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PRESS RELEASE

Angela Merkel needs to create a unified digital strategy in Europe during her Council Presidency

The digital Engagement of European Heads of State and Government varies widely. This is one of the main results of the first Digital Engagement Report that has been published by the European Center for Digital Competitiveness today. The objective of the Digital Engagement Report is to highlight the importance of Heads of State and Government in the digital transformation of their countries as well as to investigate what topics of digitalization the Heads of State and Government are engaged in. The Digital Engagement Report 2020 provides an in-depth analysis of all 27 European Heads of State and Government's digital focus areas.

European Heads of State and Government approach digitization with very different focus. Estonia, Germany, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg are most engaged on the level of Head of State and Government, while Poland, Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia are least engaged.

Digital technologies have different importance throughout Europe. In 2019, Estonia's Jüri Ratas spent more than 5 times more time on the topic than Slovenia's Marjan Sarec or Hungary's Victor Orbán. Also, there is no harmonized European approach on digital technologies, with every country setting its own agenda. Key future technologies, such as Quantum Computing and Robotics, are disregarded by most European Heads of State and Government.

Europe needs an integrated strategy for digital technologies

„Digitization in Europe is still patchwork“, says Professor Philip Meissner of the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School Berlin and adds: „How well Europe is able to position itself in terms of digital technologies will determine its future economic power and geopolitical position. We finally need an integrated and forceful approach to push this topic throughout Europe. In a nutshell, we need a digital strategy. Such a push should include attention by top leaders in the field of Entrepreneurship and Digital Education“.

European Heads of State and Government have clear topic focused profiles

Individual engagement profiles reveal: Angela Merkel is focused mostly on digital infrastructure while neglecting Entrepreneurship. Emmanuel Macron puts Artificial Intelligence and Entrepreneurship in the spotlight.

European priorities for digital technologies could push joint implementation

„Given the scale of the challenge and the speed of technological progress, we need European priorities to finally enable large scale investments in future technologies“, says Dr. Christian Poensgen of the European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School Berlin. „Europe needs to act now“.

About the Digital Engagement Report 2020

The Digital Engagement Report is based on a Digital Engagement Index, which tracks all interactions of the Heads of State and Government around the topic of digitalization in the year 2019. The Digital Engagement Index is compiled from a variety of publicly accessible information by the governments, Press releases, and personal accounts on the social media platform Twitter. These digital engagements were then classified according to the type of interaction (conferences, private sector meetings, political meetings and press conferences) and on the topic of this engagement (5G, AI, Blockchain, Cloud, Cybersecurity, Digital Education, E-Gov, Entrepreneurship, Gaming/E-Sports, Industry 4.0/IoT, Future Mobility, Quantum computing and robotics).

The summary of the Digital Engagement Report as well as detailed engagement profiles for each European Head of State or Government are available here: www.digital-competitiveness.eu/digitalengagement

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About European Center for Digital Competitiveness by ESCP Business School

The European Center for Digital Competitiveness was founded at ESCP Business School in Berlin with the goal of bringing digital competitiveness to the political and public debate, where it currently only plays a minor role. Given the digital revolution that our economy and society currently face, digital competitiveness must take center stage in debates to secure our prosperity for the future. Similarly, in this increasingly dynamic environment we want to support the initiative to position Europe as a global leader for the responsible application of technology for the benefit of society.

About ESCP Business School

ESCP Business School was founded in 1819. The School has chosen to teach responsible leadership, open to the world and based on European multiculturalism. Six campuses in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Turin and Warsaw are the stepping stones that allow students to experience this European approach to management.

Several generations of entrepreneurs and managers were thus trained in the firm belief that the business world may feed society in a positive way.

This conviction and ESCP's values - excellence, singularity, creativity and plurality - daily guide our mission and build its pedagogical vision.

Every year, ESCP welcomes 6000 students and 5000 managers from 120 different nationalities. Its strength lies in its many business training programmes, both general and specialised (Bachelor, Master, MBA, Executive MBA, PhD and Executive Education), all of which include a multi-campus experience.

It all starts here.

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