

Second day of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting
MC(25) Journal No. 2, Agenda item 7

DECLARATION ON THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AS A DRIVER FOR PROMOTING CO-OPERATION, SECURITY AND GROWTH

1. We, the members of the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, recall the provisions of the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted in Maastricht in 2003, the Ministerial Council Declaration on Strengthening Good Governance and Combating Corruption, Money-Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism adopted in Dublin in 2012, Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/16 on strengthening good governance and promoting connectivity adopted in Hamburg in 2016, and Ministerial Council Decision No. 8/17 on economic participation adopted in Vienna in 2017.
2. We have seen through the 26th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process that the digital economy plays an increasingly important role as a driver for innovation, competitiveness, growth and connectivity in the OSCE area and that the impact of digital transformation on our economies and societies is already extensive and continues to grow.
3. We recognize that there are both opportunities and challenges in an increasingly digital world. The emerging and fast-evolving implications of digital transformation are not only leading to progress and prosperity, but also to the emergence of new or enhanced security threats and challenges.
4. We are committed to ensure the greatest possible access to the Internet and its benefits. Digitalization and an open, secure, reliable, interoperable and truly global Internet are enablers for inclusive economic growth. We recognize that the free flow of and access to information, including on the Internet, are essential for the digital economy and beneficial to development.
5. Digital transformation is having a positive impact on our economies and societies and so has the potential to enhance our co-operation within the economic and environmental dimension with a view to fostering sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development, connectivity, transparency and accountability.
6. We recognize the potential for digital transformation to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

7. We believe that some of the areas where the dialogue and co-operation of the OSCE participating States should be further strengthened include: assessing the security aspects of the digital economy, in the context of, *inter alia*, anti-money-laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT); promoting security of and in the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in the private sector, including among small and medium-sized enterprises; and encouraging the sharing of experiences.

8. In order to maximise the benefits and mitigate the security risks associated with digital transformation, we are committed to strengthening our co-operation including on:

- Promoting an enabling environment for digital innovation in the business sector;
- Fostering competition in the digital economy;
- Bridging the digital divides, including through collaboration between higher education institutions;
- Promoting international labour standards;
- Promoting better social policies;
- Strengthening good governance and promoting connectivity;
- Upholding the rule of law and protecting human rights;
- Broadening access to digital technologies and services in all sectors of the economy;
- Exchanging experiences on digital transformation, digitalisation of government and innovative models.

9. We recognize that e-government and good governance play a crucial role in modernizing and increasing efficiency in public administration and contribute to the promotion of better policy-making, transparency, integrity, accountability and the prevention of corruption. We recognize that we need to increase our efforts to advance the digital transformation of the public sector as to offer more effective, accountable and user-centric public services.

10. To address the digital divides and promote inclusive economic participation, more attention should be given to widening access to digital technologies and the development of skills and reskilling required in the digital economy to enable equal opportunities, in particular for women, youth and persons with disabilities.

11. We acknowledge that the digital economy creates new opportunities for women, whose economic empowerment and participation contribute to economic development, sustainable growth and the promotion of inclusive societies.

12. We welcome the substantial discussions held in the framework of the 26th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum process, under the guidance of the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship, on how to achieve economic progress and security through innovation, human capital development and good public and corporate governance.

13. We acknowledge that rapid advances in the digital economy are causing fundamental changes in many aspects of life, which may require updating national legislation and policies, while ensuring conformity with international law and OSCE commitments, including, but not limited to, those regarding human rights. Mindful of the role parliamentarians can play in this regard, we note the contribution of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly to the discussion on the digitalization of our economies.

14. We welcome the decision of the incoming 2019 Slovak OSCE Chairmanship to continue the discussions initiated by the 2018 Italian OSCE Chairmanship on the topic of digital transformation. We encourage future OSCE Chairmanships to continue these discussions on the impact of the ongoing digital transformation on our economies and societies and therefore on our common security.