

Press Release: Digital Policy Outlook 2026: What 2025 set in motion and what's next for EU Digital policy

On Tuesday, 27 January 2026, the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers (ZPP) and European Enterprise Alliance (EEA) organised a high-level policy discussion titled “**Digital Policy Outlook 2026: What 2025 set in motion and what's next for EU Digital policy**”, hosted by MEP Michał Kobosko.

The discussion brought together policymakers and leading representatives from the industry and academia, including: **MICHAŁ KOBOSKO**, Member of the European Parliament; **DARIUSZ STANDERSKI**, State Secretary at the Polish Ministry of Digital Affairs; **JAKUB BORATYŃSKI**, Director of Compliance and Business Conduct at the European Commission's DG.GROW; **JAKUB BIŃKOWSKI**, Vice-President of the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers; **ANNA MAZUR**, Head of the Brussels Office, Allegro; **MICHAŁ LUTEK**, Senior Public Policy Manager for CEE, Bolt; **ARTUR BOGUCKI**, Associate Researcher, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); **CLARA LEMAIRE**, Director of EU Public Policy Government Affairs, Cisco; **MICHAŁ BYLICKI**, Tender Sales & Account Management Director, CloudFerro; **LAURA PASCUAL TRUJILLO**, Senior Analyst, Google; **ANISSA KEMICHE**, Director of European and International Affairs, Numeum; **RAPHAËL DANIEL**, EU Public Affairs Manager, OVHcloud; **JAN PILEWSKI**, Public Policy Director, PLAY; **MARTA PRZYWAŁA**, Lead AI and Cybersecurity Policy, EU Government Affairs, SAP; **ELEANOR FLANAGAN**, Associate Director of Government Affairs, Spotify; and **ENA SALIHOVIĆ**, Senior Lead Public Affairs EU Tech, Zalando.

The discussion was moderated by **DANIELA WERBENIEC**, the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers' Director of the Digital Forum.

In his opening remarks, **MEP MICHAŁ KOBOSKO** began by looking back at the last year, reflecting on how digital policy has become an increasingly important item on the agenda with Council discussions, Parliament debates, and summits culminating into key initiatives such as the Digital Omnibus and European Business Wallet being presented at the end of the year. However, he expressed his belief that this would still only serve as a prelude to an even more impactful 2026 with a number of expected legislative proposals of great importance. Later as he closed the discussion, MEP Kobosko conveyed three important messages. First, in this new era, all economies are to varying degrees digital economies, which underlines the importance of a well-functioning digital legislative landscape. Second, regarding Europe's digital sovereignty, he pointed out that European businesses respect and comply with foreign markets' regulatory frameworks, and that Europe does not expect any more nor less from foreign actors. Finally, MEP Kobosko called for the creation of a conducive market with ample demand to allow European businesses of all scales to grow.

Secretary of State DARIUSZ STANDERSKI began his keynote address by calling for bravery in the coming year, as the plenitude of open and upcoming files promised to be a lot of work for policymakers and the industry alike. He reflected on the report produced following the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU for simplification and ensuring that digital laws give rise to lasting reform, and expressed his hope that the proposals therein would be implemented into legislation. Dr. Standerski provided extensive insights into the Polish perspective on ongoing policy discussions such as the AI Act and European Business Wallet, which he summed up by stating that the simplification discussion must go beyond omnibus files and instead work to simplify the legislative process as a whole. Later, the Secretary of State expressed the importance of events such as this for providing the perspectives of business, and that the discussion appeared to reflect a view of the omnibuses having been a step in the right direction.

In the second keynote address providing the perspective of the European Commission, **JAKUB BORATYŃSKI** looked beyond the past year, to instead highlight the monumental growth that Europe's digital policy has seen in the past decade. He praised the ambition and potential of new initiatives – such as the Cybersecurity Act, the Digital Product Passport, and the new S.EU corporate forms – but also called for greater steps to be taken to ensure the visions of digital policy can become a reality. In addition, Mr. Boratyński stressed that to ensure digital sovereignty through the availability of European alternatives, there needs to be a balance between building up new capacities and maximising the use of those already available.

JAKUB BIŃKOWSKI conveyed his happiness in seeing the collaboration between the Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers and the Polish Ministry of Digital Affairs in the last year materialise into the omnibuses, but stressed that the exercise of simplification must not be left behind in 2025 but rather continue with greater emphasis into 2026. He called for a consumer-oriented view to be adopted by policymakers, as he believes a market of consumer-friendly products and solutions would be an ideal landscape for strengthening European businesses and, by extension, the EU's digital sovereignty.

JAN PILEWSKI kicked off the interventions by providing a perspective from the telecommunications sector, focusing on the recently presented Digital Networks Act (DNA) and its expected effect on the sector. Mr. Pilewski praised the provisions centralising the management of spectrum policies from the national to the European level as he foresees it offering greater predictability for businesses, though he also showed consideration for why it may become a conscientious issue for some Member States. He also positively assessed the shift toward greater investments into spectrum expansion. Finally, Mr. Pilewski emphasised that the most important takeaway from the Act should be greater stability for investors to drive

competition, while also expressing his hope that the final Regulation reflected much of the initial proposal.

The intervention from **CLARA LEMAIRE** centred on the Digital Omnibus, expressing how the simplification from policymakers was warmly welcomed but showed room for improvement. She explained how her organisation found the single-entry platform for GDPR breach reporting to be a positive development, but added that it would benefit from being complemented by harmonised thresholds and reporting templates. Similarly, she called for strengthened protection of trade secrets under the Data Act.

LAURA PASCUAL TRUJILLO echoed Ms. Lemaire's comments about the Digital Omnibus being a step in the right direction but needing greater ambition, and held the DNA in a similar regard. For the latter, she stated that although the Regulation's direct applicability in Member States would make it more impactful, it still lacks in clarity regarding its scope and definitions. In addition, Ms. Pascual Trujillo conveyed her concern that the shift of authority in governance toward the Commission could create a two-tiered system, thus undermining the simplification efforts and consequently weakening the competitiveness of European businesses.

Rather than target any particular legislative development, **ENA SALIHOVIĆ** took on a more overarching view of the digital policy landscape. She described the two competing perspectives in the simplification process: on the one hand, there is the effort to make rules more understandable and easier to comply with, while on the other hand, the harmonisation threatens to create new EU-level laws that demand further compliance. She urged policymakers to shift their focus away from introducing new regulatory layers, and to instead begin with finalising the implementation of ongoing projects and addressing hindrances on the EU-level.

MICHAŁ BYLICKI also presented a diverged perspective, focusing less on the policies and more on their practical impact on business operation. Reflecting on how 2025 had highlighted the importance of sovereignty and capacity building, he underlined how essential it is for the EU to free itself from technological dependencies. Mr. Bylicki then went on to state that the European digital industry already has the technology to address this, but that the political will needs to catch up with the capacities at hand.

ANNA MAZUR expressed hopefulness for the coming year of digital policy, as the ambitions of a more resilient and less dependent technology sector promises to make businesses' lives easier through simplification and the enforcement of rules. As such, her two main comments were more detail-oriented and focused on ensuring that upcoming Regulations can maximise

their impact. She called for clarification on the date of delay within the AI Omnibus, so that companies may have sufficient time to plan their implementation, and for the open proceedings under the Digital Services Act to be closed within the year to ensure fair competition between EU and third country businesses.

ANISSA KEMICHE reflected on how the success of the AI Act is entirely dependent on its implementation. In this regard, she considered large corporations well-situated to be ready to comply with new rules frameworks, while SMEs may lack the capacity, knowledge, or financial means to sufficiently prepare themselves. Ms. Kemiche also went on to discuss the growing relevance of tech sovereignty and resilience, mentioning how the in past few years the issue expanded from being limited to a few Member States to now being generally accepted, or as she put it, “[went] from a dogmatic to pragmatic approach.”

For **MARTA PRZYWAŁA**, the cloud services industry is currently suffering from needed but irregularly applied regulation, which is giving rise to confusion regarding the implementation of provisions between the business-to-consumer and business-to-business sectors. She expressed hope that the Digital Omnibus would prove to be an opportunity to improve these provisions, but felt that its adoption must come about sooner rather than later due to how needed it is. Ms. Przywała also reflected on the Cyber Resilience Act, stating that it faced similar implementation challenges as other acts with greater attention on them, and calls for clear laws to be prioritised over extensive non-adopted deliverables.

Speaking from a global perspective, **ELEANOR FLANAGAN** stated in no uncertain terms that Europe faces a regulatory imbalance vis-à-vis other regions, which can only be addressed through strong the commitment of policymakers to curb overregulation. To this end, she focused on two particular pieces of legislation. First, she praised the AI Act for its potential to give businesses more time to gain a better understanding of how to navigate new rules and hoped that it would maintain a strong focus on facilitating implementation and compliance. For the second, Ms. Flanagan examined the Digital Fairness Act, stating that although the efforts to close gaps and simplify consumer protection rules are welcomed, it is incredibly important that this does not translate into new layers of regulation and burdens for businesses while not reflecting the priorities of the consumers.

MICHAŁ LUTEK highlighted that the views of the diverse panel exemplified how the same challenges were pervasive across the different facets of the technology sector. He expressed appreciation for the efforts to make technology regulations more approachable for businesses and emphasised that simplification is not only a matter of reducing regulatory burdens but also to close gaps in EU-level laws. Speaking from his own corner of the sector as a representative of a business that falls in the intersection of traditional and analogue services, Mr. Lutek called

for the extension of the ongoing and upcoming policy development to also directly address tangentially related markets in addition to the strictly digital.

Considering the recent deterioration of transatlantic relations and the subsequent geopolitical shifts, **RAPHAËL DANIEL** called back to Mr. Bińkowski's earlier statement to not only promote European products over foreign alternatives, but to also ensure that these products accurately reflect the wants of consumers. To achieve this, he urged policymakers to provide greater support for European industry through means beyond funding, such as new regulatory mechanisms and approaches that emphasise consistency.

Closing out the interventions with a shift from industry to academia, **ARTUR BOGUCKI** saw 2026 as a year which will largely be defined by the implementation of the AI Act, and which will define the coming decade of digital policy. In this regard, he hoped for Europe to take on a coordinated rather than fragmented approach and to deploy robust public and private funding for research and development. He went on to examine the state of the EU's digital hardware, calling for the establishment of AI factories and gigafactories to bear in mind connectivity concerns and the centres of excellence already in place. Finally, Dr. Bogucki stressed the importance of a diversified supply chain, as single suppliers pose too large of a risk of creating dependencies for Europe's strategic autonomy.