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COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission,
signed by Mr Jordi AYET PUIGARNAU, Director

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To: Mr Jeppe TRANHOLM-MIKKELSEN, Secretary-General of the Council of
the European Union

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Subject: COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT Accompanying the document Proposal
for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
establishing the Digital Europe programme

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2018) 306 final.

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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Accompanying the document

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council
establishing the Digital Europe programme

{COM(2018) 434 final} - {SEC(2018) 289 final} - {SWD(2018) 305 final}

The European Commission has adopted its proposals for the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027. In order to bridge the current digital investment gap, the Commission proposed a Digital Europe Programme to shape and support the digital transformation of Europe's society and economy.

Public intervention at EU level plays a key role as first mover in acquiring "common goods" and capacities and in facilitating their use to address societal challenges and drive innovation and competitiveness. Intervention is justified in areas where the necessary funding is so significant that no Member State can act - in a timely way - alone, in areas where there is a need to aggregate resources scattered throughout Europe, and in areas where interoperability is key to the deployment of pan-European services.

In Europe, an upstream investment gap is evident from the mismatch between the growing demand for latest technology and the supply. Improving digital capacities requires investments to acquire the relevant technologies, ensure their best use in an interoperable way across the EU, and develop the advanced digital skills necessary for their wide uptake. This complements existing EU programmes covering important aspects related to digital notably in research and innovation (Horizon Europe) and in physical connectivity (CEF2).

The need to step up investments in digital capacities and in their broader use is widely supported by stakeholders and experts as well as at the highest political level.

The general objective of the programme is to support the digital transformation of the European society and economy, and bring its benefits to European citizens and businesses. The programme will reinforce Europe's capacities in key digital technology areas and widen their diffusion and uptake in areas of public interest and the private sector.

The programme will have five Specific Objectives, namely on (i) high performance computing, (ii) artificial intelligence, (iii) cybersecurity and trust, (iv) advanced digital skills and (v) deployment, best use of digital capacity and interoperability. These objectives are mirrored in the programme structure of five interdependent pillars.

The Programme will be implemented directly as provided for by the Financial Regulation or indirectly with the appropriate entities or bodies. A set of indicators will be drawn from the existing Digital Economy and Society Index, a reference instrument to measure the progress of digitisation in the EU. Moreover, new indicators will be developed in order to have detailed feedback on the impact of DEP.

This impact assessment accompanies the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and Council on the Digital Europe Programme.