



THE SLOVAK ALLIANCE  
FOR INNOVATION ECONOMY



CONFEDERATION OF INDUSTRY  
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



ICT Association  
of Slovenia

June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021

President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen  
Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis  
Commissioner Thierry Breton  
Government of the Czech Republic  
Government of Denmark  
Government of Hungary  
Government of the Republic of Latvia  
Government of the Republic of Lithuania  
Government of the Republic of Poland  
Government of the Slovak Republic  
Government of the Republic of Slovenia

Dear President, dear Executive Vice President, dear Commissioner, dear representatives of our governments,

We, as trade associations representing online companies and platforms active in Europe and all around the world, the undersigned, welcome the initiative of the European Commission to establish a new EU-US Trade and Technology Council (TTC). The aim of TTC is to jointly maximize opportunities for market-driven transatlantic collaboration, strengthen our technological and industrial leadership and expand bilateral trade and investment. It can reduce trade barriers, developing compatible standards and regulatory approaches for new technologies, ensuring critical supply chain security, deepening research collaboration and promoting innovation and fair competition. We share many of the ideas outlined by the Commission and believe there are additional points of particular importance to successfully progress the digital ambition of the EU.

We are keen to engage with all relevant stakeholders, and certainly agree that the European agenda must be based on a good combination of determination and openness. Europe's approach to digital autonomy must focus on increasing digital leadership, preparing for smart and focused action to secure capacity where needed, while preserving open markets and strengthening global cooperation and international trade. Digital innovation benefits from transatlantic partnerships are critical to building global EU-US leadership. Thus, we call for open and free-trade based transatlantic cooperation in the TTC format.

Furthermore a significant amount of digital value-added creation and innovation already takes place outside Europe. Attention must therefore be paid to the external dimension of the Single Market where we should continue to work closely with our allies around the world and develop new partnerships where it is in our interest. The TTC format offers the potential to eliminate barriers for cross-border online services, ensure a uniform and smart regulatory environment, and free flows of data. This could complement and enhance the EU's own Single Market to make scale-up easier, promote innovation and attract investment. This is a key to our prosperity and to the productivity and competitiveness of European companies.

European competitiveness can be enhanced by efficient, reliable, transparent, secure and responsible transatlantic cooperation in accordance with our common values. The EU must work closely with their counterparts in the US and jointly lead in responsible digital transformation. In doing so, the European Commission must ensure a transparent consultation process with and representation of the interests of all EU member states and their industries in a bilateral EU-US TTC format. We see great opportunities in close transatlantic collaboration and wish to partake in shaping the digital future of EU-US cooperation.

Signed:

Mindaugas Ubartas, Director of INFOBALT, Lithuania

Prof. Signe Balina, President of LIKTA, Latvia

Peter Joakim Kofler, Chairman of Danish Entrepreneurs, Denmark

Michał Kanownik, President of Digital Poland Association. Poland

Ondřej Ferdus, Director of Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic

Michal Kardoš, Executive Director of the Alliance for Innovation Economy, Slovakia

Gábor Mátrai, Board member of IVSZ, Hungary

Nenad Šutanovac, M.Sc., Director of ICT Association, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia