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Ministero delle Imprese
e del Made in Italy

A Shared European Digital Agenda

Joint Declaration by Ministers Adolfo Urso and Anne Le Hénanff

- 1. We, the Minister for Enterprises and of Made in Italy and the Minister delegate to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industrial, Energy and Digital Sovereignty, in charge of Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Sector, met today to strengthen our cooperation in the digital sector.**
- 2. We reaffirm our commitment to the undertakings made since the entry into force of the Quirinal Treaty signed in 2021, particularly with regard to the digital transition and the digital sovereignty, as well as our shared determination to advance the European project** in line with our responsibility as founding members of the European Union.
- 3. In line with the outcomes of the Informal European Council on 12 February 2026, Italy and France will lead efforts to implement an ambitious agenda aiming at boosting competitiveness, simplifying regulation, deepening the single market, fostering investment and innovation, and achieving strategic autonomy.**
- 4. We will advocate for timely and bold decisions at the EU level to** (i) answer the Digital Decade's ambition and to fulfill the objectives set out in the national roadmaps; (ii) deepen the digital single market, enhance competitiveness and foster innovation, in particular through a fit-for-purpose regulatory framework and a reduced administrative burden on companies; (iii) strengthen the Union's strategic autonomy in the digital sector and the accelerate the development of European digital solutions in key sectors; (iv) promote bilateral partnerships and cooperations, which are essential for reinforcing European value chains.

5. **We believe it is critical to align our positions to facilitate constructive progress** in discussions between EU Member States and provide effective responses to the Commission's digital initiatives.
6. In this perspective, we commit to jointly addressing the following priority areas.
7. **On artificial intelligence and high performance computing**
8. **Industrialisation of AI technologies must be pursued to the benefit of the European economy.** France and Italy are committed to delivering effective gains of productivity and sovereignty to the European economy by supporting flagship collaborative projects to industrialise AI technologies, notably in the strategic sectors of healthcare, energy and manufacturing. Aiming to start these projects in early 2027, France and Italy seek to respond to the fast developments of AI and the urgency of strategic autonomy and digital sovereignty by supporting initiatives for the industrial application of AI.
9. **On telecommunications and the Digital Networks Act proposal**
10. **France and Italy take note of the Commission's recent proposal of a Digital Networks Act.** While we share the goal of driving the European telecoms sector towards greater investment and innovation, we believe that the specificities of national telecom markets should not be seen as an obstacle to achieving these objectives.
11. In terms of infrastructure perspective, the telecommunications market is inherently local as it is based on national broadband planned adapted on regional specifics, such as population density, topography, consumers appetite, or government subsidies. Therefore, being a pan-European operator does not necessarily generate significant synergies, but it does offer operators in mature markets new avenues for growth outside their domestic markets. Cross-border initiatives can however be useful for enhancing the sector's capability for joint investments in the research and development of future connectivity solutions.
12. In this regard, they support cross-border cooperation and strategic alliances between European operators, including at bilateral level, with a view to facilitating investment in innovation.

- 13. France and Italy emphasize that the Commission's proposal does not address the obstacles to such cross-border partnerships.** It focuses instead on amending the existing regulatory framework for infrastructures without explaining the expected gains.
- 14. More specifically, France and Italy express strong concerns about the negative impacts of this proposal, particularly with regards to spectrum management.** The by default obligation to deliver infinite spectrum licenses could significantly affect competition in the telecom sector. Restricting member states' authority to issue spectrum licenses could hinder their ability to adapt their national digital planning policies.
- 15.** With regard to the proposed Digital Networks Act, France and Italy also highlight the importance of ensuring a balanced and effective approach to the provisions on harmful interference (Article 14), particularly in the context of cross-border spectrum management. Clear and workable coordination mechanisms between Member States are essential to guarantee legal certainty and operational continuity for operators. In this context, further reflection may be warranted on the proposed 12-month timeframe for the elimination of harmful interference, taking into account the technical complexity of cross-border coordination procedures.
- 16. Further harmonization should only be considered when economically justified,** as is the case in the satellite sector, since such markets are only economically viable at large geographical scales. France and Italy support the establishment of a common mechanism to enforce minimum operational requirements for satellite services, and, in cases of spectrum scarcity, a common selection mechanism. However, the issuance of licenses must remain at the national level.
- 17. On quantum technologies and the Quantum Act**
- 18. France and Italy will cooperate on the implementation of the European Quantum Strategy to position Europe as a global leader in quantum and closely follow the development of the future Quantum Act.** It is essential that it establishes the necessary regulatory frameworks and secures adequate funding to support the European development, deployment, and industrial adoption of quantum technologies. The Quantum Act will also play a crucial role in leveraging Europe's research excellence and accelerating technology transfer in Europe. This will ensure that

innovations move seamlessly from laboratories to industry and into real-world applications.

19. On value chains in key and strategic technological sectors

20. France and Italy stress the need to reinforce European technological value chains as a key lever to help innovative firms become global leaders. Digital technologies are now embedded in every sector of the economy, serving as the operational backbone of Europe's economic and industrial activity. Any vulnerability, dependency, or disruption directly impacts productivity, resilience, and strategic autonomy across the entire European industrial spectrum.

21. The Draghi report underscores that Europe's main competitiveness gap arises from its lag in digital transformation. Closing this gap is not just about fostering innovation; it is essential for Europe to maintain its economic relevance in a global environment where digital performance drives industrial leadership.

22. The structure of Europe's digital ecosystem is an additional challenge. The majority of European technological companies are SMEs with fewer than 250 employees. While these companies are innovative, they rarely achieve the scale required to rival global tech giants that benefit from massive network effects. Without targeted support in strategic sectors, Europe risks continuing to generate cutting-edge innovation only to lose out on its strategic and economic benefits at the scaling stage.

23. In this context and in line with the approach presented in the Franco-Italian Shared Agenda for Industry and Competitiveness in Europe, the discussion around European preference in the digital sector should be rooted in a strictly industrial policy approach. It should be proportionate, gradual and evidence-based and should not be construed as protectionist. Its objective should be to strengthen industrial technology value chains and to foster the development of technologies and services providing value in Europe.

24. Under this industrial policy approach, France and Italy are open to define in the forthcoming weeks a framework to introduce European preference in key strategic sectors including digital technologies, with the objectives of strengthening value chains and reducing dependencies.

25. On protection of minors

- 26. We reaffirm our commitment to ensuring a safer and more secure online environment for children and teenagers.** Significant regulatory steps have been taken within the EU to shape the digital environment in accordance with our values and principles and to address the issue of protecting minors online. Consistent and effective enforcement of this legislation must remain a priority.
- 27. These efforts must be sustained and intensified.** France and Italy advocate for an ambitious and harmonised approach to safeguarding minors online as part of the forthcoming EU digital agenda. To achieve this, we fully support the introduction of an EU digital age of majority and the implementation of effective and reliable age verification systems by online platforms, while ensuring compliance with data minimisation, purpose limitation, and user trust principles.
- 28.** To this end, France and Italy commit to enhancing their cooperation with one another and with any other willing Member States with the goal of exchanging best practices on the implementation and roll-out of these technical solutions, and creating a harmonised European signage system designed to enhance the user experience.

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The Signatories

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