

Europe's digital decade – 2030 digital targets

EuroHealthNet's input to the European Commission's feedback, March 2021

EuroHealthNet welcomes the European Commission's initiative to set out goals, targets and pathways for a long-term vision to guide the European Union in its digital transition over the next decade.

The digital transformation of our societies is on its way and the years to come are crucial to define how this process will be steered. **Health and social inequalities are prevalent in most European societies, and the digital transformation offers an opportunity to tackle them. On the other hand, should challenges and barriers to inclusion not be addressed today, the digitisation process could exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and their manifestations among various population groups.**

The limited space available for this feedback does not allow to touch upon all relevant issues for the development of a long-term plan. We therefore focus our input on elements we consider key and remit further detailed comments to a later opportunity.

1. Ensure that nobody and no territory is left behind. EuroHealthNet welcomes the attention that the Roadmap has given to an equity principle/rights-based approach to digitalisation. In this regard, we would like to stress the importance to fully embed digital (health) literacy programmes (including data literacy) in every stage of the digital transformation. Improving digital literacy would allow more people to better access and benefit from new and existing digital tools and services. It would facilitate the effectiveness and efficiency of apps. It would help understand how we are using the collected data, and how it can be controlled. It would increase trust in digital innovation in health, care and related sectors, both among individuals and healthcare workforce

2. Digital targets 2030 should build on and reinforce basic digital skills targets set out in the European Skills Agenda 2025. Specific digital targets should be foreseen to ensure that vulnerable and socially excluded groups are reached and that budgetary allocations for this purpose are made. The **European Skills Agenda 2025** envisage reaching 70% share of people having at least **basic digital skills** (vs 56% in 2019)

4. The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) should provide adequate attention to socio-economic differences with regard to digital skills, their acquisition and application. We highly recommend ensuring proper monitoring and measurements of digital skills across different population groups to support actions against the formation highly "digitally illiterate" pockets of populations

5. The DESI should also be integrated with health-related specific indicators, namely, to measure, monitor and assess levels of digital health literacy and health data literacy across the population and health workforce. This would allow to set out quantifiable targets and develop tools to act on in this sphere at EU level

6. The Digital Targets 2030 should include specific goals for up- and re-skilling of health and social workforce to stimulate the development training and capacity building programmes for professionals. Public health and social care professionals should not be neglected in this process. In addition, on this regard, specific indicators should be included under the DESI

7. The digital transformation of public administration, in particular of the health and social sectors, should include the use of indicators to assess the change in accessibility during this process. Targets on access should therefore be set to ensure that everyone will benefit from this transformation

EuroHealthNet is a not-for-profit partnership of organisations, agencies and statutory bodies working on public health, disease prevention, promoting health, and reducing inequalities. Its core mission is to tackle health inequalities and to improve and sustain health between and within European States through action on the social determinants of health.

Publications: [Digital health literacy: how new skills can help improve health, equity and sustainability](#)