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To:	Council
Subject:	Simplification and digitalisation: Reducing burdens for businesses in the digital domain - Exchange of views

In view of the TTE (TELECOM) Council on 5 December 2025, delegations will find in the Annex the Presidency background note on simplification and digitalisation : Reducing burdens for businesses in the digital domain.

Simplification and digitalisation: Reducing burdens for businesses in the digital domain

Meeting of the Telecommunications Council

Brussels, 5 December 2025

Since the publication of the reports on European competitiveness by Mario Draghi and Enrico Letta respectively, simplification has emerged as central to the enablement of European competitiveness and innovation. In this context, the European Commission has set ambitious targets for reducing administrative burdens for European businesses, aiming for a reduction of at least 25% for all companies and at least 35% for SMEs. Significant strategies, legislative proposals, and communications from the Commission, have emphasised digitalisation's indispensable role in removing barriers to the operation of businesses in the EU. In the same vein, the European Council has expressed strong support for simplification efforts in the EU since the adoption of the Budapest Declaration in 2024, a commitment reaffirmed in the recent Conclusions of the European Council. Against this backdrop, digitalisation has been identified as a key driver in overcoming Europe's innovation challenges, bolstering European competitiveness in an increasingly uncertain geopolitical environment.

At the same time, the digital rulebook has expanded and become rather complex. European digital competitiveness therefore continues to face pressing challenges. A year after the publication of Draghi's recommendations on how to strengthen Europe's competitiveness, a mere 11.2% of the recommendations have been fully implemented¹. While the Commission has been driving tangible impact across Europe with regard to funding the uptake and manufacturing of technologies within the digital domain², concrete measures to simplify the digital rulebook and its application have yet to become reality.

Two distinct, though intertwined, issues concerning simplification in the digital domain are outlined below – first, simplifying the rulebook, and second, simplifying its implementation and enforcement.

Simplifying our digital rulebook – making it fit for purpose on a continuous basis

Over the last year, initiatives in the digital domain with a clear focus on simplification and the use of digital tools to reduce administrative burdens have been published, including, most recently, the Digital Package, including the Digital Omnibus, the European Business Wallet proposal, the European Data Union Strategy, the report under Article 91(1) of the Digital Services Act, and the launch of the consultation on the Fitness Check of the Digital Acquis. The Digital Omnibus, which will be dealt with in the General Affairs Council, is an important first step in delivering immediate simplifications. The remaining initiatives, including both the European Business Wallet and the Fitness Check of the Digital Acquis, have the potential to become key tools by means of which the Telecommunications Council can deliberate on further simplification measures in the digital domain.

¹ [Europe drags its heels on Draghi plan as global rivals surge](#)

² [The Draghi report: one year on](#)

The Fitness Check of the Digital Acquis therefore offers an important opportunity to critically assess the cumulative effects and regulatory coherence of the digital rulebook in light of the fast-evolving geopolitical and technological developments. To this end, regulatory objectives must be reconsidered and pursued through modern approaches, including by considering the relevance and consistency of threshold values, definitions, interaction with other legislation, and promoting a more risk-based regulatory approach, while preserving the objectives of the legislation. Furthermore, still within this mandate, all of the major individual legal acts constituting the EU's digital rulebook are coming up for review or evaluation. These file-specific assessments should supplement the horizontal analysis of the interplays between the various acts under the Fitness Check.

Turning simplification into reality – effective implementation and enforcement

Ensuring a more streamlined and coherent digital rulebook is a key first step towards easing burdens. However, only through effective governance will a simplified rulebook translate into actual burden reductions that benefit businesses, citizens and authorities. This requires an implementation of the digital rulebook that provides the necessary level of clarity and predictability for the actors concerned, including businesses, realistic and feasible deadlines, timely establishment of new enforcement bodies and, not least, guidelines and necessary standards in due time to enable the actors concerned to comply by the date of applicability. Once the rules are implemented, keeping compliance burdens for businesses to a minimum requires effective and coordinated enforcement that delivers unambiguous guidance for the actors concerned, taking particular account of the issue of diverging enforcement and application of rules between Member States.

The Commission has already taken important horizontal steps to strengthen implementation and enforcement, including the various initiatives outlined in the *Simpler and Faster Europe Communication* of February 2025 and the *2025 Annual Overview Report on Simplification, Implementation and Enforcement*³. However, dedicated discussions on what can be done in the digital domain are appropriate, taking account of the nature and specificities of the digital rulebook. In particular, the importance of EU-level enforcement in cross-border cases involving systemic risks, as seen in the Digital Services Act and the Artificial Intelligence Act, could be a topic for further discussion, building on experiences to date.

Guiding questions for discussion

Member States are invited to engage in discussions on the two issues set out above, based on the following questions:

- *Which are the most important files and issues to address in the Fitness Check of the Digital Acquis in order to maintain a strong focus on burden reductions?*
- *What are the most important measures and digital tools for improving the implementation and enforcement of the digital rulebook with a view to reducing burdens for businesses and authorities?*

³ Doc. ST 16212/25