

Green and digital transitions in the EU: what do we mean?

The European Green Deal: a blueprint for sustainability

Launched in 2019, the European Green Deal is the EU's strategic plan to become the **first climate-neutral continent by 2050**.



- Its primary objectives include:
- achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions
 - decoupling economic growth from resource use
 - and ensuring that no person or region is left behind in this transition.

This comprehensive approach addresses various sectors, including:



energy



transport



agriculture



industry

aiming to foster a resource-efficient and competitive economy.

The 2024-2029 Commission: evolving priorities

With the new European Commission taking office on December 1, 2024, under President Ursula von der Leyen's second term, there is a renewed focus on enhancing Europe's competitiveness while maintaining the core objectives of the Green Deal.

The Commission has outlined seven key priorities for 2024-2029, emphasizing a faster, simpler, and more united Union.



A significant aspect of this agenda is the "Competitiveness Compass," which aims to simplify administrative burdens, lower barriers within the Single Market, and establish a European Savings and Investment Union to finance competitiveness.



In response to concerns from businesses about regulatory complexities, the Commission plans to propose at least five legislative packages in 2025 aimed at reducing bureaucratic hurdles.



This initiative seeks to streamline processes, promote investment, and foster innovation across Europe.



Digital Single Market: Integrating Technology and Economy

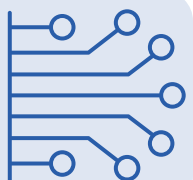
The Digital Single Market (DSM) is a cornerstone of the EU's strategy to integrate digital technologies across its member states, ensuring seamless online activities for individuals and businesses.



By removing digital barriers and harmonizing regulations, the DSM aims to boost economic growth, create jobs, and enhance Europe's digital competitiveness.



The 2024-2029 Commission continues to prioritize the DSM, focusing on reducing regulatory burdens and fostering a conducive environment for digital innovation.



Recent Developments: balancing ambition with practicality

Recent policy discussions highlight the EU's efforts to balance its ambitious Green Deal objectives with economic and practical considerations, in particular the EU's competitiveness which has been steadily declining compared with China and the US. For instance, the EU has reached a provisional agreement to introduce binding targets aimed at reducing food and textile waste, compelling producers to bear the cost of waste management.



These measures aim to cut food waste by 10% in manufacturing and 30% in retail, restaurants, and households by 2030. Additionally, the textile industry will face stricter requirements, with producers funding the collection, sorting, and recycling of textiles through extended producer responsibility schemes.

However, there are internal debates regarding the pace and scope of implementing green regulations.

Major EU economies are divided over proposed revisions to sustainability reporting rules, with some advocating for delays to alleviate burdens on businesses, while others emphasize the importance of maintaining stringent environmental standards.



Conclusion:

The Green and Digital transitions are integral to the EU's vision of a sustainable and competitive future. The European Green Deal provides a comprehensive framework for environmental sustainability, while the Digital Single Market fosters technological integration and economic growth. The 2024-2029 Commission's agenda reflects a nuanced approach, striving to uphold environmental commitments while addressing economic realities and stakeholder concerns. This balanced strategy is crucial for the EU to navigate the complexities of global challenges and to lead by example in sustainable development.

