

**Message by the European Parliament President Martin Schulz
to the launch of the report Digital World in 2030**

Innovation and development of the digital world in the past few years have been enormous: it has created a boom in the digital economy; it has influenced our way of working and our habits. Innovation and development of the digital economy has also changed how we seek or use information from private and public services, it has opened the path to new decision making processes.

The technical dimension of this digital project is therefore at the very heart of our socio-economic life. Our society and our way of thinking are being revolutionised, yet many complex questions remain open:

Is the registration of every step and movement of our society making us more secure or is it leading to a total surveillance system? Being on-line, does this make our work life more independent or are we losing our right to free time and recreation? Do technical possibilities which allow for improvements and efficiency bring us more convenience or will they limit our personal freedoms?

At the same time, we face dominant market positions of mainly non-European economic actors which follow their own specific interests.

There is a risk that human beings will simply be reduced to an economic product. How can we ensure that technological progress will be translated into social development?

The challenge will be to define clear, transparent and binding rules and standards. We have to decide which data can be used and for which purpose. We must always consider the balance between privacy of the individual and the needs of security. Sometimes this balance has not been fully appreciated. In the end, we have to ensure that people regain sovereignty over their privacy.

What about the political side? The European Parliament has contributed to the regulatory framework of the digital world on several levels, such as the completion of the digital single market, the data protection package and, as let me mention the very recent example, the ITRE committee held its vote on the telecoms package today. I would therefore like to thank the rapporteurs and the contribution of other members involved in this important work.

Today's report -Digital World in 2030- identifies trends in technological and economic life, as well as social and political features. It therefore provides a very useful tool for further reflections and debate.

Thank you very much for this important initiative. I would like to invite you to use this forum for a broad debate on the future of the digital world and hence a debate on our future social economic model.