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‘Only what gets measured gets done.’

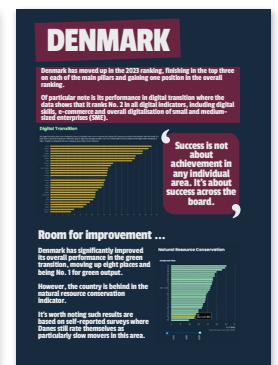
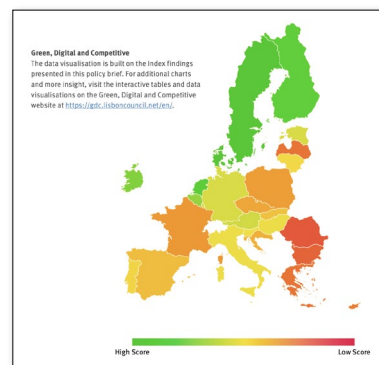
– Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, addressing the European Parliament on the new European Commission Political Guidelines

## Green, Digital and Competitive: A New European Agenda

Throughout a contentious campaign, political parties often asserted that Europe’s goals were mutually exclusive. Efforts to strengthen competitiveness would somehow lower environmental progress. And the digital revolution itself was somehow holding society back, blocking progress in many areas. The reality is nations that thrive don’t do so because they prioritise one area over others; they succeed because they show similar levels of ambition in all areas – and pursue progress in those areas with determination, skill and helpful recourse to regular evaluation. That’s the key finding of **Green, Digital and Competitive: An SME Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**, a 27-country ranking of European countries based on 34 indicators. As in previous years, Sweden is No. 1. But Denmark



(No. 2) is rising fast, driven by improvements in curbing greenhouse gas emissions. And the Netherlands (No. 3) and Ireland (No. 4) also do well, using competitive strength to drive progress in other areas. The main message is policy is not a series of tradeoffs; success is a matter of setting ambition high enough and dealing successfully with contradictions by creating

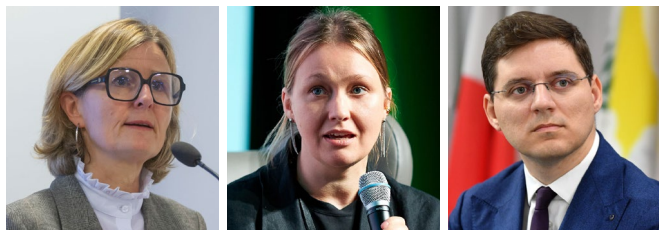


feedback loops that bring communities together to avoid unintended consequences and improve legislation after it is implemented. As President von der Leyen told the European Parliament, measurement is crucial to success; it offers policymakers the chance to judge progress and evaluate outcomes. Green technology and clean-energy technology are not yet a driver of competitiveness, but they could become one – and they should if Europe is to realise the values it holds dear. And digital technology is actually doing much to promote and develop a deeper internal market which could boost European performance in other areas. The project was developed in collaboration with Amazon. It was presented last year at the SME Assembly in Bilbao and later to a high-level working group in the European Economic and Social Committee. [Download Green, Digital and Competitive](#). Additional data visualisations are available at <https://gdc.lisboncouncil.net/en/>.

‘Events like the Lisbon Council 2024 Digital Skills Summit provide us a fundamental forum to assess, to listen and to keep working in a joined-up way, ultimately enhancing competitiveness and keeping our democracy strong.’

– Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, director general of the directorate-general for education, youth, sport and culture, European Commission

## The 2024 Digital Skills Summit: **Scaling Up at European Level**



Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen

Valeria Ionan

Victor Negrescu

Europe has a talented workforce – but how many European workers have the skills they need for the digital century ahead? As the mid-term review of the [Digital Education Action Plan](#) deepens, we thought it time to investigate best practice – reaching out to successful local and member state-led initiatives and asking, “How could successful

initiatives be taken to scale?” Among the key presenters at **The 2024 Digital Skills Summit** were Hadi Partovi, founder and chief executive of code.org (a United States-based initiative that has reached 80 million students worldwide); Valeriya Ionan, deputy minister at the ministry of digital transformation of Ukraine (who presented *Diia Education*, a Ukraine government-led initiative that brought online skills to 1.5 million Ukrainians despite war-time conditions); and Victor Negrescu (S&D-Romania), vice-president and rapporteur for the European Year of Skills in the European Parliament. Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, director general at the directorate-general for education, youth, sport and culture at the European Commission, gave an overview of European Commission plans and priorities. [Watch The 2024 Digital Skills Summit.](#)

## Artificial Intelligence: **From Challenge to Opportunity**



Benedict Evans

Gilles Babinet

Will artificial intelligence make the economy more sustainable – or less? It depends, of course, on how we measure it. In **Sustainable Computing for a Sustainable Planet**, a special report, lead authors David Osimo and Senan Khawaja look at the environmental footprint of cloud computing and big-data analytics – and the potential that artificial intelligence holds for delivering better energy efficiency throughout the economy. The project was developed in collaboration with

NVIDIA, the leading supplier of the graphics processing units (GPUs) that power artificial intelligence, which offered access to top experts and provided key data points on tech-sector energy consumption. At an earlier workshop, venture capitalists Benedict Evans (author of the 175,000-subscriber *Benedict’s Newsletter*) and Gilles Babinet [co-president of France’s *Conseil national du numérique* (CNNum)] led [Interactive Dialogue on AI: What’s Next?](#), an online seminar about key trends and forthcoming evolution in the tech sector. [Download Sustainable Computing for a Sustainable Planet.](#) [Watch Interactive Dialogue on AI: What’s Next?](#)



## Inclusion and Gender Equality: **Can the App Economy Deliver?**



Renate Nikolai

Michael Mandel

Anna Neovesky

Together with Progressive Policy Institute (PPI), the leading Washington DC-based think tank, the Lisbon Council

convened the **High-Level Roundtable on New Digital Leaders and the App Economy**. Renate Nikolai, deputy director-general at the communications networks, content and technology directorate, European Commission; Michael Mandel, chief economic strategist at PPI; and Anna Neovesky, co-founder of Berlin-based Coding Friends, led an expert exchange on the role of women in the technology sector – and the possibility that app-economy growth could drive greater inclusion in a sector that remains predominantly male. The discussion was informed by *EU App Economy: Skills for the Digital Age*, a new policy brief from PPI.

# The Lisbon Council: A Scientific Hub

Along with its cutting-edge research capabilities and second-to-none convening authority, the Lisbon Council builds and mobilises large coalitions capable of ambitiously analysing key issues, sharing experience and delivering cutting-edge solutions for improved governance and change for the better. Today, the think tank collaborates with more than 100 organisations – many of them among Europe’s most respected institutions – and an array of municipal authorities, regions, governments and policymakers. Among the most important projects:



## Fake News Risk Mitigator (FERMI)

The project unites 17 leading organisations in criminology, social science, public policy, technology development, innovation management and law enforcement. Its mission is to develop tools for detecting fake news – and methods to mitigate and overcome crimes derived from it. To date, the initiative has hosted three innovation-driven workshops, where a wide-range of experts brought their perspectives together and brainstormed ways of effectively fighting against mis- and dis-information. [Visit https://fighting-fake-news.eu/](https://fighting-fake-news.eu/).



## Bridging the Gaps in Evidence, Regulation and Impact of Anticorruption Policies (BRIDGEGAP)

This innovative, three-year project brings 15 partners together to explore the gaps in evidence regarding corruption and develop tools where information can be more effectively tracked and exchanged. The research will produce academic publications and will interconnect and refresh existing databases, such as the EU Compass, the European Transparency Index and the Follow the Money search engine to allow additional crowdsourcing and online tutorials. The project lasts four years and includes Transparency International, nine leading European universities and three corruption-fighting organisations. [Visit https://corruptiondata.eu/](https://corruptiondata.eu/).



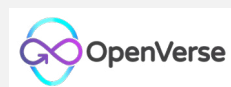
## Systematic Integration of Transformative Technical and Nature-Based Solutions to Improve Climate Neutrality of European Cities and Regions and Tackle Climate Change (URBREATH)

This nine-city consortium will produce and pilot a new generation of “nature-based solutions,” developing climate-neutral plans built with local community input, cross-city benchmarking and AI-driven insight. The goal is to transform cities from the ground up, making them not only sustainable but resilient against the ever-growing threats of a warming world. Among the cities taking part are Aarhus, Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Kajaani, Leuven, Madrid, Parma, Pilzen and Tallinn. [Visit https://urbreath.eu/](https://urbreath.eu/).



## #Govtech4all

This €16 million, 26-partner, 15-country project has a special mission: developing workable solutions for accessing crossborder government services and road-testing the “regulation light” provisions of the Interoperable Europe Act, Europe’s flagship project for providing citizens and businesses with access to government services across borders. Among the key deliverables are 10 pilot projects that will come from two sources: innovative government services that will be made available to other nations and entirely new solutions emerging from startups. [Visit https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/govtechconnect/news/project-management-govtech4all](https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/govtechconnect/news/project-management-govtech4all).



## Open and Co-Created Virtual Worlds for Europe (OPENVERSE)

This coordination and support action will run three years and deliver subject-based studies on topics as diverse as taxonomy, marketplace, technological foresight, governance and environmental impact. It will also produce a handbook of co-creation methodologies, a policy roadmap and three policy briefs. The projects are collaborative and will be developed through regular peer review and a series of seminars to be held in the run up to the release of the European Commission’s European Virtual Worlds Technical and Infrastructure Framework and Strategy Agenda, due to be published in October 2026. [Visit https://www.open-verse.eu/](https://www.open-verse.eu/).

For more, visit <https://lisboncouncil.net/projects/>.



‘We must seize the moment now. Opportunities abound. If scientists are well-trained in the use of artificial intelligence and have fair access to the proper AI tools and data, their work could be more impactful, ethical and purposeful.’

— **Nicole Grobert**, professor of nanomaterials, University of Oxford, at the **High-Level Roundtable on Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Science**

## News and Outreach



Paul Hofheinz and Kier Starmer

David Osimo

Nicole Grobert

Building on its leadership in technology and science policy, the Lisbon Council launches **AI for Science**, a new community to explore how the scientific community can use artificial intelligence to deliver scientific breakthroughs. Participants including Google DeepMind, NVIDIA, the European Commission, the Government of Ukraine, the University of Oxford and the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre have taken part in exploratory discussions. Director of Research

David Osimo made the case in [Artificial Intelligence for Scientific Discovery: Is Europe Ready for It?](#) a blog co-written with Jonathan Wareham, professor of information systems at ESADE Business School. Elsewhere, President Paul Hofheinz spoke at the *Diia in Zurich* and joined *The 2023 Global Progress Action Summit* in Montreal, participating alongside 14 political leaders and heads of state, where he met future British Prime Minister Kier Starmer. Director of Research Osimo presented [Help Where It is Most Needed](#), a Lisbon Council policy brief, to the *Congress of Basic and Specialised Social Services (CEESC)* in Barcelona.



Congress of Basic and Specialised Social Services in Barcelona

## Coming Up

### Scale Up Europe!

The Lisbon Council teams up with Stripe, the South San Francisco- and Dublin-based financial services company, and other fast-growing European startups to deliver *Scale Up Europe!*, an innovative look at the way government can

spur entrepreneurship and deliver better services for consumers and businesses alike. Stripe President and Founder John Collison keynotes.



John Collison



Nikki Pope

### The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

As the European Union’s Artificial Intelligence Act takes effect, the Lisbon Council convenes the **High-Level Roundtable on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**. Participants and practitioners will discuss and analyse

cutting-edge developments in algorithmic bias assessment and mitigation, AI safety and the practical applications of the AI Act. Nikki Pope, head of AI and legal ethics at NVIDIA and former managing director of the High Tech Law Institute at Santa Clara University, keynotes.

### Peace through Strength: the Machiavelli Initiative

What advice would you give a modern-day prince? Europe faces major threats, with a land war on its border in its third year and major questions afloat on the future of the transatlantic alliance. President Paul Hofheinz leads this multi-year initiative on the evolving nature of threats to

European democracy and the need to strengthen Europe’s security position with concrete action and real-world initiative.



Kyiv

## [www.lisboncouncil.net](http://www.lisboncouncil.net)

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