JOINT DECLARATION

SUMMARY

ROME, APRIL 11ᵀᴴ, 2024

1. SCENARIO

We are arguably in the most economically transformative period in decades and international cooperation is key to navigating this transformation. Given the complex and highly integrated global supply chains, G7 countries and their allies should collaborate further to increase their digital and economic innovation and resilience.

The future of our society is more closely linked than ever to the future of its industry and especially its ability to demonstrate digital and technological leadership: strengthening economic security through digital resilience, supporting the international rules-based order and trade cooperation are the main factors for global success.

Recommendations

- G7 countries should focus on increased cooperation in order to achieve significant progress in the climate transition, cyber security, energy security and international conflict management.

- G7 countries should deepen cooperation to advance digital trade and trade in technology products by pursuing new international agreements and collectively addressing barriers to trade in third markets.

- G7 countries should recognize that open trade is key to fostering growth globally, and it is in the interest of all to ensure an effective, business-friendly customs process for importers and exporters.

- G7 countries should also reiterate the importance of resilient supply chains and expand trade collaboration through new commitments and enhanced enforcement of existing rules.

2. NEW EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Digital transformation supports continued social and economic prosperity in our countries. We, the Tech7, ask the G7 countries to recognize the role of new digital technologies in maximizing digital transformation, digital trust, and economic security. We also highlight the importance of regulatory cooperation in support of innovation.

Recommendations

- G7 countries should encourage investments into key technologies such as AI, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, cloud computing, data centers, 6G, space technologies and other technologies that enable and extend the benefits of the internet.

- G7 countries should cooperate on strategies for advancing the development and implementation of emerging technologies, taking into account multiple components: research, industry, education, skills, and economic issues.

- Building on the success of the G7 Hiroshima AI initiative, G7 countries should continue to raise awareness on the Guiding Principles and Code of Conduct, encourage their implementation within the G7 and beyond in close cooperation with industry.

- G7 countries should ensure their policy frameworks on AI governance leverage international standards, remain flexible to keep the pace of AI innovation and are compatible and aligned as much as possible.

- G7 countries should strengthen cooperation on quantum computing, including on mutual recognition of existing and to-be-built computing infrastructure, support for international standards, streamlining supply chains and facilitating access to computing resources.

- On developing national Digital Public Infrastructure strategies, G7 countries should plan their digital transformation, measure the impact of digital public infrastructure, and track digital transformation projects in a coordinated way.

- G7 countries should aspire for global technology leadership in 6G, by increasing international cooperation in research and development, and in international 6G standards aligned with WTO principles for international standardization.

3. DIGITAL SKILLS AND EDUCATION

Digital skills are crucial for a robust digital economy, and conducive to innovation, employment, and competitiveness. Basic digital skills are the backbone for the social and economic advancement of and a fundamental tool of inclusion in modern societies. At the same time, the increasingly pervasive diffusion of digital technologies is shaping a new labour market, influencing the demand for specialized skills necessary for the growth of the production system.

Recommendations

- G7 countries should track the most on-demand digitalization level in various sectors, focusing on continuous orientation, streamlining educational paths, and monitoring the gaps to be addressed.

- G7 countries should invest in programs to support digital education of population and to train, attract, and retain talent in the ICT sector.

- Collaboration among G7 countries will be important to bridge the digital skills gap, which affects both social life and the labour market, promote STEM education and reduce gender gap.

- G7 countries should lead the way by joining forces with the private sector and academia to develop global education programs focused on emerging technologies such as AI, cybersecurity, quantum technologies, 6G and facilitate the adoption of new digital solutions in companies by fostering "on-the-job" continuing training through initiatives that promote the adoption of frontier technologies.

- G7 countries should cooperate on cybersecurity skills which are essential to increase resilience against cybersecurity threats, by sharing best practice and enhancing capabilities.

4. CYBERSECURITY

Availability of state-of-the art technologies, such as the latest advancements in AI and cloud computing, are crucial to the cybersecurity and cyber resilience of companies and organizations of all sizes. Since cyber threats are a global phenomenon, alignment between G7 countries can help organizations respond to incidents more effectively across jurisdictions.

Recommendations

- G7 countries should foster policies that advance interoperable approaches to cybersecurity including the development and use of international standards.
- G7 countries should increase cooperation on cyber threat information sharing, securing networks, cloud services and digital infrastructure.
- It is crucial for G7 countries to integrate cybersecurity considerations into every phase of regulatory development and implementation and to harmonize regulations.

5. DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Digital technologies can significantly enhance the competitiveness of SMEs by providing reach to a global audience; this helps to extend their customer base beyond local or regional

boundaries, allowing them to tap into new markets and customer segments that might be otherwise inaccessible.

Adoption of key digital technologies (such as AI, virtual human twins and wearables) and the (re)use of data are also crucial for the transformation of health systems.

Recommendations

- G7 countries should support the digital sector not only as an enabler and growth factor for economic actors, but also because it brings positive impacts on social welfare, public services, and the environment.
- G7 countries should foster digital transformation of SMEs by supporting cybersecurity preparedness and simplifying and better explaining regulations.
- G7 countries policies and measures on digital health should encompasses strong funding programs which give special attention to cloud-based and software driven ICT solutions.

6. DIGITAL TRADE AND DATA FLOWS

Data flows are critical to global priorities including economic growth, climate change, cybersecurity, supply chains, and public health. We urge the G7 to strengthen its commitment to a comprehensive data strategy that promotes and enables secure and responsible data flows and maintains high data protection standards while bolstering innovation.

Achieving a clear global approach to trusted data flows is also critical to the growth of AI and other emerging technologies. Imposing unfounded limitations on data flows, including any form of data localization, should be avoided as they will stifle innovation, impede cross-border collaboration, and undermine global connectivity and shared advancements.

Recommendations

- We urge the G7 countries to build on Data Free Flows with Trust (DFFT) and continue to work towards a comprehensive global data strategy built on evidence-based criteria and internationally recognized risk-based standards to establish trustworthiness between governments and industry partners.
- G7 countries should also develop shared principles for trusted digital infrastructure such as cloud computing, facilitating trust-based cross border data flows, and promoting interoperable data governance systems.
- The G7 countries should prioritize the implementation of the OECD Declaration on Government Access to Personal Data Held by Private Sector Entities.
- G7 countries should address the issue of data interoperability in a coordinated manner by promoting the creation and implementation of interoperability codes/models, with a particular emphasis on key sectors such as healthcare and social policies.

7. SUSTAINABILITY AND GREEN TRANSITION

Climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly affecting people's lives, disrupting economies, and transforming ecosystems. Technological investments and digital solutions can foster new economic opportunities and ensure a sustainable green transition. Importantly, cross-border cooperation can help ensure digital solutions can be available for all countries to manage environmental risks and for disaster prevention.

Countries around the world are promoting the transition to a green economy with a wide range of policy and regulatory interventions in the climate, energy, and environmental fields. Alignment of these objectives at the international level is crucial to help companies navigate in a less burdensome and more investment-friendly environment.

At the same time, governments should ensure companies are encouraged and incentivized to use renewable energy sources for operations. Technology companies have already started the transition to renewable energy use, paving the way to a new vision on energy and material consumption: consuming more renewable energy and investing more in resource efficiency.

The digital and green transitions should go hand in hand. Climate and circularity considerations should be integrated in digital policies, and digital technologies should be strategically integrated into green sectoral strategies to exploit their enabling potential.

Recommendations

- G7 Countries should acknowledge the significance of digital technologies, especially in fostering decarbonization and circularity, and facilitate the development of large-scale pilots on digital traceability of products, building on existing technical solutions.
- G7 countries should adopt green digital strategies, at least, across the key economic sectors.
- G7 Governments should be able to finance and promote the greening of the digital sector.
- G7 countries should promote the creation of concrete relationships and investment plans to bridge the digital divide and especially the digital divide between Global North and Global South to ensure countries have access to technologies needed to effectively address sustainability challenges.
- G7 countries should commit to use purchasing preferences for socially and environmentally preferable goods or services which have a lesser or reduced impact on the life cycle when compared with competing goods or services serving the same purpose.