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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.1.2025)

The Commission has launched a range of initiatives to facilitate broadband investments, both regulatory (e.g. Gigabit Infrastructure Act¹) and capacity building related (e.g. Broadband Competence Offices²). Concerning funding, the Connecting Europe Facility Digital³ (EUR 2 billion) also supports the deployment of 5G infrastructures in rural areas for public services. The budget allocated to the development of broadband infrastructure under the Recovery and Resilience Facility⁴ reaches almost EUR 14 billion. Connectivity is also supported under the cohesion funds, e.g. by the European Regional Development Fund⁵ (circa EUR 2.3 billion) and through InvestEU⁶.

Funded by the Digital Europe Programme, the GovTech4All project⁷ has been supporting the development of innovative digital public services accelerating their deployment since 2023. The coordination and support action⁸ for ‘Innovative and Connected Public Administrations’ allows Member States to collaborate, identify common needs and to develop interoperability solutions needed for seamless cross-border digital public services. Future initiatives include a European Digital Infrastructure Consortium⁹ to leverage investments to develop interoperability solutions for new cross-border public services.

The Interoperable Europe Act¹⁰ gives public administrations new instruments for a harmonious digitalisation of their services, e.g. by introducing interoperability assessments to detect legal and technical barriers. Additionally, the Commission plans to work on a renewed European Interoperability Framework, which will focus on concrete implementation recommendations, and on the Digital Networks Act¹¹ to help boost secure high-speed broadband connectivity.

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/gigabit-infrastructure-act>

² <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/bco-network>

³ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/cef-digital>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_connectivity.pdf

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/available-budget_en

⁶ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/eu-funding-broadband-2021-2027>

⁷ <https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/govtechconnect/govtech4all>

⁸ <https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/joinup/news/call-proposals-innovative-and-connected-public-administrations>

⁹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/edic>

¹⁰ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/interoperable-europe-act-proposal_en

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_941