Percentage of IT systems using cloud against datacentre	65 % (baseline 58%)
Green, Resilient and Secure Digital Infrastructure		
IT System with an updated security plan	Percentage of systems with updated security plan	100%
Tracking the adherence of your DG to the objective for 100% attestation of compliance for the 55 IT priority controls for all CIS until end of 2024.	Percentage of systems with GRC attestation	100%
Data Management		
Staff following data management trainings	Percentage of staff following at least one data management training	15%
Staff following documents management trainings	Percentage of staff following at least one document management training	30%

⁽¹⁰⁾ Source: Digital Commission Dashboard.

Output	Indicator	Target
Data Protection		
Creation of records for newly identified data processing activities	Percentage of new records created for newly identified data processing activities	100%
DPC to organise training sessions	Number of training sessions	2 sessions
	% of staff trained about the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725	100%
Signature of agreements with external processors	Percentage of agreements signed	100%
Handle requests from data subjects to exercise their rights in respect of the established procedures	Percentage of data subject's requests handled	100%

C. Sound financial management

Objective: The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

Main outputs in 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: legal and regular transactions	Estimated risk at payment and at closure for Horizon 2020 grants	Remains as close as possible to 2 % of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at payment and at closure for Horizon Europe grants	Remains below 2% of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at payment and at closure for Digital Europe grants	Remains below 2% of relevant expenditure
	Estimated overall risk at payment and at closure	Remains below 2 % of relevant expenditure
Effective controls: Safeguarding of information	Data breaches handled in accordance with the EUDPR and internal policies.	100% of data breaches handled
Efficient controls	Budget execution and / or timely payments	Remains > 95% of payment appropriations and remains > 95% of payments (in value) made on time
Economy of controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	Remains < 4% of funds managed

D. Fraud risk management

Objective: The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission anti-fraud strategy ⁽¹¹⁾ aimed at the prevention, detection and correction ⁽¹²⁾ of fraud

Main outputs in 2025:

Output	Indicator	Target
Implementation of the CONNECT anti-fraud strategy (Research family anti-fraud strategy and CONNECT's)	% of implementation actions planned in the anti-fraud strategy	100%
Organise Fraud risk awareness raising trainings and similar anti-fraud trainings with a focus on cases/ examples and exchange of best practices.	Number of fraud risk awareness training sessions organised in CONNECT. Percentage of newcomers (staff involved in grant management joining the DG and newcomers joining the Resource directorate in the last year) which attend the fraud risk awareness training sessions during the year.	One session 55% of newcomers (staff involved in grant management joining the DG and newcomers joining the Resource directorate in the last year) which attend the fraud risk awareness training sessions during the year.
Active participation in anti-fraud networks	Participation in FPDNet and the FAIR Committee meetings.	Participation in all FPDNet and the FAIR Committee meetings

E. Sound environmental management

Objective: Reaching climate neutrality by 2030 and a reduced environmental footprint for the Commission.

Main outputs in 2025

Output	Indicator	Target
Actions to reduce emissions from staff missions ⁽¹³⁾	1 internal communication campaign organised	Q4 2025
Emissions from experts' travel under the administrative budget	1 action organised to reduce expert's travel	Q4 2025

⁽¹¹⁾ Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget', COM(2019) 176 of 29 April 2019 – 'the CAFS Communication' – and the accompanying action plan, SWD(2019) 170 – 'the CAFS Action Plan'.

⁽¹²⁾ Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

⁽¹³⁾ DG/department emissions report from MiPS+. Emissions from staff whose place of assignment is one of the Commission's sites: [EMAS](#).

Output	Indicator	Target
Energy saving actions	BEST action to reduce building emissions organised during winter break	Yes
	CONNECT offices shared with DG Competition during summer months in the context of BEST	Yes
Staff awareness actions	1 awareness session organised for CONNECT staff	Q4 2025

