



11 FEBRUARY 2026

Ahead of the EU retreat, 75 European CEOs call for urgent EU tech investment, procurement and regulatory simplification

Europe has entered a decisive phase. In a world marked by geopolitical instability, deepening economic fragmentation and intensifying technological competition, Europe's ability to act as a global power will be determined by whether it can digitalise, mobilise investment, reduce internal fragmentation and scale its industrial and digital capacity at speed.

DIGITALEUROPE welcomes the momentum emerging ahead of the upcoming informal leaders' retreat in Limburg, which rightly treats security, competitiveness and technological leadership as inseparable. But recognition alone is no longer sufficient. Europe must move decisively from diagnosis to execution.

“ ‘Member States should give the EU a strengthened mandate to act in unison, not only on regulation, but on investment, joint procurement and market integration. Europe urgently needs instruments that can translate ambition into deployment: coordinated public procurement for critical technologies, cross-border infrastructure projects and demand-side measures that create scale for European solutions,’ said Director-General Cecilia Bonefeld-Dahl.

Critical digital infrastructure – from drone technologies, connectivity and space to quantum, cloud, cybersecurity, AI and energy systems – must be treated as strategic assets, central to Europe's economic, societal and military stability and unity.

Europe has some of the world's most innovative companies, but lacks the structures needed to scale. The absence of central policy tools such as European tax incentives and EU-level procurement, slow and fragmented R&D-focused funding, overregulation and inconsistent standards continue to undermine Europe's ability to build and operate critical systems at speed.

At the same time, completing Europe's Capital Markets Union is essential to channel Europe's vast savings into these priorities. Deep and integrated capital markets must work hand in hand with joint procurement to de-risk investment and create a predictable pipeline of large-scale projects.

In short, European companies want more Europe when it comes to market integration, critical technology investment, incentives and procurement, defence and security – and less Europe when it comes to overregulation. European digital and industrial companies stand ready to invest at scale, as demonstrated by DIGITALEUROPE's [European AI and Critical Tech Declaration](#), endorsed by more than 75 CEOs. What is needed now is a financing environment capable of channelling Europe's savings into strategic technologies, infrastructure and dual-use innovation at the scale and speed demanded by today's reality.

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EU Transparency Register: 64270747023-20

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Without this shift, Europe risks remaining strategically exposed, economically dependent and structurally slower than its global competitors. With it, Europe can build the foundations of real technological sovereignty and long-term resilience.

About DIGITALEUROPE

DIGITALEUROPE is the leading trade association representing digitally transforming industries in Europe. We stand for a regulatory and investment environment that enables European digitalizing businesses across multiple sectors and citizens to prosper from digital technologies. We wish Europe to grow, attract and sustain the world's best digital talents, investment and technology companies. Together with our members, we shape the industry policy positions on all relevant policy matters and contribute to its development and implementation. Our membership represents over 56,000 businesses who operate and invest in Europe. It includes corporations and scale-ups which are global leaders in their field of activity, as well as national trade associations from across 30+ European countries.

