

Digital Inclusion in Europe's communities: Digi-inclusion Partner Declaration on Digital Rights

We, the mayors and official representatives of the European cities, regions and institutions participating in the Digi-Inclusion network under the URBACT IV Programme, have co-authored this declaration and mutually agree on the following:

We are inspired by...

- The importance the European Union attaches to aiming for digital transitions that are just and give benefits to all citizens, leaving no-one behind
- The European declaration on digital rights and principles, and how it puts people at the centre of digital transformation
- The idea of a set of digital rights that strives for solidarity and inclusion, freedom of choice, participation in the digital public space, digital safety and security, and empowerment of citizens

The commitment at the EU level to a digital transformation that leaves nobody behind and the aim that it should benefit everyone, achieve gender balance, and notably include elderly people, people living in rural areas, persons with disabilities, or marginalised, vulnerable or disenfranchised individuals and those who act on their behalf, as well as promoting cultural and linguistic diversity.

We recognise that...

1. A digital divide exists in our territories and societies and that this is a social and economic problem, not merely a technical one;
2. This divide is characterised by inequalities in the access to digital technologies, in the skills that are essential to use that technology, and in the ability to capitalise on this to gain full value from digital transitions in our society;
3. Digital inclusion is about bridging this divide and is about more than online transactions and being an online consumer;
4. Being fully digitally included is about participating in society via the digital space - being confident in interacting, working, playing, learning, creating, socialising, consuming, and participating in our communities and democratic process and discourse;

We believe that...

By sharing our experiences we can better understand our individual contexts. Through a process of critical reflection and co-creation, we can explore how digital inclusion can be better incorporated as a cross-cutting theme in all digital transformation planning and implementation activities.

We define that successful digital inclusion policies should be aimed at:

- Ensuring everyone can access the digital world and that the digital world offers them the services they need
- Enabling citizens to acquire and maintain core digital skills for now and the future
- Helping citizens gain digital capital, to enable them to make the best use of their digital skills and access, hence being empowered to get best value from the digital world
- Offering opportunities and value that motivates citizens to engage in the digital world
- Enabling citizens to operate safely in the digital world, with a sense of trust digital public space and awareness of their own security responsibilities and limitations

We commit to...

- Promote core digital rights and principles for all our citizens
- Support the implementation of Integrated Action Plans aimed at enabling digital inclusion in our territories
- Bring together relevant stakeholders and actors of civil society to promote these local policies and supporting their participation in actively defining, implementing and monitoring those actions
- Promote in our cities, regions, countries and the whole European Union the results of our common work and lessons learned, contributing in particular to strengthening the transnational work of digital inclusion in small and medium sized cities and rural communities

Signed in Iasi (Romania)

September 24, 2024

Political signatories

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