

Sum up Visby agenda.

Creating impact for an eUnion 2015 – "The Visby Declaration"

9th to 10th November 2009 the Visby agenda was arranged in Visby, Sweden by the Swedish Presidency of the European Council with the participation of the European Commission, the Member States of the EU, candidate and potential candidate countries as well as industry representatives and other relevant stakeholders.

The main purpose of the conference was to seek a common understanding of which relevant and pressing policy issues a new ICT agenda for the EU will need to address.

The conference was chaired by Mr Leif Zetterberg, State Secretary at the Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications, in the presence of the Swedish Minister for Communications Ms Åsa Torstensson and the European Commissioner for Information Society and Media, Mrs Viviane Reding.

The focus headline was: **A green knowledge based society.**

The presentations were structured in 7 different areas:

1. Policy perspective: Strengthening competitiveness and good governance.
2. User perspectives: Fostering use, inclusion and quality of live.
3. Environmental perspectives: Encouraging ECO-efficiency and sustainability.
4. Consulting the public: Analysis of the European commission consultations and the European debate.
5. Business perspectives: Fuelling competition and openness in a digital single market.
6. Change perspectives: Addressing a radical transformation towards a European knowledge-based society.
7. Setting a new agenda: Policy leadership and implementation.

Under each area prominent and interesting people gave their solutions and suggestions. All the speakers' presentations are available at the [home-page of Visby agenda](#).

The Presidency conference conclusions were pointed up in 17 areas guiding our thinking in setting out Europe's future ICT agenda. Some of the focus words are underlined.

1. There is a need for a holistic, integrated and horizontal approach to ICT policy with clear, visionary leadership.
2. The EU must make use of the comparative advantage that a well functioning European digital single market can bring by creating business opportunities and capitalising on Europe's diversity.
3. A prerequisite for the creation of a European knowledge society is that all users can have access to resilient and reliable wired and wireless broadband and network technologies.
4. The EU and its Member States should promote Internet take-up by building broad skills and improving user confidence for personal and professional use of the Internet. Steps should be taken to ensure that ICT skills are enhanced in the educational sector by promoting ICT in schools, in the education of teachers, and in the workplace by providing incentives for businesses to further implement ICTs in their business processes and skill their workers in the use of ICT.
5. The EU also needs to strengthen its efforts to stimulate digital take-up and seek to narrow digital divides taking measures to increase social digital inclusion through information, education, enhanced participation and other available means.

6. Upholding an open Internet and establishing transparent guidelines on net neutrality are important safeguards for building a European knowledge society at the forefront of innovation.
7. By further reducing transaction costs, ICTs hold significant further potential for the building of a single market for new products and services, to the benefit and competitiveness for European businesses including SMEs and consumers.
8. The EU and its Member States should examine the Intellectual Property Rights system with a view to ensure robust solutions that are balanced and attractive for users and rights holders alike.
9. The EU should set an ambitious agenda for research, development and innovation, capitalising on a user-centric perspective to make the EU a world-leader in ICT and particularly in usability, which will be essential in further bridging the digital divide.
10. EU member states and community institutions should seek to make data freely accessible in open machine-readable formats, for the benefit of entrepreneurship, research and transparency.
11. Access to and reuse of public sector information and data should be improved among EU Member States. The domains of data targeted by the Directive on the re-use of public sector information should be enlarged.
12. Open platforms for innovation and the development of services for public and commercial use should be fostered. This should include commercially neutral promotion of open solutions in public procurement to ensure that interoperability rests on a non-proprietary basis. In this context, standardised interfaces between process steps are one key element.
13. ICTs play a crucial role regarding general efficiency improvements in the public sector. However, going beyond purely administrative benefits, the Member States of the EU should also find ways to deliver on eHealth and eGovernment expectations and provide visible added value for all European citizens. Steps should be taken to support Member States ambitions to ensure continuity of care within and between countries, examining multilateral arrangements, with a clear mandate for openness of innovation.
14. The forthcoming Malmö Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment will provide an important foundation for increased collaboration in order to increase the potential of eGovernment and support Europe's transition into a leading knowledge-based economy. It will also provide important input to the discussion on the post-i2010-agenda.
15. The EU must rapidly respond to environmental targets by establishing measurable action plans for greener solutions in the field of ICT as well as in non-ICT areas, supported by ICT policy institutions where relevant. Such measures could include contributions from ICT to develop greener solutions for energy, transports, industry production and process, housing etc.
16. A green perspective on ICT policy is necessary but will not suffice. There is also a need to review the use and management of ICT policy throughout and between policy areas and EU institutions in order to promote effective and efficient development and implementation of policies that support a European knowledge-based society with a green perspective.
17. The EU and its Member States should expect and prepare for structural changes. In doing so they should systematically benchmark, evaluate and report on progress made towards the higher-level objectives of creating growth and jobs, and meeting the social and environmental targets of the EU.

Timetable for a European ICT policy agenda by 2015

During the Swedish Presidency of the European Council:

- Malmö Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment, November 18th 2009 ([link](#))
- Transport and Telecom Council, December 17th – 18th 2009

2009-11-20

During the Spanish Presidency of the European Council ([link](#)):

- International Meeting with the European Industry, January 18th 2010, Madrid – SETSI Hq
- High Level Conference on Research for Trustworthy ICT, February 10th –11th , León (same dates and place as the informal EU Council on Competitiveness)
- Ministerial Meeting EU-Latin America and Caribbean Countries: “Digital Content for a Digital Society”, March 14th –16th 2010, La Granja de San Ildefonso, Segovia
- Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Telecommunications/Information Society, April 18th – 20th 2010, Granada - **Launch of the New Strategy for 2010–2015 “For a Digital Europe: the Granada Strategy”**
- World Congress on Information Technology, May 25th –27th 2010, Amsterdam (Organized by the Dutch Government)

Rune Nilsson