

23 June 2015

Mr Donald Tusk
President of the European Council

Dear President,

The pace of change in the digital world is truly astonishing. The volume of data we create and consume continues to double roughly every year, and it is likely that more digital information is now transmitted in a single second than existed on the entire internet just two decades ago. The data associated with this digital revolution is the new currency of the global economy, and data-driven innovation is the new frontier of global productivity growth.

At the same time, too many of Europe's citizens no longer see the EU as making the full contribution it should to pushing for economic prosperity. The goal of adapting our Single Market rules to twenty-first century reality, and digitisation, is therefore one that must succeed, even where technically complex or politically difficult. This is clearly a win-win proposition for European consumers and enterprise alike.

The dynamism of digital networking technologies is undoubtedly disruptive of many traditional business models. But this dynamism also brings unprecedented opportunity. The reality is that it has never been easier for a new business to scale internationally, connect with new consumers, and grow new markets. At a time of unacceptably high unemployment, we also know that most new jobs will be created by fast-growing young firms. This is extremely important for countries that are on the path of economic recovery. The Digital Single Market should therefore be used as a vehicle for inclusive growth in all regions within the EU.

It is this reality that must guide our overall approach: making sure our shared market rules are keeping pace with the full extent of what is now possible for digital innovation and entrepreneurship, while unlocking a new wave of European investment in next generation broadband services, connecting all parts of the Union no matter how remote, including with the support of the new European Fund for Strategic Investments. Barriers to doing business digitally and across borders are now barriers to growth and jobs.

The June European Council will agree the next steps on developing the Digital Single Market. The Commission is to be commended for presenting us with an excellent new Strategy that sets a clear direction on the key issues, and is clearly informed by the key principles of better regulation.

The three pillars proposed by the Commission for the new digital roadmap are entirely appropriate: simplifying access for consumers and business; shaping the environment for digital networks and services to flourish; and maximising the growth potential of the digital economy.

This new Strategy for the Digital Single Market now demands our strong political endorsement at this week's meeting. There is no greater opportunity at our disposal to make a real difference for investment, growth and jobs, and deliver a vital boost to Europe's future global competitiveness.

The constituent elements of this package must, of course, support the innovation potential of our most dynamic entrepreneurs. We should therefore benchmark our ambitions in copyright, in consumer rules, and in ease of online trading for SMEs, against the best-in-class trading blocs. Our objective should be for Europe to have a superior, highly competitive digital ecosystem that propels our competitiveness and growth. A prerequisite is that Europe's Digital Single Market is open and connected to the wider world.

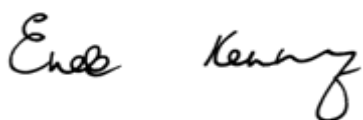
This also means getting the regulatory balance right. We should regulate only where there is clear evidence to do so, backed by the principles of smart regulation and thorough impact assessment. It is very clear that a successful Digital Single Market will not be one that stifles innovation, investment and entrepreneurship.

We should signal our commitment by calling for early action on those issues that will deliver the most tangible and practical benefits for European consumers, including by setting a clear path to eliminating mobile roaming charges, ensuring cross-border portability of digital content, and embracing the 'once-only' principle in our systems of public administration. While pressing forward on the Digital Single Market, we must also remain clear on the enormous transformation potential of digital technologies across all areas of public policy, including the crucial education, health and transport sectors.


With sixteen new initiatives spanning the responsibilities of different Commissioners and Council formations, the overall governance of the new Digital Single Market Strategy will continue to require particular attention, building on the work already overseen by Vice President Ansip in bringing Digital Single Market preparations to this point. This should include regular reporting on implementation progress to the European Council, and clear expectations for early results on our most important priorities.

We look forward to agreeing concrete measures and ambitious timelines at this week's meeting, and are copying this letter to President Juncker and all other members of the European Council.

Yours sincerely,



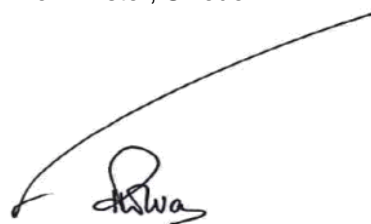
Enda Kenny
Taoiseach, Ireland



Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister, Sweden



Bohuslav Sobotka
Prime Minister, Czech Republic



Taavi Rõivas
Prime Minister, Estonia



Juha Sipilä
Prime Minister, Finland



Mark Rutte
Prime Minister, Netherlands



Ewa Kopacz
Prime Minister, Poland



David Cameron
Prime Minister, United Kingdom

cc President Juncker, European Council