

FROM 50 SHADES OF SOVEREIGNTY TO A COMMON WAY FORWARD FOR EUROPE

HIGH-LEVEL CONCLUSIONS FROM DEEP DIVE ON DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY

GET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER. NOW

If Europe shall achieve digital sovereignty building a strong European tech-sector is a prerequisite, but it is not only a matter of technology. Speeding up its decision-making processes and ensuring execution of political and regulatory agendas at scale are needed to establish a truly single digital and capital market.

BE A PLAYER, NOT A REFEREE

Europe needs to get into the (technology) game. Not as a referee only making or enforcing the rules. But as a player competing in the game. There is still some unclarity to what digital sovereignty means, and Europe could benefit from a unified understanding of digital sovereignty. Not as isolation or complete self-sufficiency, but as the freedom to choose, the ability to switch, and the capacity to continue operating under pressure.

DIVIDE TO CONQUER

Europe should resist the temptation to try to copy the entire tech stack or re-enact yesterday's battles. Instead, we must focus on making long-term investments in research and education and build upon national and regional hubs of excellence, for both current technological strongholds and emerging technologies. Building alternatives should focus on critical layers of the tech-stack and critical sectors. Succeeding will require an unprecedented willingness to cooperate. We can take inspiration from handling Covid-19.

DON'T PICK THE CURRENT WINNER

To grow a strong tech-sector with the winners of the future, Europe must create an environment and ecosystem where start-ups and scale-ups can flourish. This includes making regulation that enables innovation instead of just tolerating it and re-doing public procurement and more strategically activating our buying power to build up the alternatives that we need but don't have.

TRUST YOUR NEIGHBORS

To compete in the technology race Europe needs to build up an alliance of middle powers and enable new and closer public-private-partnerships. One way forward is the enablement of a Europe in different speeds. Jointly the Nordic and/or Baltic countries are a regional factor in terms of economy, defense and digital technologies. The role of Denmark is not to build everything by ourselves, but to be a pragmatic first mover and testbed for digital sovereignty in practice.